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A
Godly and learned
Expoſition vppon the Prouerbes *of Solomon:*

Written in French by Maiſter *Michael Cope, Miniſter* of the woorde of God, at *Geneua:*

And tranſlated into Engliſh, *by M. O.*

Marcelline Outred

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¶TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE, *Sir VVilliam Cecil,* Knight, *Baron* of Burleygh, Lorde high Treaſurer of Englande, Maiſter of the Queenes Maieſties Courtes of Wardes and *Liueries, Knight of the moſt noble order of the Garter,* and one of her Highneſſe moſt honorable priuie Counſel, *continuance of health, with proſperitie and increaſe of honour.*

IT hath bin reported (Right Honourable and my verie good Lorde) and is founde true of al men, that the Bee, when ſhe hath gathered her hony, flieth immediatly to the hiue, wher ſhe leueth the ſame, as in the place of ſauegarde for her fruite, and as a gaine of her labour: whoſe paine as it is commended of al, ſo alſo is it diligently folowed but of a few, who whileſt they come to the ſweete flowers and wiſe ſentences of the worde of God, doe but baſely reade and negligently conſider the ſame, whereas they ſhoulde drawe and ſucke out, yea, and laye vp euen with the Bee, to their beſt vſe, moſt pleaſant hony. And this they ſhould doe, not onely for them ſelues, but alſo for other. For liuing to the profite of the Church of God, they imparte their labours to the benefite thereof, yea beſides the foode to their own ſoules, other are comforted by them: as amongſt other (Right honorable) Maiſter Michael Cope, Preacher of the word of God in Geneua, deſerued not the leaſt praiſe, who painfully trauelling in the Prouerbes of Solomon, did not onely read them for his owne delight, but alſo ſucked out of euerie flower of the ſame Garden, moſt ſweete honie: which beeing faithfully gathered and diſpoſed in the Hiue, he left as a fruite of his labour to al poſteritie, for al the godly to be partakers of. Now for that it is not the gift of euery man to driue the Hiue wherin the Bee gathereth her honie (although I knowe that many can, amongeſt whome your honour may bee equal with the beſt) yet becauſe it was preached, and then written in the Frenche tongue, which moſt vnderſtande not, I thought it vnmeete, that ſo ſweete a nouriſhment ſhould be withholden from my countrie men: & therfore haue bin bold vnder your honors protection to communicate it as wel as I coulde for their profite and commoditie, which I am bolde the rather to dedicate to your honour; becauſe you loue thoſe that liue to other; becauſe you are a Patron, & ſo haue ſhewed your ſelfe of al honeſt labors, who albeit you vnderſtande the tongue, yet are you glad to haue it made known vnto others. Theſe things cōſidered, & for that alſo I haue receiued benefit heretofore at your honours hands, I thought it my bounden duetie, to dedicate the tranſlation of this Comentarie vpon the Prouerbes of the wiſe King Solomō to your honor: aſſuring my ſelfe, that your care wil be no leſſe in the protecting of ſo good a woorke, then there ſhal happen profite to the wiſe reader thereof: for what woulde any man deſire for the full accompliſhement of knowledge, belonging to all eſtates, that is not handled in the Prouerbes? Or what woulde he deſire for his profit, that is not cōteined in the Prouerbes? for therin ſhal euerie man finde, from the higheſt to the loweſt, his duetie preſcribed moſt notably, as for Kinges, godlineſſe, iuſtice and mercy: for Magiſtrates and Iudges, wiſedome and true dealing: for rich men, liberalitie to the poore: againe, that the poore be contented with his eſtate, without murmuring: to be ſhort, he teacheth the husbande fidelitie: the wife, obedience: children, reuerence: ſeruants, diligence: finally, he ſetteth downe a puniſhment for the proude, a reward for the lowlie, a dangerous eſtate for ſcorners and diſdainers of the word of God: the life of a lier altogether vnlawful: the vſurer, couetous, and vnchaſt, cleane condemned. Contrariwiſe, he exhorteth that the merciful, liberal, and wel doers, be imitated and folowed: al which and a thouſande more then I am able to repeate, as they are moſt notably ſet downe by the wiſe King Solomon, ſo are they verie learnedly, and moſt plainely declared by Maiſter Cope. Wherefore (Right honourable) ſince that the maieſtie of the matter is ſo great, and the wiſdom of the wiſe man ſo vnſearchable: I truſt your Lordſhip wil beare with my rudeneſſe, and ſupporte mine endeuour in publiſhing and making manifeſt this ſimple tranſlation to al men. And although I am not a tranſlator of ſuche rypeneſſe in iudgement, and perfection in ſtyle, as the matter requireth, and as I my ſelfe coulde haue wiſhed: notwithſtanding, I hope I haue rendered it at the leaſte, ſenſe for ſenſe: and where the Frenche and our tongue doe agree, verbatim; that out of the wordes, one may gather the ſenſe; and out of the ſenſe the reaſon, and ſo obtaine the trueth: moſt humblie beſeeching your honour to take in good part this my rude labour & bold enterpriſe, the which if it ſhal pleaſe your honour of your accuſtomed clemencie to doe, you ſhal not onely incourage me to greater thinges, but alſo ſhew your ſelfe a comfort to al the godly. And thus beeing loth to offend your honour by tediouſnes, or to withhold you from your graue & moſt waightie affayres, I beſeech the Almightie God by Ieſus Chriſt our Sauiour, long to preſerue your honour in health, wealth, and godlineſſe, to the glorie of his name, profit of his Church, & good of this our common weale & countrie, & to your own euerlaſting comforte in him. Amen.

Your honours moſt humble to commaund,
Marcelline Outred.

¶ An ample and large Index or Table, compriſing al the principal points of Doctrines, and circumſtances, as wel Moral as Diuine, contemned in this Booke, very neceſſarie and beneficial for all eſtates, euen from the higheſt to the loweſt.

The number noteth the leaſe. A, ſtandeth for the firſt ſide, and B, for the ſecond ſide of the leaſe.

A.

Abſtinence.

The *Abſtinence* oꝛ faſting of the Papiſts detected.474.a.

Admonition.

Againſt ſuch as cannot abyde *Admonition*, though it be necedful.134.a

The neceſſitie of *Admonition*, and what benefit repentant ſinners doe reape therby. 139.a.b

Aduauncement.

That we muſt not refuſe pꝛomotion & *Aduauncement*, if we be called therunto.545.b

The behauioꝛs of ſuch as are raiſed to *Aduancemēt* out of a vile & baſe eſtate.619.b

Adulterers.

The dealings of *Adulterers* ſet foꝛth by notable compariſons.618.b.619.a

Adulterers compared to ſouldiers that go to warre in danger of their liues.27.a

Of *Adulterers* that cannot repent, and in what helliſh caſe they be.27.a

That *Adulterers* offend not only againſt mē, but againſt God, and why.26.a

In what repꝛoche and infamie *Adulterers* ſhoulde be, if things were oꝛdered as they ought.98.b

Adulterers and whoꝛemongers are thꝛeatened with eternal death.26.b

Adulterie.

That there is danger in *Adulterie*, and why. 26.b.27.a

The hoꝛribleneſſe of *Adulterie* ſet foꝛth in ſundꝛie and ſeueral points.618.b

Againſt *Adulterie* & Adulterers. 25.b.26.a

Who ſo is giuen to *Adulterie*, wil not abſtaine from ſingle foꝛnication.26.b

Adulterous.

Of the *Adulterous* woman, and what is meant by her houſe.26.b

That the *Adulterous* man & adulterous woman are both vnfaithful, & why.26.a

Affection.

Of walking after the affection of the fleſhe. 35.a.

Affections.

How wee may come to the knowledge of mans ſecret *Affections* 434.a

Of the diuerſitie oꝛ contrarietie of *Affectiōs*, and the effects of the ſame.234.b

Howe our *Affections* are made holie, good, and iuſt, &c.432.b.433.a

Our thoughtes and *Affections* are open to the knowledge of God.488.a

Wherevpon the *Affections* of kings & pꝛinces ought not to be ſet.288.a

Who they be, whoſe *Affections* can neuer be ſatiſfied.544.a

The danger that commeth by folowing our carnal *Affections*.70.b

Of our *Affections*, and how they muſt be oꝛdered to Godward.32.b

What kinde of *Affections* are compared to the rotting of the bones.282.b.283.a

Raging *Affections* compared vnto a madde man, and why.91.a

Affliction.

The meaning of theſe woꝛds, All the childꝛē of *Affliction*, and who be ſuch.626.a.b

That *Affliction* and tribulation begetteth patience.304.a

The wicked woꝛld, to toꝛment the godly, addeth *Affliction* vppon *Affliction*. this is pꝛoued by example.532.a

Afflictions.

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That we muſt not refuſe promotion & *Advauncement*, if we be called therunto.545.b

The behauiors of ſuch as are raiſed to *Advauncemēt* out of a vile & baſe eſtate.619.b

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In what reproche and infamie *Adulterers* ſhoulde be, if things were ordered as they ought.98.b

Adulterers and whoremongers are threatened with eternal death.26.b

Adulterie.

That there is danger in *Adulterie*, and why.26.b.27.a

The horribleneſſe of *Adulterie* ſet forth in ſundrie and ſeueral points.618.b

Againſt *Adulterie* & Adulterers.25.b.26.a

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Of walking after the affection of the fleſhe.35.a.

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The wicked world, to torment the godly, addeth *Affliction* vppon *Affliction*. this is proued by example.532.a

Afflictions.

The *Afflictions* of the juſt are the roddes of God, and what effects they worke.136.a

Comfortes againſt *afflictions* and troubles of the righteous 137.a

The meanes that many ſeeke to ſhunne *afflictions*.441.b

The end or cauſe why God doeth lay *afflictions* vpon vs.145.a

The Lorde doeth compaſſe the faithfull with great and many *afflictions*.150 b

Of *afflictions* laide vpon the righteous, moſt comfortable doctrine.198 b.199.a b

That in our *afflictions* wee muſt take courage, and how.199 b

The common vſe of them that feare God, is to haue *afflictions*.472.b

Of the *afflictions* which doe followe ſinners.247.a

How ſuch as are wiſe ſhoulde behaue themſelues in *afflictions*.489.a

Of the *afflictions* of the good, and of their behauiour in the ſame.304.a

Afflictions and tribulations commended vnto vs vnder the ſignification of an humble minde.335.b.336.a

What we ought to thinke of God for ſending vs *afflictions*,544.b

Gods children compared to gold and ſiluer in *afflictions*.544.b

The wicked in *afflictions* compared to dry wood, chaffe, and hay 544.b

That *afflictions* are troubleſome euen to the elect and faithful.372.a.b

That we muſt not be afraide of the greatnes and heauineſſe of *afflictions*.373.a

The *afflictions* of the faithful are an earneſt of Gods good wil.39.b

What knowledge is required of vs in ſuffering *afflictions*,34.a

Age.

That *age* is a crowne of glorie, and in what reſpects.343.a.b

That there is none but deſireth old *age* 343.a

Of boaſting in old *age*, and looking for reuerence.343.b

What we muſt doe, if we wil be honorably crowned for our *age*.343. b

Not *age*, but righteouſneſſe maketh men honorable.343.b

Ambaſſadour.

Howe & in what maner a faithful *ambaſſadour* ſhould be receiued.243.a

Of a faithful *ambaſſadour*, and that hee bringeth health and life.242.b.243.a. b

That there are but fewe which receiue the faithful *ambaſſadour*, and why.243.b

Ambition.

The ill ſucceſſe of *ambition* and pride in ſuch as were infected therewith.505.b

Kings, Princes, and Magiſtrates led away with *ambition*.487.a

Againſt *ambition*, and what danger it bringeth.382.a

The way to bring vs to rewarde, is to roote out of our harts pride and *ambition*.506.a

That *ambition* doth reigne in our hearts naturally.505.b

Angels.

The *angels* are a parte of Wiſedomes familie.116.a

Chriſt is the head of the *angels*.116.a

How and after what ſorte we are fellowes with *angels*.116.b

The *angels* which kept ſtill their firſt eſtate, &c. are one parte of wiſedomes houſe. 116.a

Anger.

Againſt *anger*.281.a

The deſcription of *anger* by her effects.214. a.b

Againſt what ſinnes the Lordes *anger* is kindled, & that heede muſt be had herein.455.b

What is meant by the rodde of *anger* which Solomon aſcribeth to the wicked.451.b

God refraineth his *anger*, when wee giue to the poore for his ſake.436.a

The meanes & waies to pacifie the *anger* of kings and great men.509.b 510.a

Remedies againſt *anger*.267.b

That *anger* is prouoked and ſtirred vp by auerthwart and grieuous words.290 a

That *anger* is cruell, wherevpon dependeth notable doctrine.534.b.536.a

The dangers which depēd vpon *anger*.306.b

The danger which dependeth vppon the *anger* of a king.407.a

Reaſons why we ſhould take heede how wee moue the Lord to *anger*.408.a

Of the *anger* of a king againſt a lewde ſeruant.289.a

The meanes that the wicked vſe to appeaſe Gods *anger* for their ſinnes.327.a

That the *anger* of man fulfilleth not Gods iuſtice.396.b

The puniſhement of *anger* in ſuch as were filled therewith.396.a

That the foreſight of a man maketh him defer his *anger*, and how.388.b

Commendations of him that is ſlow to *anger*, &c.344 a.b

The ſlow to *anger* preferred before him that is mightie, and why.344.a.b

Who they be that are ſlowe to *anger*. 344.b

Angrie.

In what reſpects it is needful to bee *angrie*. 306.b.307.a

Why wee muſt not accompanie with an *angrie* wilful man, &c.462.a.b

Apoſtaſie.

The daunger and damnableneſſe of *apoſtaſie*. 524.b

Apoſtaſie cannot bee diſpenſed withal by repentance.525.a

Eternal reprobation the firſt cauſe of *apoſtaſie*.525.a

Apparel.

Of gorgeous *apparel* and the wearing of the ſame.6.b

Appetite.

The diuerſe ſignifications of this word *appetite* in ſcripture.517.a.b

Of ſuch a one as cannot refraine his *appetite*, and whereunto he is compared.517.a

Arrogancie.

Why pride and *arrogancie*, which is bewraied by high lookes, is called the lanterne of the wicked.430.b

Euident ſignes and tokens of pride and *arrogancie*.430.a b

Againſt the *arrogancie* of riche worldlinges. 248.a.b

Arrogant.

Who he is that is called *arrogant* and proude. 442.a b

Authoritie.

That men in *authoritie* muſt vſe the rod, and how.519.b

The happie ſtate of the people when the righteous are in *authoritie*.579.b

That wee ought to take heede whome wee raiſe vp to the ſeate of authoritie.577.a.b 578.a

That wee ought to hinder the wicked from comming to authoritie, and why.566.a

In what reſpects a man of *authoritie* is compared to the North & South winds.514.a.b

B.

Backbiters.

That we muſt not be familiarly conuerſant with *Backbiters*, and why.420.a.b

Againſt *Backbiters* which ſeeke their neighbours decaie.420.a

That we muſt giue *Backbiters*, &c. an angrie countenance, and why.514.b

Shame and infamie threatned againſt *Backbiters*,507.b

Ballances.

Againſt falſe *Ballances*.163.a.b

The rewarde of them that vſe falſe *Ballances*.163.b

Wherein falſe *Ballances* doe ſtande, and who they bee that vſe them.163.b

That there are falſe *Ballances* in all eſtates 164.a

Of the *Ballances* and waites of God and what they are.323.a.b

Beautie.

What deceitfulneſſe there is in *Beautie*, appeareth by examples.638.a.b

How and by what meanes *Beautie* is defiled. A leſſon for fayre women worth the learning.189.a.b

Wholeſome leſſons and exhortations vnto women concerning the vſe and abuſe of their *Beautie*.189.a

That the carnall will labour to abuſe the *Beautie* which God hath giuen them.189.a.

The dangers which enſue, if wee vſe not our *Beautie* wel.188.b

Of *Beautie*, & who is the author of the ſame both in men and women.188.b

Againſt the counterfeite *Beautie* of women, which is called vanitie.638.a.b

Beleefe.

That of lightneſſe of *Beleefe* follie commeth.268.b

Againſt lightnes of *Beleefe*.265.a.b.266.a.

What wee muſt doe, to auoide lightneſſe of *Beleefe*.265.b.266 a

Bitterneſſe.

What is meant by the *Bitterneſſe* of the ſoule 26.b

That *Bitterneſſe* is diuerſly taken in holie ſcripture.26.b

Blaſphemie.

The church of Rome and her ſectaries condemned of *Blaſphemie*.235.a. b

That *Blaſphemie* is a moſt horrible ſinne,and worthy of great puniſhment 68.b

Againſt *Blaſphemie*,and al vndecent and vnreuerent ſpeeches.68.a.b

Bleſſed.

That they which haue greate abundance of worldly riches,are not *Bleſſed*.53.a.b

What maner of man is *Bleſſed* of the world. 53 a

That the number of the *Bleſſed* is very ſmal, and why.44 b

What we muſt doe, if wee wil liue and bee *Bleſſed*.44.b

That a wiſe man is *Bleſſed* , is prooued by compariſon.40 b

That the wiſe man is *Bleſſed* for euer, and why.40 b

What we muſt doe,if wee deſire to be truely *Bleſſed*.41.a

Bleßedneſſe.

The *Bleſſedneſſe* of the wicked, and wherein it ſtandeth.133.a

The *Bleſſedneſſe* of the righteous, notwithſtanding that they are contemned 133. b.

That *Bleßedneſſe* is the onely gifte of God. 41.a.

The perfection of al *Bleſſedneſſe* is the kingdome of heauen 53.a

Bleſſedneſſe attributed in ſcripture vnto wiſdome.41.a

Bleſſing.

The chiefe parte of the *bleſſing* of the righteous,what it is.176 a

The *Bleſſing* of the righteous, and what citie ſhalbe exalted thereby.176.a

Of *Bleſſing* our needie neighbour.151.b

The *Bleſſing* of God vpon the faithful,is not much ſeene vnto the eies, and why.150. b.

Of riches without Gods *Bleſſing*, and with Gods *Bleſſing*, and the difference of both. 235.a

The *Bleſſing* of God exempteth not the faithfull from afflictions in their fleſhe. 152.a

That the wicked refuſe and reiect the *Bleſſing* of God.152.a

The wicked ſhal in no wiſe bee partakers of the *Bleſſing* of the kingdome of heauen: 150.b

That which we diſtribute to the poore, is a *Bleſſing*.151.b

The *Bleſſing* of the Lord maketh men riche. 151.a

What Solomon meaneth by the *Bleſſing* of the righteous , which exalteth the citie. 175.b

By what *Bleſſing* the citie is exalted. 175.b

The ſignification of this worde *Bleſſing*,and of the contrarie.576. b

The meaning of Solomon, by *the Bleſſing of the head,&c.*192.b

That *Bleſſing* commeth not by deſert,but by promiſe,and how.192.b.193.a

That the multitude of children in lawefull mariage is a great and ſingular *Bleſſing* of God. 77.b

That the good ſhal obtain a *Bleſſing* of God, and how.248 a

Of the *Bleſſing* of goodneſſe, and to whome it appertaineth.496.b.497 a

That nothing doth proſper or increaſe without the *Bleſſing* of God.53.a

What vices wee muſt forſake,if we wil bee aſſured of Gods *Bleſſing*. 53 a

What *Bleſſing* is promiſed to the mercifull. 272.b

What puniſhments we muſt looke for,if we deſpyſe the *Bleſſing* of God.257.b

Bleſſings.

That God beſtoweth his *Bleſſings*,as it pleaſeth him, &c.36.b

The *Bleſſings* of God are extended as wel to the wicked and vnthankeful, as to the faithful and iuſt, and why. 149.b.150. a.

Of the *Bleſſings* wherewith a faythfull man ſhal abound.572.a.b

Brethren.

In what reſpectes neighbours are to be preferred before *brethren*. 538.a.b

That friendes are neerer then *Brethren*.378.b.379.a

Of carnal *Brethren*, and who be ſuche.385.a.b.

What is meant by theſe wordes, To diuide the heritage among *Brethren*.347.a

The diſcords betweene *Brethren*, are heere to be appeaſed, and why.375.b

Admonitions to *Brethren*, to keepe vnitie and concord.375.b

Brother.

The meaning of Solomõ in this, that a *Brother* is borne for aduerſitie.357.b

The meaning of theſe words, Neither enter into thy *Brothers* houſe in the day of thy calamitie.538.a.b

Buſibodies.

Againſt *Buſibodies*,267.b.268.a

C.

Cal.

That we muſt not ceaſe nor be weerie to *Cal* vpon God.15.a

What wee muſt doe, if we wil haue God to anſwere when we *Cal* vpon him.15.b

That it is not lawfull for vs to maintaine our ſelues in any degree, except the Lorde *Cal* vs thereunto.238.a

Careful.

In what ſenſe Chriſt forbiddeth vs not to be *Careful*.86.a

That we muſt be *Careful* to gather the ſpiritual harueſt.86.a

Careleſneſſe.

Of *Careleſneſſe*, and the hurt thereof, both in ſuperiour and inferiour.368.a.b

What miſchiefe the *Careleſnes* of Miniſters, and their ignorance doeth in the Church.368.a.b

Charitie.

Of true *Charitie*, and howe it is ſtirred vp.148 a.Looke *Loue*.

Chaſtitie.

Chaſtitie is a thing of great vertue, and what effect it worketh.99.b

Children.

What *Children* they be, whom Solomon calleth ſhameful & vnworthie.402.b.403.a.

Howe ſhameful & vnworthie *Children* ſhoulde be puniſhed.402.b

The *Children* of God in this worlde are mingled with the wicked, and how they ſhould behaue them ſelues in this caſe.8.b

Againſt ſuch *Children* as any way hurt & hinder their parents.402.a.b

Of certaine vngratious *Children*, which neglected their duetie of obedience.580.b

That the vpright and perfect are the *Children* of God.565.a

What kinde of *Children* Solomon eſteemeth no better then theeues.575.a.b

Children are bound to their parents in a three fold bond or Obligation, and what that is.575.b

What behauiour *Children* ſhoulde vſe to delight and reioyce their parents.591.a

The dueties of *Children* to their fathers.60.a

That none but obedient *Children* receiue the way of wiſedome.60.a

That to haue fooliſh *Children*, is a thing of no ſmal importance.390.a

Of fooliſh *Children*, who are to be ſo reputed, and howe they muſt be vſed.390.a

Leſſons for *Children* that are borne to great patrimonies and heritages.391.a

Neceſſarie doctrine touching the generation, and dannation of *Children*.359.a.b

That *Childrens* children, are Gods bleſſing, and howe.349.b.350.a

Againſt ſuch as complain that they are charged with too many *Children*.350.a

What wee muſt doe to be crowned honeſtly with our *Children*.350.a

What is meant by this, That the glory of the *Children*, are their fathers.350.b

Who are Gods *Children* ſpiritualy begotten.5.a.

Of the neceſſitie of knowledge in *Children*, and why.3.a

Of *Children* in age, & children in vnderſtanding.3.a

Of the dueties of *Children* to their parentes.92.a.b

The names of Gods *Children* are regiſtred in heauen.442.a
Againſt ſuch as would haue *Children* to doe according to their owne fanſie.414.a
Children which mocke & contemne their parents, compared to Carion, & howe.618.a
What *Children* they be which offende and ſin againſt their owne conſciences. 617.b. 618.a
What it is that hindereth *Children* to inherit. 248.b
That a vertuous woman is worthie of publike praiſe: whereupon followeth a leſſon for *Children*.639.a
What *Children* doe make glad their fathers. 127.a
The inconueniences which folow vpon not inſtructing of *Children* in their youth.450.a
What parents muſt do, if they deſire to haue their *Children* prooue honeſt.450.b.
Againſt ſuch as thinke it not needful to buſie them ſelues in teaching *Children*. 449.b
When *Children* neglect their duetie principally to their parentes.474.a.b
A threatning againſt diſobedient and rebellious *Children*.420.b
Howe and when *Children* doe turne their parentes ioye into weeping and mourning. 127.b
Children that deſire to make their parentes glad, muſt folowe the word of God.127.b.
Fathers, mothers, &c. ought to be careful to ſee their *Children* inſtructed in gods word. 127.a
The wiſedome of *Children* and inferiours ſtandeth in obedience, and ſufferance, to be ruled after the woorde of God, &c. and why.128.a.

Church.

That we muſt be in companie with our mother the *Church*, and why.58.a
Againſt the Popiſhe *Church*, and what wee muſt doe to diſcerne it. 6.a b
That we muſt be obedient to the *Church*, if we wil heare God.6.a
The *Church* is the ſpouſe of God.6.a
The *Church* is the piller & ſtrength of trueth. 6.a

Citie.

What *Citie* ſhalbe exalted by the bleſſing of the righteous.176.a
Wherein the happineſſe of a *Citie* conſiſteth. 175.a
What we muſt doe, if we wil haue our *Citie* proſper and be happie.175.a
By what bleſſing a *Citie* is exalted. 175.b 176.a

Cities.

That God alone ruleth Countries and *Cities*.175.a
That hee which ruleth his minde, is more valiaunt then hee which winneth *Cities*. 345.

Commandement.

For what reaſons wee ſhoulde folowe the *Commaundement* of God with great diligence and loue.36.a
That the keeping of the *Commaundement* is the keeping of the ſoule.393.a
The Papiſtes confuted, in that they holde opinion, we ſhould not obey the *Commandement* of louing our enemies.13.b
The prayer of a Prince is as muche as his *Commandement*.13.b

Commandementes.

That we decline not, when wee deſpiſe the *Commandements* of men 71.a b
That the *Commandements* of God are giuen vnto vs by men.56.a.b
What is the meaning of theſe woordes, To keepe the *Commandements*.392.b
What leſſons Moſes teacheth vs in the two firſt *Commandements*.33 a.b
The *Commandements* of God are the pathes of the righteous.30.a
That the keeping of Gods *Commandementes* doeth not ſtand onely in outward works, &c.32.b
Why the length of our life is attributed vnto the lawe and the *Commandementes*. 30.b
The *Commandementes* diuided into mercie and trueth.31.
What wee muſt doe to fulfil Gods *Commaundementes*, and when wee fulfil them. 19.b

The

The meaning of Solomon by theſe wordes, And hide my *Commandements* within thee. 19.b
Howe and in what ſenſe we may ſay, that the way of Gods *Commandements* is ours.260 b
What kinde of loue God requireth of vs in the keeping of his *Commandementes*.239. b.240 a
Life is giuen vs by the keeping of Gods *commandements*.97.b
What it is to receiue the *commaundementes*, 134.a.b

Companie.

Corruption of manners by wicked *companie*, and euil examples.75.b
The daunger of keeping *companie* with the wicked.61.b.62.a
The danger that commeth by an harlottes *companie*, any way vſed.72.a b
The Papiſts a helliſh *compane*.246.b
That we ought to take heede howe we keepe *companie* with whoores & whoremongers, and why.26.b.
We muſt flie the *companie* of the wicked, and not ſpare our goods from the poore, if we would be ſatiſfied.130.a
The daunger and miſchiefe of euil *companie*. 106.a
What *companie* wee muſt reiect, and what companie we muſt ſeeke.106.b

Compaſsion.

That we muſt haue pitie and *compaſsion* on them that hate vs.513.a b

Concupiſcences.

Al ſuch reprooued vnder the compariſon of horſleaches, as are caried away of their vnbrideled *concupiſcences*.617.a

Confeſsion.

Auricular *confeſsion* condemned, as hauing no foundation in ſcripture.567.a
Confeſsion of our ſins to men, neceſſarie and requiſite, and why.567.a
Confeſsion of ſinnes to men prooued by ſundrie examples.567.b
Confeſsion of ſinnes, ought to come only from griefe, of hauing offended God, &c.75.a
Confeſsion of ſinnes comming from feare of puniſhment, condemned.75.a
What kinde of *confeſsion* we ſhould vſe, beeing afflicted 75.a
Confeſsion of mouth, and conſent of heart, are required together in ſcripture.36.b
Of the hypocritical *confeſsion* of ſuche as repent not truely.75.a

Confidence.

Againſt vaine *confidence* in worldly & temporal thinges.159.a b
Againſt vaine truſt and *confidence* in riches. 167.a

Conſcience.

The difference of *conſcience* in the iuſt and the wicked.557.a.b
That a good *conſcience* is a continuall feaſt and howe.304.a.b
That the wicked doth not poſſeſſe that which he hath with a ſound *conſcience*. 295.b
Who bee the guides and gouernours of the righteous mans *conſcience*.168.b
A good *conſcience* is ſtaied vpon the grace of God, &c.169.b
When the *conſcience* of man is vpright and righteous.167.b
None can flie the iudgement of the *conſcience* 496.b
What a man muſt doe, to haue a pure and right *conſcience*.167.b
What is the cauſe that a man can not haue a pure and right *conſcience*.167.b
The framing of the *conſcience* by the certeintie and aſſurance of Gods goodnes.168.a
Of a right and ſound *conſcience*, and in whom it is not to be found.168.b
The euill *conſcience* of the wicked doeth reprooue them, and howe.14.a

Conſolation.

A *conſolation* for the miſerable and diſtreſſed. 314.b.315.a
Howe the Lord miniſtreth *conſolation* to the faithful afflicted.513.a
Of ſuch as are neuer the better for wordes of *conſolation*.512.b.513.a

Conſtancie.

That *conſtancie* commeth not of our ſelues, but of God.218.a
That there is no *conſtancie* without trueth. 218.a
Of *conſtancie*, and who count that they haue it.217.b

Contemners.

The

The iudgement of God againſt the *Contemners* of his worde.243.b

Contempt.

Of *Contempt*, and that wiſe men loue contemptes, better then al worldly riches. 43.a

Of blindneſſe proceeding from the *Contempt* of God.560.b

Perdition, the ende of the *Contempt* of Gods worde.591.b

The proude *Contempt* of the wicked man deſcribed.364.a.b

That *Contempt* commeth with the wicked in two ſortes, and howe.364.b

Howe God wil puniſh ſuch as haue his Goſpel and word in *Contempt*.25.a

The *Contempt* of ſcorners and fooles againſt God.15.b

That we muſt not feare the *Contempt* of the world.272.a.b

Of the *Contempt* of the poore, and wherin the ſame conſiſteth.271.b

That it is the *Contempt* of God, which maketh men lewde in their wordes.255.a

That God wil deſpiſe the wicked with a horrible and fearefull *Contempt* 205.a

Contentation,

Of *Contentation*.208.a b

Of *Contentation* with foode, clothing, and other neceſſities.130.b

That *Contentation* is more worth then al the exceſſiue abundance of the rich.&c.249.b

Exhortations to *Contentation* of life.556.b

That Jeſus Chriſt onely ſhoulde be our *Contentation*.45.a

Of *Contentation* with quietnes & ſoundneſſe of conſcience.328.b.329.a

Of the *Contentation* of the poore with their litle.&c.328.b.329.a

Againſt ſuche as ſtay not them ſelues vppon *Contentation*.&c.328.b.329.a b

Of the *Contentation* of the poore, folowing his labour.250.b

The *Contentation* of the righteous, and wherin they ſhewe it.150.a

Of *Contentation*, and that there is no greater riches then the ſame.182.b

Contention.

That ſtrife & *Contention* is the roote of miſchiefe, and howe.358.a

What kinde of ſtrife and *Contention* is to be mainteined.358.a.

That *Contention* is onely mooued by pride. 23.a.b

The danger of ſtirring vp ſtrife and *Contention*, declared by compariſon.355.b.356.a

That the Pope and his Clergie are full of pride and *Contention*.288.a

Contentions.

Againſt *Contentions*, being the fruites of euil thoughtes.51.a.

That al *Contentions* are forbidden vs by the mouth of Jeſus Chriſt.51.a

That the lot cauſeth *Contentions* to ceaſe, and howe.375.b

That ſuche as rayſe vp *Contentions* among neighbours, are one of the ſeuen thinges that God hateth.91.b.92.a.

Contentious.

That *Contentious* perſons are the ſonnes of the Deuil.92.a

That al *Contentious* perſons are the ſeede of Caine, &c.237.b

Conuerſation.

Among the thinges that Solomon aſketh of God, he requireth holie *Conuerſation*,610.b.611.a.b

What we muſt doe to haue a quiet and a modeſt *Conuerſation*.623.a

With what maner of men wee ſhoulde haue *Conuerſation*.246.b

What our *Conuerſation* ought to bee, thereby to obtaine wiſedome.246.a

Correction.

The neceſſitie of *Correction*, and a promiſe annexed thereunto.591.a

The time of *Correction* or chaſtiſemẽt of children, when it is.395.b

Howe children ſhoulde behaue them ſelues in time of *Correction*.395.b

Againſt ſuch as wil not haue children haue *Correction* with rods.395.b.396.a

That he which taketh *Correction* vpon him, ought to doe it by the word of God.319.b

Of the *Correction* of the Lord, and howe we ſhoulde receiue the ſame.38.b.39.a.b

A reaſon why we muſt not refuſe the *Correction* of the Lord.39.a

Whence it is that we regarde not *Correction*.75.a
Of *Correction*, and who can not away with it.12.a.13.a b
That the fooliſhe refuſe *Correction* and chaſtiſement.13.a
That the fleſh abhorreth *correction*, as a childe doeth the rodde.320.b
Of the continuance of *Correction* to be layde vpon children.469.b
The danger enſuing the neglect of *Correction* in time conuenient.250.b
That *Correction* is requiſite and needeful in diuers degrees. 250.b.251.a.b
Excellent doctrine for fathers, &c. touching *Correction*.250.b 251.a b
Sundrie ſortes of *Correction*, apperteining to ſundrie eſtates. 471.b
That the rodde and *Correction* giue wiſdome, and howe.589.b
Two ſortes of *Correction* for children, one by wordes, the other by the rodde. 469.b. 470.a
What it is to regard *Correction*.244.a
The neceſſitie of *Correction* for children, and what miſchiefes folow the omitting therof.135.a
Of the *Correction* of life, and the meaning of the ſame.319.b.320.a
Of Popiſhe *Correction*, and from whence it commeth.320.a
Wherein *Correction* conſiſteth. 200.b
The neceſſitie of *Correction* by the rodde, for children.456.a
The good and yll which commeth by vſing and not vſing of *Correction* to children. 470.a
To take *Correction*, is a remedie againſt follie. 397.a
The meaning of Solomon in theſe wordes, Take *Correction*.397.a

Corrections.

That the *Corrections* of God are diuers, as wel outward as inward.39.b.40.a
What kinde of *Corrections* wee ought not to receiue.294.b
That the *Corrections* of the Lord, are witneſſes of his loue.39 a

Couenant.

Why the *Couenant* of God with the faythful, is called a Secret.52.b
Of the *Couenant* of God with the faythfull, and what it is.52.b

Couetous.

Againſt the *Couetous*.334.b
Couetous perſons called theeues, robbers, and murtherers in ſcripture.239.a
The inceſſant and reſtleſſe care of the *Couetous* for riches.20.a
In what ſenſe and meaning, wiſdome would haue her children like vnto the *Couetous*. 20.b
The *Couetous* reprooued. 316.a
The *Couetous* ſaide to haue an euil eye, and why.466.b
Againſt a *Couetous* and diſtruſting rich man, a moſt neceſſarie doctrine.76.b.77.a
Why God caſteth *Couetous* men out of his kingdome.131.a.b
The *Couetous* man hath no inheritaunce in heauen.131.a
Againſt *Couetous* men, and that they are alwayes needie.190.b.191.b 192.a
That the *Couetous* haue no true reioycing, though they ſeeme neuer ſo ioyful. 224.b
Againſt ſuch as are *Couetous* poore, and coutous rich.142.b
Againſt the *Couetous*.194.b.195.a

Couetouſneſſe.

That our nature doeth leade vs vnto *Couetouſneſſe*, and why.334.b
Couetouſneſſe iuſtly condemned.128.b
The great benefite that commeth by flying from *Couetouſneſſe*.573.a
Of the fruits of *Couetouſneſſe*, and how hateful a thing it is.570.a
Againſt the *Couetouſnes* of the Iudges of the earth.351.b
That ſuch whoſe heartes are ſet on *Couetouſneſſe*, lacke ſweete and quiet ſleepe. 47.b
That we muſt flie *Couetouſneſſe*, and why. 9.b.10.a
Couetouſneſſe, an abhominable vice. 130.b
Eternal life promiſed vnto ſuch as hate and abhorre *Couetouſneſſe*.316 b
Remedies to make vs abhorre *Couetouſneſſe*. 191.b.192.a

That *Couetouſneſſe* loadeth the heart of man with heauineſſe. 224.a
Againſt *Couetouſneſſe*. 196.a

Counſel.

The ſecrete *Counſel* of our neighbour compared to perfume. 537.b. 538.a
Of ſuch as deſpiſe *Counſel*, and what foloweth thereupon. 310.b
That without *Counſel* thoughtes come to naught, and howe. 310.b
That God abaſeth him ſelfe, to make vs partakers of his diuine *Counſel*, and howe. 311.a
Unto what *Counſel* Solomon admoniſheth vs to giue eare. 397.a
That the fooliſh wil in no wiſe taſte of Gods *Counſel*. 13.a
Notable doctrine of the *Counſel* in the heart of man. 410.a.b
The meaning of theſe wordes, Confirme thy thoughtes by *Counſel*. 419.a
Againſt ſuch as take *Counſel* at them ſelues, and ſeeke not counſel at Gods woorde. 398.a
In what ſenſe the *Counſel* of the Lorde is to be taken. 398.a
Of the firmeneſſe and ſtedfaſtneſſe of Gods *Counſel* 398.a
The miſerie of people, when their gouernours are deſtitute of good *Counſel*. 179.a
Of *Counſel*, and what counſel it is that is required in Kinges and Princes. 179. a
We muſt be diligent folowers of good *Counſel*, if we wil auoide falling. 179.b
Of *Counſel* which maketh men erre, and of *Counſel* that tendeth to life 213.b
That there is no *Counſel* againſt the Lorde, and why. 445 a
The neceſſitie of good *Counſel* and wiſdome in Kinges, Magiſtrates, &c. 107.a
That the people muſt folowe the good *Counſel* of their Superiours, or els they ſhal fal. 179.a.b

Counſels.

That the *Counſels* of God are commaundements, and the neceſſitie of obeying them. 13.b
Reaſons why the *Counſelles* of the wicked are called deceitful. 203.b. 204.a

Counſellers.

What rule wee muſt keepe in chooſing our *Counſellers*. 310.b
That in the multitude of *Counſellers* there is ſtedfaſtneſſe, and how. 311.a
That the *Counſellers* of peace are oftentimes tormented, &c. 220 a
That it is God which prouideth men of *Counſellers*, that can giue good counſell. 179.b
That wee ought al and euerie of vs, to bee *Counſellers*, one to an other. 219.b. 220.a
Of the *Counſellers* of peace, and who haue that name. 219.b

Crie.

That the Preachers of the worde muſt not be greeued to *Crie*, though they profit nothing thereby. 104.a.b
To *Crie*, of duetie is required in the Miniſters of the word. 104.a
To *Crie* for ioye and for ſorowe, when they are to be vſed. 104.a

Crovvne.

Of the *Crovvne* of the wiſe, & what is meant by the ſame. 275.b
That a vertuous woman is the *Crovvne* of her huſband. 202.b. 203.a
Of the *Crovvne* which commeth by poſteritie and iſſue of blood. 349.b. 350.a
That the ſcripture hath a *Crovvne*, and vſeth to giue a Crowne, &. 269.a
That the *Crovvne* of knowledge bringeth the *Crovvne* of life. 269.a

Crueltie.

A ſharpe ſentence againſt ſuche as vſe violence, wrong, and *Crueltie*. 273.b
Of *Crueltie* againſt our neighbour, and how many wayes it is committed. 271.b 272.a
That *Crueltie* doeth al the hurt that may bee to ones neighbour. 272.
Of *Crueltie*, exerciſed in euerie eſtate. 8.a
Who are to bee reputed and comprehended in the number of ſuch as exerciſe *Crueltie*. 9.a.

The *Crueltie* of the great men of the earth in former time.616.a.b
Wherunto the *Crueltie* of great men is compared.616.b
The *Crueltie* of the Pope and his ſhauelings. 208.a
By what things *Crueltie* is knowne and diſcerned. 530.b

Curioſitie.

Curioſitie and vaine pompe forbidden 556.a.b

Curſe.

The meaning of theſe woordes, A *Curſe* ſhal bee imputed vnto him that praiſeth his friend, &c.540.a b
What children they bee that are ſooneſt readie to *Curſſe* father and mother.614.b
Excellent doctrine vpon theſe words, There is a generation that doeth *Curſe* their father, &c.613.b.614.a.b
That we muſt not *Curſe* ſuche as accuſe and belie vs, is ſhewed by examples. 613.
A *Curſe* againſt thoſe that are wiſe in their owne conceit.565.b
A *Curſe* againſt ſuche as are not contente with their owne patrimonie, &c. 463.a
That wee muſt not giue occaſion to any bodie to *Curſe*, and why. 518.b
Whereto the *Curſe* that commeth cauſeleſſe is compared.518.a b
Of the Lordes *Curſe*, and that it deſtroyeth whatſoeuer commeth againſt it. 53.a
Howe and in what ſorte the *Curſe* of the Lorde is in the houſe of the wicked.53.a
A *Curſe* denounced againſt him which iuſtifieth the wicked.496.a

Curſſedneſſe.

That in whoredome is nothing but *Curſſedneſſe*.77.b
That there is nothing but *Curſſedneſſe* in riches, &c.41.a
That the wiſe man needeth not feare to fal into *Curſſedneſſe*, and why.41.a
That the Papiſts ſeeke for nothing but *Curſſedneſſe*, and why.41.a

Curſsing.

That the *Curſsing* of the poore oppreſſed is heard of God.192.a.b
That the *Curſsing* of the poore ſhal take effect againſt the couetous, although it be not iuſt.192.a
That God is offended with *Curſsing*. 192.a.
Of *Curſsing*, and whether it be lawful to curſe ſuche as enhaunce the price of corne.191.b.192.a

Cuſtome.

That in al eſtates *Cuſtome* is made a lawe, and howe.263.a

D.

Dayes.

That all *Dayes* are the good creatures of God, and therefore can not be euil.304.b
Of good *Dayes* and euil *Dayes*, and why they are ſo called.304.b
That there is no euil in the *Dayes*, but in the people which liue in the *Dayes*. 304.b

Darkeneſſe.

That by *darkeneſſe* is meant yl lucke, miſerie, &c.421.a
In what ſenſe *darkeneſſe* is taken in the holie ſcripture.236.b

Dealing.

That God is a louer of ſimple and plain *dealing*.418.a
That which is deſireable in a man, is his vpright *dealing*.398.a.b
In what reſpectes vpright *dealing* muſt be vſed.398.b
That in elections of Magiſtrates and Officers, wee muſt keepe vpright *dealing*. 398.b
In election of Miniſters, vpright *dealing* muſt be vſed.398.b
By what thing iudgement may bee giuen of a mans vpright *dealing*.398.b

Death.

Solomons woordes impugned, Deliuer them that are drawne to *Death*. 486.b

Two ſortes of people, which thinke themſelues to be in the way of life, but tende vnto *Death*. 144.b

What we muſt doe, if we deſire life, and abhorre *Death*. 143 a

They that hate wiſedome, doe loue *Death*, and why. 115.a

He that vouchſafeth not to ſeeke wiſedome, doeth ſeeke *Death*. 115. a

Death commeth by deſert, but life by promiſe. 114.b

That it is not temporal *Death* which hee ſeeketh, that doeth euil, and why. 186.a

The cauſe why they which worke euil, doe ſeeke *Death*, &c. 186.b

That the wicked, though they bee neuer ſo mightie, cannot exempt them ſelues from *Death*. 187.a.b

Of the way leading to *Death*. 227.a.b

What we muſt doe, if wee wil liue without *Death*. 227.b.

That temporall life is not without *Death*. 227.b

Al worldly wiſe men condemned to *Death* eternal, and why. 237.b

Of *Death* temporal, and death eternal. 186. a

Of the *Death* of the faithful, and what it is. 437.b

That it is not in our power, to deliuer our ſelues from *Death*, and why. 241 a

The *Death* of Chriſt our reconciliation with God. 408 a

The cauſe why God giueth ſentence of *Death* againſt al fleſh. 282.a

Of the hope of the righteous euen in *Death*. 285.a

Howe that they which feare God, auoide the ſnares of *Death*. 279 b

What we muſt doe, if we will auoide *Death*, 263.b

That al of vs of our ſelues, incline, and tend to *Death*, and why. 263.b

That the wicked deſerue euerlaſting *Death*, and why. 81.82.a

Eternal *Death* the laſt deſtruction of the wicked. 14.a

What we which feare *Death*, & can not ſhun it of our ſelues, ought to doe. 608.a.b

Deceit.

Notable doctrine of him which vſeth *deceite* to his friende. 528.a.b

Againſt *deceit* in meaſure and weight. 163. b

That there is *deceit* in the worke of the wicked, and why. 186.a

What is the moſt daungerous *deceite* that can be. 219.a

The daunger that they are in, which eate bread gotten by *deceit*. 10.a

In what reſpects the bread of *deceit* is ſweet. 418.b

That God hateth al kinde of *deceit*, and why we doe vſe it. 418.a.b

The meaning of theſe woordes, The bread of *deceite*, and who eate thereof. 418. b

Againſt *deceit*, both in the ſeller and the buier. 416.a.b

Of diuers kindes of *deceit*, whereof ſome are moſt hurtfull, euen to the enemies themſelues. 342.b

What maner of man he is, that vſeth *deceite* to his neighbour. 342.b

Of *deceit*, and howe the ſame is practiſed. 219.a

Deceiuers.

Of *Deceiuers*, and who are moſt exquiſite and cunning therein. 277.a.b

Delight.

What maner of perſons they bee, in whome the Lord hath *delight*. 292.b. 293.a

Delight taken for a louing and fauourable affection. 288.a.b

Of ſundrie kindes of *delight*, in ſundrie reſpectes. 308.b

Derision.

Of *derision*, and howe it is in God and his wiſedome. 14.a.b

Desire.

The great *desire* of the wicked, to hurt their neighbours. 61.b

That it is lawful for vs to *desire* riches, and howe. 209 a

Of the *desire* of the godlie, and that it is a tree of life. 239.a.b

Deſire to proſper in this worlde is not euil, but the meanes, &c. 557.a
Whether it be lawful for them that are diligent to *Deſire* to beare rule. 223.a
The *deſire* of the people and nations of the earth, and what it is. 286.b

Deſires.

That God doeth make fruſtrate the *deſires* and deuiſes of the wicked. 210.a
Of the *deſires* of the wicked, & what traines he vſeth to attaine vnto them. 209.b
That the *deſires* of the ſlouthful ſhal kil him, and why. 442.b
The *deſires* of the iuſt, and what they are. 245.a.b
The affections and *deſires* of mans hearte compared to a roote, and how. 210.b
What kinde of *deſires* that is which is not to be blamed. 473.94.b
Of the *deſires* of the righteous. 189.b
That God doth not ſuffer the wicked to enioy the fulneſſe of their *deſires* 244.b
They which are vnſatiable in *deſires* compared to foure notable thinges, and what they be. 617.a.b
Howe wee ought to moderate and gouerne our *deſires*. 250.a
That the *deſires* of the righteous are not outragious, but moderate. 252.a
What we muſt do to come to the obtaining of our *deſires* 253.a
The behauiours of the wicked to accompliſh their *deſires*. 557.a
That the highminded obtaine not their *deſires*, and why. 575.b
What mens *deſires* are likened to the rotting of the bones. 282.b.283.a
Why infidels are fruſtrate of their *deſires*. 380.b
Of running after our owne affections and *deſires*, *&c.* 380.b.381.a
What *deſires* are to bee blamed, and what not. 380.a.b
The *deſires* of ſinners to bee riche, and their exerciſes 8.a.b
What wicked men doe if they cannot come to the end of their *deſires*. 10.a

Deſtruction.

Of the children of *deſtruction*, and to whome that name properly belongeth. 628.a
That the rapines of the wicked ſhalbee their *deſtruction*. 432.a
That where there is no repentance, *deſtruction* foloweth. 239.b
That the euil enterpriſes of the wicked are their owne *deſtruction*, and howe. 531.b. 532.a
That God hath made the wicked to be glorified in their *deſtruction*. 325.b
What we muſt doe if we wil auoide *deſtruction* 60.a
Of *deſtruction* which inſueth pryde, 370.b. 371.a
Who they be that bring the worſt *deſtruction*. 348.b
That pryde goeth before *deſtruction*, and how. 335.a.b
That God foretelleth his ſeruantes the *deſtruction* of the wicked. 590.a.b
That harlots, whoores, and their companions, fal into *deſtruction*, and why. 72.b. 73.b
What is meant by this, that the houſe of the wicked ſhall come to *deſtruction*. 262.a
The fruites of our ſinnes are death and *deſtruction* 543.a.b
In what cauſes wee ought to deſire and wiſhe the *deſtruction* of the wicked. 578.a
That the *deſtruction* of the wicked is the increaſe of the righteous. 578.a
Of the *deſtruction* of the wicked, and that it falleth vpon them vnawares. 48.b
A comforte for the godly, that the *deſtruction* of the wicked ſhal not ouertake them, &c. 48.b
That the graue is our *deſtruction*, & meanes prouided that it ſhal not bee ſo. 543.b
Unto whome the graue and temporal death are the entrance to eternall *deſtruction*. 543.b

Diligent.

Who deſerue the name and title to be called *diligent*. 430.b. 431.a
That none but the *diligent* ought to haue plentie of goods. 430.b
The rewarde of the *diligent*, after the ſentence of Solomon. 463.b. 464.a

That a *diligent* man may ſafely poſſeſſe abundance,&c.431.a

That *diligent* and warie men ought to be receiued into Kings Courts, and who were ſuch.463 b.464.a

The difference betweene him that is *diligent* and him that is haſtie.593.a

Direction.

What Solomon meaneth by this worde *direction*.169.a

Diſcipline.

That *diſcipline* ſtandeth not only in woordes but in ſome things elſe.320.b.

Againſt ſuch as regarde not *diſcipline*, and care not for it.320.b

Of eccleſiaſticall *diſcipline* vnderſtoode by the outſtretched hande of wiſedome.13.a.b.

Diſhonour.

Of the *diſhonour* of God, and wherein the ſame conſiſteth.283.a

Pretences to cloke and colour the *diſhonour* done to God.283.a

Diſobedience.

That by *diſobedience* God bringeth nations to ſhame.287.b

That *diſobedience* was the cauſe of ſinne.287.b

Diſtruſt.

Of *diſtruſt*, and howe it tormenteth.323.b.324.a

Diſtruſt of Gods goodneſſe and prouidence an abhominable vice.130.b

Diuination.

Againſt *diuination*, and *diuiners*.331.a

What *diuination* it is that Solomon requyreth to be in kings.331.a

The cauſes why God taketh away from the people ſuch Princes as haue *diuination*.331.b

Diuiners.

Of the eſtimation of *diuiners* amongeſt the ſuperſtitious ydolaters.331.a

That *diuiners* promiſe themſelues to bee inſpired from God,&c.331.a

Diuinitie.

Of *diuinitie*, and what ſmall account there is of the ſame among men.285.b

Doctrine.

Of the *doctrine* of God, and of applying our ſelues thereunto.458.b

By the *doctrine* of trueth wee muſt learne to beleeue in Chriſt,&c.459.a

The time of applying our ſelues vnto the *doctrine* of God, when it is. 458.b.459.a

The *doctrine* of the Anabaptiſtes, of hauing al things common, confuted.511.a

That the *doctrine* of the Goſpel, is the ſuſtenance of our ſoules.240.b

Of the ende of the *doctrine* of God, what it is.458.b.459.a

The benefite which commeth by giuing our ſelues to true *doctrine*.457.a

Why the Goſpel is called a ſound and wholeſome *doctrine*.282.b

That wee muſt bee carefull to heare the *doctrine* of the Lord 563.a.b

That *doctrine* hath beene in all times, yea before the lawe was written. 563.b

The commendation of wholeſome *doctrine*, and the benefite thereof.591.b

The meaning of Solomon, ſaying, That the wiſe addeth *doctrine* to his lippes.338.b.339.a

Of the behauiour of the people towards the *doctrine* of God, and what it ſhoulde bee.55.a

That the Pope and his maintainers labour to make vs decline from the *doctrine* of the trueth 71.a

What inſueth vppon vs, after wee are turned away from the *doctrine* of the trueth.71.a

Of *doctrine*, and what doctrine is vnprofitable, and hurtful.54.b

In what *doctrine* we ſhould deſire to bee inſtructed.54.b

That the *doctrine* of our heauenly father is his lawe.54 b.55.a

Drunkardes.

Drunkardes drinke out their memorie, ſenſe, and vnderſtanding.406.b

Whoremongers and *drunkardes* aptly compared together.101.b

The harme that *drunkardes* do to themſelues and to others.522.b

To keepe companie with *drunkardes* forbidden,

den, and why. 473. b

Drunkardes deſtroy themſelues, and howe. 510. b

A heauie ſentence againſt *drunkardes*. 406. b

The damnable ſtate of *drunkardes* declared by compariſon 480 b

The ſenſeleſnes of *drunkards* ſignified by their owne ſpeeches. 480. b

The manner and cuſtome of *drunkardes* at their bibbing benches. 479 a

Drunkardes abuſe wine and ſtrong drinke, &c. 406. a

Of certaine miſeries and inconueniences due to *drunkardes*. 478. b. 479 a

A ſhameful reproche to *drunkardes*. 406. a

Drunkenneſſe.

Whoredome with the miſchiefes that inſue and folowe *drunkenneſſe*. 480. a

In what daunger their ſoules are which giue themſelues to *drunkenneſſe*. 479. b. 480. a

What filthie vices hang at the taile of *drunkenneſſe*. 477. a.

E.

Eare.

What is meant by theſe wordes, To hearken and giue *eare*. 348. b

Of the *eare* that hearkeneth to the correction of life. 319. b

Earth.

The *earth* is not moued, except it pleaſe God to ſhake it. 619. a

The *earth* taken in ſcripture for the inhabitants of the ſame. 619. a. b

What foure thinges they bee, for the which the earth is moued. 619. b

Eaſe.

Of *eaſe*, and howe it ſlayeth the fooliſhe. 17. a. b

Eies.

The ſundrie ſignifications of this worde (*Eies*) in holy ſcripture. 319. b

Why the ſcripture aſcribeth *eies* vnto God, he being a ſpirit. 292. a

That the *eies* of the Lorde are in all places. 292. a

That the bodyly *eies* are not capable of the worde which is ſpirituall. 65. b. 66. a

That by the *eies* are meant knowledge and vnderſtanding. 66. a

That the *eies* of the bodie ſee nothing in the heart. 66. a

Upon what things it is not laweful for magiſtrates to turne and ſet their *eies*. 70. a.

What temptation commeth by ſetting our *eies* to marke the proſperous eſtate of the wicked. 69. b. 70. a

The meaning of Solomon by theſe wordes, let thyne *eies* beholde the right, &c. 69. a b

By what kinde of lifting vp our *eies* wee forget God, and ſo fall into ſinne. 69. a.

What is meant by the *eies*, when Solomon ſaith, let them not depart from thine *eies*. 65. b. 66. a

The danger of gaſing, and wanton ſetting of our *eies* vppon the beautie of women. 69. b

What is meant by this, That the *eies* of a foole are in euery corner. 361. a

What is meant by this, that all the wayes of man are before the *eies* of the Lorde. 80. a. b

Elect.

The *elect* and faythfull are a parte of wiſedoms houſe. 116. a

Though men bee *elect*, yet are they earthly and carnal. 116. b

Enimies.

Three reaſons to reſtraine vs from reioycing in the fal of our *enimies*. 491. b. 492. a

The meaning of theſe words, That we muſt giue bread and water to our *enimies*, &c. 513. b

Of carnal and ſpiritual *enimies*. 369. a

The wordes of Solomon impugned, Bee not glad at thine *enimies* fal. 491. b

That wee muſt bee pitiful and charitable to our *enimies*, and why. 491. a

The reward of him which reioiceth at his *enimies* fal. 492. a

Two kindes of reward that commeth by doing wel to our *enimies*. 514. a

That

That our ſinnes make vs *enimies* to God. 491.a

Enuie.

The meaning of theſe wordes, But who ſhall ſtand before *enuie*. 535.a

The reaſon why ſuch as are caried away with *enuie*, are voide of the feare of God. 472.a

Enuie ſignifieth all ſiniſter, malicious, and cruel affections. 282.b

Enuious.

Why the ſcripture calleth the *enuious* froward, ſcorners. 53.b

That the *enuious* man ſhal goe into deſtruction. 52.a

A threatning to put the *enuious* and froward in feare. 52.a

That in this world the *enuious* and froward are bleſſed, &c. 53.a

That the faithful ought not to bee *enuious* at the eſtimation of the wicked. 53.a

Of the *enuious* man, and that we muſt not be enuious. 51.b

Why Solomon calleth the *enuious* man froward. 52.a

Euil.

The meanes and wayes to liue without feare of euil 135.b

Hee that ſeeketh *euil* ſhall ſoone finde euill, this is proued by example. 100.a

That it is not lawful to wiſhe, much leſſe to worke *euil* to the wicked, &c. 435.a

Not only from dooing of *euil*, but from the apparance of *euil*, wee are commanded to abſtaine. 100.b

What kinde of *euil* the feare of the Lorde doth hate. 105.b.106.a

What miſchiefe the imaginers of *euill* doe. 219.b

That hee which followeth *euil*, ſeeketh his owne death, and how. 186.a

The meaning of Solomon, ſaying, that al the dayes of the afflicted are *euil*. 303.b. 304.a

Againſt ſuch as imagine *euil*, and who they be. 272.b 273.a.b

That the wicked moſt commonly neuer cõfeſſe that they doe euil. 64.a

That wee are firſt *euil*, before wee bee good. 292.b

An *euil* deede often done, to the wicked ſeemeth not euil. 25.a

What they be, that hauing feare, doe not abhorre *euil*. 266.a

Who they bee that reioice in dooing *euil*. 24.b

That wiſedom in poſſeſſion, or poſſeſſed preſerueth from al euil. 57.b

The true meaning of theſe woordes, That God beholdeth *euil*. 292.b.293.a

That there is no *euil*, but that which is committed againſt the woorde of God. 71.a

That there is nothing but *euill* when wee turne on the right hande or on the left. 71.b

Of rewarding *euil* for good, & a threatening againſt ſuch. 354.b.355.a

That a wicked man diggeth vp *euil*, & howe. 340.b.341.a.b.

Euils.

Pryde and arrogancie are *euils* cleane contrarie to the feare of God. 106.a

Of the deliuerance from al *euils*, and when it ſhal be. 18.b

Exalt.

How the people and nations of the earth *exalt* themſelues. 286.b

The rewarde of ſuch as haue laboured to *exalt* themſelues. 286.b.287.a

That fayth and repentance are the thinges which *exalt* vs. 287.a

Exaltation.

Of the *exaltation* which proceedeth from the word of God. 287.a

That the *exaltation* which commeth of righteouſneſſe, is ſpiritual. 287.a

Of temporal *exaltation*, and of them that are contented with the ſame in degree. 287.a.b

Of the eternal *exaltation*, beholde by fayth and hope. 287.b

Of the *exaltation* of the gate, and what is meant therby. 358.a.b

Excellencie.

Of the *excellencie* of man in his creation, and how he loſt the ſame. 225.b

That wee haue nothing in vs whereby to challenge *excellencie*, and why. 620.b.

Of the *excellencie* of the iuſt, and howe it differeth from that of the vniuſt 225.b

What wee muſt doe to finde *excellencie.* 225.a

That *excellencie* is not attributed to the wicked. 225.b

Of the *excellencie* of one man aboue another, declared by compariſon. 544 a.b

That wee muſt not vaunt of our *excellencie*, but rather humble our ſelues. 599.b. 600.a

Of the lippe of *excellencie* vnfit for a foole. 350.b. 351.a

Of the *excellencie* of the ſpirit, and why the ſame is giuen vs. 362.b

Exceſſe.

The ſcripture forbiddeth *exceſſe* to all men, &c. 625.b

Exceſſe in apparell and fare, forbidden. 556.b

Againſt ſuperfluitie and *exceſſe* of meates & drinkes. 536.a.b.

F.

Face.

Of ſharpening the *Face*, and what is meant thereby. 541.b

Faith.

Faith only without workes is not ynough to ſaluation 144.b

We muſt be armed with a liuely *faith*, if we woulde not ſtande in feare of the wicked. 156.a

Faith and hope are the guides of the righteous mans conſcience. 168.b

Faith is required to the purifying of the hart and conſcience. 413.a

The neceſſitie of *faith*, and that the promiſes of God require the ſame. 130.a

Faith the true foundation of our prayers. 563 b

That mercie is the fruite of *faith*. 327 b

That true and perfect *faith* is not ydle. 318.b

That *faith* is the goodneſſe of our deſires. 380.b

That it is *faith* whereby we finde fauour before God. 32.a

The definition of *faith*, what it is. 12.a

Faithful.

The pure eſtate of the *faithful* is much better than either it ſeemeth or is thought to bee. 129.b

That the *faithful* ought not to feare, howe long and forcibly ſoeuer the rage of the wicked be: and why. 156.a

That none can vaunt himſelfe to bee *faythfull*, vnleſſe hee bee ſkilfull. 458. b. 459. a.

The *faithful* are the temple of GOD. 116.b

The ſundrie deedes of men, whereby to be thought *faithful*. 456.b 457.a

That a *faythful* man is harde to finde 410. b.

That the *faithful* ought not to deſire the eſtimation of the wicked. 53.a

The meaning of theſe wordes, A *faythfull* man ſhall abounde in bleſſings. 572. a.

The cauſe why the poore *faithful* are ſo conſtant in perſecutions. 557.b

That the *faithful* ought to tremble at the iudgementes of GOD, and why. 52.a

We cannot be *faithful* to our neighbors, except we bee led by loue. 178.a

Of the ſpeeches of the *faithful*, whereto they enure their mouthes. 276.a

The proſperous eſtate of the *faythful*, & why it is called flouriſhing. 263.a

The commodities that the *faithful* haue in this life by wiſedome. 47.a.b

Fall.

In what caſes wee may reioice at the *fall* of our enimies. 491.b. 492.a

The *fall* of the iuſt and the wicked, with differences of both. 490.b. 491.a

That it is very dangerous to take pleaſure in the *fall* of ones enimie, and why. 492.a

Falling.

That the *falling* of the wicked beginneth ſometimes in this life, and howe. 64.b

The *falling* of the wicked is ſo ſodaine, that they perceiue it not in this life. 64.b.

Father.

Abraham the *father* of al beleeuers. 131. a.

Nothing doeth more reioice the *father* than to ſee and know that his children do proſper 128. a. Looke *children.*

Unto what maner of men the ſcripture attributeth the name of a *father*. 294. b

What wee muſt doe, that wee may not flye from the preſence of God our *father*. 56 a

That God is our *father*, and why hee calleth vs his ſonnes. 19. a.

Fathers.

Solomons counſel to *fathers* and mothers, for prouyding for their children. 129. b.

An offence or ſinne of *fathers* committed againſt the holy Ghoſt 389. b

The meaning of theſe wordes, The fooliſhe childe is the *fathers* ſorrowe. 389. b. 390. a

Why *fathers* and mothers, &c. ought to bee carefull for their children, &c. 128. a.

The enuie of *fathers* to their children. 60. a.

The greate authoritie of *fathers* liuely deſcribed. 474. b. 475. a

Fauour.

What kind of *fauour* is required among me, and what is to bee gathered by the want of the ſame 26. a. b

Of the *fauour* of men, and the *fauour* of the Lord. 201. b

That we haue great neede of Gods *fauour*, if we be righteous, and why. 201. b

That the good man draweth the *fauour* of the Lord, and how. 201 a. b

That wee ought to deſire and ſeeke *fauour*, & how. 446. a b

Againſt ſuch as ſeeke the hurte of their neighbours, and that they ſhal be depriued of al *fauour*. 194 a

The meaning of this worde *fauour*, and that it is deceitful. 638 a b

The *fauour* of kings compared to a cloude of latter raine, and in what reſpectes. 334. a

Why and for what cauſe *fauour* is attributed to the righteous. 261. a

The meaning of theſe wordes, So ſhalt thou finde *fauour*, &c. 32. a. b

That no people are in leſſe *fauour*, and more deteſtable before men, than ſuch as are giuen to goodneſſe, &c. 32. b

To what end, and for what cauſe Solomon woulde haue vs finde *fauour* before men. 32 b 33. a

That wee muſt ſeeke the *fauour* of God and men, but as not labouring to pleaſe men, &c. 33 a

That we muſt obtaine *fauour* in Gods ſight by mercie and trueth: & whereunto good leſſons are annexed. 33. a.

Feare.

Of the *feare* of the Lord, and what it is. 4. b. 5. a

The *feare* of the Lorde is the chiefe parte of knowledge, and why. 5. a

What manner of *feare* it is that leadeth to repentance. 5. a

A promiſe of comforte made to the faythfull for their comfort againſt *feare*. 18. a

The remedie and meanes to bee of *feare* and to ſcape deſtruction, what it is. 18 a

Why the wicked & obſtinate *feare* nothing. 13. b

In what caſe men bee when they liue without the *feare* of God. 35 b. 36. a

Of the *feare* of the Lord, called an holy feare, and of the contrarie 35. a. b

That ſodaine *feare* is due to them that haue not the feare of God, &c. 48. a

The ſodaine deſtruction of them that *feare* not the Lord 494. b

The daungers and inconueniences that a man is in, being in *feare*. 597. a

The meaning of theſe woordes, The *feare* of a man bringeth a ſnare. 597. a.

The deſtruction of ſuch as through *feare* haue refuge vnto creatures. 597. b

Wiſedome is not without *feare*, nor *feare* without wiſedome. 158. a

The *feare* of the Lord is the way to lengthen our life. 157. b

The vngodly cannot bee without al doubte & *feare*, though they bee too hardie to commit euil. 154. b

The *feare* of fooles and wicked men doeth not auayle them, and why. 154.b. 155.a

To what end the Loꝛd demandeth his *feare* at our handes.399.a

Euil conuerſation is contrarie to the *feare* of God, and why.106.a

A frowarde mouth plainely ſheweth that a man hath not the *feare* of G O D. 106.a

Pryde and arrogancie are euilles cleane contrarie to the *feare* of G O D. 106.a

What bleſſinges are belonging to ſuch as *feare* the Loꝛde.448.a.b

Of *feare* to ſinne, and feare to ſuffer loſſe. 232.b

Feare and humilitie are the wayes to aduauncement.448.b

That they which deſpiſe the *feare* of the Loꝛd are rightly called diſguiſed, and what that is.494.a

The effectes of *feare*, and that no man doeth laugh gladly being in feare.154.a.b

What kinde of *feare* G O D requyꝛeth of vs in keeping his commandements.239. b.240.a

What wee muſt doe, if wee wil bee without *feare*, and free from daunger of Sathan and the woꝛld.159 b

Remedies againſt the *feare* of the wicked. 155.a

The *feare* of the Loꝛde is to hate euill. 105.b

Of the *feare* of the faythfull, and that it is an honourable affection. 266. a. b. 267.a

Notable doctrine concerning the *feare* of the Loꝛd.321.a.b

Of two kindes of *feare*, the one leading to deſpaire, the other to griefe and ſoꝛrowe. 152.b

That we muſt not *feare* the Loꝛde like a cruel tyꝛant, oꝛ ſeuere and ſharpe iudge, and why.158.a

The meaning of theſe woꝛdes, The *feare* of the king is as the roaring of a Lyon.407. a.b.

What *feare* that is, which Solomon calleth the inſtruction of wiſedome.321.a.b.

What they bee that deceiue themſelues, in beleeuing that they *feare* God.254 a.b.

Of the bleſſednеſſe of them that *feare*, and the curſednes of them that *feare* not God. 305.b

Why we make ſmal account of the *feare* of God.305.a

The rewarde of them which *feare* God, and which *feare* him not.254.a

Of a trembling *feare* and a godly feare. 255.a

That in the *feare* of the Loꝛde there is aſſurance.305.a

That God requyꝛeth *feare* at our handes, as hee did of our foꝛefathers, &c.493. a.b.

Howe wee ought to *feare* iudges and magiſtrates 493.b

Notable doctrine touching the *feare* of the Loꝛde, and the feare of the king. 493. b.

The reward and heauie iudgement of them that *feare* not God.399.b

That it is a miſerable thing to reiect the *feare* of the Loꝛd.399.b

That it is not ynough to *feare* God in ſome one parte of our conuerſation. 399. b. 400.a

Of the lodging of him that liueth in Gods *feare*.400.a.b

Solomons woꝛdes impugned, that hee which liueth in Gods *feare*, ſhall lodge where no Plague ſhall viſite him. 400. b.

How we ſhal knowe, whether wee haue the *feare* of God oꝛ not.254.b

The *feare* of the Loꝛde pꝛoceedeth from the knowledge of his woꝛd.123.b

The *feare* and knowledge of God are things ſo knit togither, that the one cannot ſtande without the other.123.b

A definition of the *feare* of God.305.a

Of the *feare* wherwith a foole is taken 266. a.b.267.a

Wee are altogither voide of wiſedome, except wee haue the *feare* of the Loꝛde. 124.a

Infidelles and faithleſſe haue not the *feare* of the Loꝛde, but of toꝛmentes, and why. 124.a

Whether loue and *feare* can ſtande togither. 278.a

The *feare* of the Lorde and the knowledge of holy thinges, is the token and ſigne that ſhall certifie vs whether wee bee refreſhed at wiſedomes table. 123.b

The *feare* of the Lorde comprehendeth vnder it all the ſeruice and honour that we owe vnto God, &c 123.b

To the attaining of wiſedome the *feare* of God is required. 105.b

Of the neceſſitie of the *feare* of the Lorde, and what fruites depende heerevpon. 277 b. 278. a

Of a tormenting feare, and in whome the ſame is founde. 278.a

That the Papiſtes haue not the *feare* of the Lorde, and why. 278.a

The *feare* of the Lorde compared to a welſpring of life, and why. 278.b. 279. a

Of ſundrie meanes whereby wee are admoniſhed in ſcripture to *feare* the Lorde. 567.b. 568.a

Wee muſt perſeuere to the ende in the *feare* of the Lorde. 568.a

What wee muſt do to *feare* God rightly and truly. 568.a

Wherein their felicitie ſtandeth, which doe alwaies *feare*. 568.b

Feete.

Of the *feete* of an whore, and what they ſignifie. 72.b

Our *feete* taken in ſcripture for our affections, and how. 70.a

That *feete* ſwift in running to miſchiefe, are one of the ſeuen thinges which God hateth. 91.a

That the mouth hath feete, and what thoſe feete be. 87.a

Fellovvſhip.

What communion & *fellovvſhip* there ought to be among Chriſtians. 77.a

Flatterers.

The hope of *flatterers* and the ende of the ſame. 171.b

The ordinarie tricke and faſhion of *flatterers* what it is. 420.a

Howe kinges and princes &c. ſhoulde handle *flatterers* and ſuch like catterpillers. 514.a b

That *flatterers* ſeeke the fauour of Kinges by vnlawful meanes. 333.b

In what daunger they are that beleeue *flatterers*, is prooued by examples. 582.b

The dealing of *flatterers* betweene the ſeruant and the Maiſter. 612.a.b

The drift of *flatterers* to make themſelues be thought good men. 356.b

The nature of *flatterers* ſet foorth by Solomon. 352.b

Of the wordes of *flatterers*, ſet foorth by Solomon vnder a compariſon. 339.a.b

Flesh.

By what meanes the *fleshe* laboureth to make the righteous man a ſlaue of ſinne. 169 a

The meaning of Solomon by theſe words, But hee that troubleth his owne *fleshe*, is cruel. 184.b

Of our *flesh* and what the corruption of the ſame worketh in vs. 59.a.b

That wee muſt not feede the *fleshe* in his luſtes and pleaſures, and why. 81. b.

The temptations of the *flesh* to withdrawe vs from wiſedome. 43.a

Follie.

Follie, a great wickedneſſe, and of the danger of the ſame. 381.b

What we muſt doe to roote *follie* out of our hearts. 381.b

Notable doctrine vpon theſe words, To beginne *follie* afreſh. 524.b. 525.a

Of vomitting vp the *follie* of our naturall corruption, notable doctrine. 524.b

The cauſe why wee iudge wiſedome to bee *follie*, &c. 275.b. 276.a

Follie is no ſmall vice, but a wickedneſſe greatly furious, and why. 354.b

A definition of *follie*, ſhewing what it is. 338.b

Of *follie*, and when a man is commonly ſaid to worke it. 267.b

Foole.

Whereto a *foole* ſent in meſſage is compared. 520.b. 521.a

Of anſwering and not anſwering a *foole* after his fooliſhneſſe. 519.b. 520.a.b

Notable doctrine vpon theſe words, A *foole* powreth out al his minde. 586.b. 587.a
Howe harde a thing it is to breake a *foole* of his fooliſhnes, appeareth by compariſon. 544 b 545.a
That it is no contending with a *foole*, and why.585.a.b
Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, The *foole* deſpiſeth his mother.309.a.b
That the mouth of a *foole* is his owne deſtruction, and ho we.367.a.b
The begetting of a *foole*, is the begetting of ſorowe, and howe.359.a.b
What Solomon meaneth in ſaying that the *foole* is careleſſe, &c.266 b
A *foole* in his follie, compared to a Beare robbed of her whelpes.354.

Fooles.

They that rebuke their neighbours through hatred, are *fooles*.146.a
Of ſimple and wicked *fooles*.145.b
Why Solomon calleth the contemners of Gods lawe, *fooles*.99.a
What *fooles* they bee that ſhall die through their owne follie.149.a
What we muſt doe if we wil not be counted *fooles*.587.a
That glorie and promotion is not to be beſtowed vpon *fooles*, and why. 521.b.522.a
A parable in a *fooles* mouth, compared to a thorne in the hande of a drunkarde. 522.a.b
A ſentence in a *fooles* mouth, compared to the lifting vp of a lame mans legges.521.a.b.
The meaning of theſe wordes, Whiſper not in the *fooles* eare.467.b.468.a
Of innocent *fooles*, or ſuch fooles as are eſteemed for maigames to mocke at.242.a
What *fooles* they bee that deſerue greeuous puniſhment.5.b
Of *fooles*, and who are to be reputed ſuche.11.b
Of *fooles* deſpiſing wiſedome, and who bee ſuch.5.a.b
What kind of *fooles* Solomon ſetteth againſt the righteous.26.a
Wee muſt be diligent to reproue and correct *fooles*, if we wil forſake them and their follies.121.a
The way to forſake *fooles*, is to bee inſtructed in the pure word of God, &c.121.a
That there are many *fooles*, yea, euen there, where the Goſpel is preached.54.a
Howe fit the rodde is for the *fooles* backe, appeareth by compariſon.519.a.b
The felicitie of *fooles*, and that it is of ſmall continuance.246.a.b
Howe vainely and idlely *fooles* doe occupie their tongues.363.a
Neceſſarie pointes of doctrine for obſtinate *fooles*.15.a
Why *fooles* are ſaide to ſeeke God, dooing in deede nothing leſſe.15.a

Fooliſh.

Who be *fooliſh*, and ſo accounted, after the ſentence of Solomon.448 a
For what cauſe Solomon calleth man *fooliſh*. 524.b
We are forbidden to be acquainted with the *fooliſh*, and why. 259.a.b
What is the greateſt plague that the *fooliſh* can haue in this life. 259.a
That the *fooliſh* haue no knowledge of God, and why.259.a
That the *fooliſh* haue neither feare of God nor reuerence to his worde, and why.245 b
Who are *fooliſh*, and that wiſdome cryeth vnto them. 11.a
Fooliſhe men are hardie and raſhe to ſpeake hurtful words. this is ſhewed by example. 522.b.523.a
Reaſons why we ſhould not keepe companie with the *fooliſhe*.268.b
That *fooliſhe* men feeling Gods iudgement, doe accuſe him of rigour, &c.381.b
The behauiour of the *fooliſhe* againſt God and his Miniſters.13.a
That the *fooliſh* wil in no wiſe taſt of Gods counſel.13.a
Leſſons for the *fooliſh* to learne at wiſdomes mouth.11.b.12.a

Fooliſhneſſe.

Fooliſhneſſe in wordes or workes, is an argument that we are not wiſe in heart.134.b
The cauſe why *fooliſhneſſe* is founde in the lippes, euen of ſuche among whome true wiſedome is preached and taught.139 b

That the wiſeſt of the worlde are reprooued of *foolishneſſe*, and why. 5 b
The waies to driue *folishneſſe* from the heart of a childe. 456. a
The meaning of theſe wordes, *Foolishneſſe* is borne in the heart of a childe. 456. a
That *foolishneſſe* is ioye to him that lacketh vnderſtanding, and howe. 309. b. 310. a
That the *foolishneſſe* of man peruerteth his way, and how. 381. a. b

Fortune.

That wee muſt attribute nothing vnto *fortune*, but al to Gods prouidence, and why. 130. a

Friend.

The vſe and benefite of a priuie *friend*, and why we vſe ſuch a one. 177. b
That he is no *friende* which loueth not at all times. 357. a
When and at what time the true *friend* doeth chiefly declare his loue, &c. 357. b
Notable doctrine vppon the deceitful mans dealing with his *friend*. 528. a. b
The meaning of theſe woordes, Euerie one is a *friend* to him that giueth. 384. a. b

Friendes.

The meanes that many vſe to get *friendes*. 441. b
The paſſions of *friendes*, ſeparated by diſtaunce of place declared by compariſon. 515. a
Unto whome we ought to ſhewe our ſelues *friendes*. 357. b
Of *friendes* in proſperitie, but not in aduerſitie 357. a
What ſuche as couet to haue many *friendes*, and fewe enemies, muſt doe. 385. a
The meaning of theſe woordes, Goods gather many *friendes*. 382. a. b
Of *friendes*, and what commodities come by them. 378. b. 379. a
Of table *friendes*, and that they are ſoone ſeparated. 378. b
That *friendes* are neerer then brethren, and howe. 378. b. 379. a

Friendship.

That we ought to eſteeme *friendship*, and to ſeeke after it. 306. a. b
That *friendship* is the ſauce which maketh meate good. 306. a
The excellencie and power of *friendshipp*. 306. a
What wee muſt doe, if wee haue *friendship* and peace with al men. 366. b
That if wee will feede at a good banquet, meates muſt bee ſeaſoned with *friendship*. 345. b. 346. a
Of the *friendship* of the world, and who can not obteine the ſame. 30. b. 31. a

Freevvil.

The eſchuing of whoredome commeth not of *freevvil*. 98. a
The feare of the Lorde commeth not of *freevvil*. 123. b
It is not in our *freevvil* to become wiſe of our ſelues. 107. b
Freevvil in men to guide and gouerne themſelues condemned, and why. 106. b. 107. a
The Papiſtes confuted in their doctrine of *freevvil* 168. a
The doctrine of the Papiſtes concerning *freevvil*, manifeſtly diſprooued. 29. b. 30. a
That our *freevvil* is verie ſmal, yea, of no force at al. 533. a
That Solomon ſeemeth to attribute *freevvil* vnto man. 322. b
Againſt ſuch as would winne Paradiſe by their *freevvil*. 49. a

Friers.

Againſt the wiſedome of Monkes and *Friers* in Poperie. 132. b
Wee muſt take heede of Monkes and *Friers*, and why. 936. b

Againſt *Friers*, and that they are vnprofitable and ſleepie dogges. 132.b

Againſt Popiſh *Friers*, and their doctrine of deſertes. 67.b.

Frovvard.

Solomons woordes impugned, ſaying, The *frovvarde* of heart ſhalbee deſpiſed. 204.b. 205.a

The *frovvard* compared to a hunter, and why. 449.a

Who are to bee counted and called *frovvarde* perſons. 341.b. 342.a

The manners and cuſtomes of the *frovvard* and wicked, and what they are. 88. a. b

That leawde thinges are in the heart of the *frovvarde*, and what they be. 87.b

That the *frovvarde* and wicked doe counterfeite them ſelues in diuers ſortes. 87. a.b.

The nature of the *frovvard* heart, and what the ſame is. 358.b

Of the *frovvard*, and that he falleth from the right way. 52.a

That the *frovvarde* are an abhomination to the Lorde, and of threateninges againſt them. 52.a.b

Of ſundrie ſortes of *frovvarde* perſons verie dangerous. 449 a b

What Solomon meaneth by this, That ſnares and thornes are in the way of the *frovvarde*. 449.a

Frovvardneſſe.

Deſtruction is attributed vnto *frovvardneſſe*. 166.a

Howe he which delighteth in *frovvardneſſe* of heart, ordereth his ſpeech. 530.a

Of the *frovvardneſſe* of the mouth, and what is meant thereby. 68.a b.

E.

Gaine.

Greedineſſe of *Gaine*, diſallowed in Magiſtrates, officers, and great men. 316.a.b

Againſt ſuch as are greedie of *gaine*, and who they be. 316.a

Againſt greedineſſe to followe *gaine*. 9.b. 10.a

Gathering.

What is meant by *gatheringe* in ſommer, and watching in harueſt 132.a.b

That there is great wiſedome in *gathering* in due ſeaſon. 132.b

Gentleneſſe.

Of *gentleneſſe*, and that it is neceſſarie for the obteining of honour. 181.b

That we pleaſe men through *gentleneſſe*, and howe. 32.a

Giftes.

The *giftes* and callinges of God, are without repentance. 127.a

Againſt ſuche as perſuade them ſelues that they doe no euil in taking giftes. 360. a

That *giftes* are of power and force to preuaile 360.b

A preſenter of *giftes*, compared to a meſſenger, and in what reſpectes. 373.b. 374.a

Glorie.

The meaning of theſe woordes, The *glorie* of God is to conceale a word. 503.a.b

Of temporal *glorie*, and howe it ſhoulde bee vſed. 371.a.b

The way whereby to attaine and come by *glorie*, what it is. 371.b

What the worldly wiſe do to darken the *glorie* of God. 503.a

The *glorie* giuen to a foole, is like a precious ſtone heaped vp in a heape of ſtones. 521. b. 522.a

That al *glorie* commeth of God, & ſhame of our ſelues. 516.b. 517.a

Of their fall which haue not beene content with their *glorie*. 516.b

That it is no *glorie* when men ſearche their owne *glorie*. 516.b. 517.a

Gluttonie.

Againſt *gluttonie*, and what hurt commeth thereby. 367.b

Gluttons.

Againſt *Gluttons*, and that they are neuer ſatiſfied.209.a
To keepe companie with *gluttons* forbidden, and why.473.b.474.a
Gluttons cannot vſe all meates indifferently with thankeſgiuing.510.b
Gluttons and drunkardes deſtroy themſelues, and howe.510.b
The deſire of vnſatiable *gluttons* what it is.252.a.b
In what thinges *gluttons* doe moſt of all delight.467.a
Againſt *gluttons* and drunkardes.252.a
Of *gluttons* and drunkardes abounding in worldly riches.17.a

God.

The inuiſible properties of *God*, namely his power and Godhead are ſeene, and howe.111.b
There is neither Superiour nor inferiour, higher nor lower in God, &c.110.b
In what reſpect *God* is ſaide to be in a farre countrie from vs.515.a
Howe and when *God* ſeeketh vs, draweth vs vnto him, and holdeth vs faſt.107.b
The omnipotencie, Almightineſſe, and Maieſtie of *God*, notably ſet forth. 601.a.b.602.a.b.603.a.b
The name of *God* what it is, and that no vnderſtanding can attaine to the perfection of the ſame.602.b.603.a
That none knoweth the name of the Sonne of God, and why.603.a.b
The name of *God* the father, and *God* the Sonne, reuealed vnto vs 603.a.b
A neceſſarie leſſon concerning theſe twoo wordes, *God* and Ieſus.603.b
By what meanes *God* ſpeaketh vnto vs.604.a
That it is vnpoſſible to make any likeneſſe or ſimilitude of God, and why.293.a
God compared vnto a wicked Iudge.6.b
That *God* is compared to a ſhielde, & in what reſpectes.22.b
That *God* is a Spirite, and howe wee ought to thinke of him.13.a
Solomons wordes diſprooued, that a good man ſhal rule ouer a wicked.264.b
That patience is the meanes whereby the *good* ouercome the wicked.264.b
Of the vbiquitie of *God*, or his preſence in al places.317.b
God compared to a Merchaunt, and howe.323.a
That *God* ſeeth al thinges, wherin are many notable doctrines.80.a.b
That *God* hath a ſoule, and that the ſame is not parted from the reſt of his eſſence.88.b
What we muſt doe, to finde *God* and his wiſdome truely.258.a
That we cannot ſeeke wiſedome, except wee ſeeke *God*.258.a
Why *God* is called the *God* of conſolation.262.a
Names and titles of *God* attributed vnto him in ſcripture.324.b.325.a
That none can giue vnto *God* titles or names ſo excellent, and why.325.a
That *God* hath no need of any creatures help 325.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, That *God* created al thinges for his owne names ſake.325.a.b

Godfathers.

The dueties of *Godfathers* and Godmothers, and what is required of them.84.a

Good.

A fearefull threatning againſt them that hate the *good*.199.a.b
That wee muſt be careful to doe *good* to our needie neighbours.193.a
The meaning of Solomon by theſe wordes, He that ſeeketh *good* thinges, &c.199.a.b
Howe, and by what meanes wee are made *good* and righteous.27.b
The worde of *good* men may bee founde out in true fayth, &c.27.b
A promiſe made to ſuch as walke in the word of *good* men, and what it is.27.b
Who they bee that are *good* men and righteous.28.a
Where a man ſhoulde finde out the way of *good* men, ſeeing there is none that doeth good, &c.27.b
That the *good* ſhal obtaine a bleſſing of God, and howe.248.a
That we muſt not truſt to the *good* deedes of others.220.a
Hee is *good* whome God maketh partaker of
his

his goodneſſe.248.a
That wee are firſt euil, before wee be *good.* 292.b
That the froward heart findeth no *good*,note what good.358.b
What wee muſt doe to walke in the way of *good* men.30.a
To what ende the *good* and righteous are taken out of this world.29.a.b
The wordes of Solomon impugned, ſaying, The euil ſhal bowe before the *good.* 269.b.
What is meant by this,That a *good* man ſhal liue of his leaues.265.a

Goodneſſe.

What *goodneſſe* is required in vs, and that we haue none of our ſelues.265.a
That our *goodneſſe* can neuer be ſo excellent, that it deſerueth reuerence.270.b

Goods.

Inſtructions teaching vs howe to get *goods.* 248.a
To what ende God ſuffereth vs to bee ſpoyled of our *goods*.249.a
Cfyl gotten *goods*, and the ende of the ſame. 248.a

Goſpel.

The doctrine of the lawe and the *Goſpel*, is called colde meate,and why. 126.a
Of the preaching of the *Goſpel*, to the declaring whereof, both a mouth and wiſdome is promiſed.162.a
The doctrine of the *Goſpel*, is the chiefe part of the bleſſing of the righteous.176.a
Why the *Goſpel* is called a ſounde and wholſome doctrine. 282.b
That there is neither health nor life, but where the *Goſpel* is truely preached.282.b
That wee ought to bee aſſured that wee are the children of God, when wee gladly heare the preaching of the *Goſpel*.66.a
The office of the lawe and the *Goſpell*. 12.a
With what care and diligence, feare and reuerence, we ſhould heare the preaching of the *Goſpel*.21.a.b

Gouernment.

Of *gouernment*, and who are fit and vnfit to gouerne.179.a.b.180.a
Of Gods vniuerſall *gouernment*. 329.b. 330.a
What *gouernment* we muſt folowe, if we wil be exalted.287.a

Gouernours.

Leſſons for *gouernours*, ſet downe by the holie Ghoſt.332.a.b
Of wrath in *gouernours*,and when it is alowable,and not alowable.333.a.b
That temporal *gouernours* ought to attempt nothing in Eccleſiaſtical policie, without the aduice of the ſpiritualtie.288.b
Inſtructions for Kinges, Princes, and *gouernours*.288.a.b
Of gouernment and *gouernours*. 288.a.b
Alterations of *gouernours*, why and from whome they come.558.a.b
The *Gouernours* and Lordes of the world accuſed to be wicked,&c.364.b
What wiſedome that is, which is required in *gouernours*,&c.351.b
What maner of men the *gouernours* of the Church ought to be.4.a

Grace.

Of the continual feaſt of Gods *grace*, & why it is ſo called.304.b
Of the *grace* of the lips, and what is meant by the ſame.453.a.b
Jeſus Chriſt,and al that is his,is ours, thorowe *grace*. 77.a
The *grace* of God compared to a fountaine, howe,and why.377.a.b
Of the lawe of *grace*, and the lawe of ſeueritie.96.a.b

Gracious.

The meaning of Solomons wordes,That a woman muſt be *gracious*.181.a.b
That women muſt not ceaſe to ſhewe them ſelues *gracious*, notwithſtanding the contempt they are in.181.b

Graciouſneſſe.

What *graciouſneſſe* is required in a woman. 181.a.b
What women ſhould doe, if they ſee themſelues diſdained: this concerneth *graciouſneſſe*.181.b

Guide.

That vprightneſſe muſt be our *guide* and gouernour. 166.a

That wee are like blinde men which walke without a *guide*. 165.b

In what caſe we be, beeing left to *guide* our ſelues. 166.a

Into what miſchiefes we fal, when we deſire to *guide* our ſelues. 166.a

H.

Hande.

The meaning of theſe woordes, Though *hande* toucheth *hande*, he ſhal not be vnpuniſhed. 326.b.327.a

Notable doctrine vpon theſe woordes, Laye thy *hande* vppon thy mouth. 623.a.b

What is meant by turning to the right *hand* and to the left. 71.a

What we haue to learne by this, That wiſdome is ſaide to haue a right *hande* and a left. 43.a.b

What is meant by the outſtretched *hande* of wiſedome. 13.a

That the *hande* of wiſedome is ſtretched out diuers wayes. 13.a

God hath many inſtruments to exerciſe the *hande* of wiſedome. 13.a

For what thing the outſtretched *hande* of wiſedome is chiefly to be taken. 13.a

Handes.

What maner of perſons haue *hands* ſheading innocent blood. 90.a

That *hands* ſheading innocent blood, are one of the ſeuen things which God hateth. 90.a.b

Harlot.

The inticements of a *harlot* in talke deſcribed. 100.b

Why Solomon calleth an *harlot* a ſtraunger and forrenner. 25.b

A *harlot* compared vnto an hunter, and why. 94.a.b

Harlots.

What Solomon meaneth by theſe woordes of feeding *harlots*. 581.a

The daunger that commeth by an *harlottes* companie any way vſed. 72.a.b

The ſundrie inticements of *harlots*, & wherein they conſiſt. 25.b

That *harlots* labour, as much as in them lyeth, to deſtroy the image of God, and how. 94.b

That *harlots* are vnſatiable and pitileſſe. 94.a

Haſtie.

A foole preferred before a *haſtie* man, and why. 593.a

The deſcription of a *haſtie* man by his doings. 593.a

That the *haſtie* man ſhalbe curſed of God, and feele his vengeance. 563.a

Of being *haſtie* in wordes, & *haſtie* in deedes. 593.a.b

Hate.

Suche as *hate* their brethren are manſlears, and pray not to God, but againſt themſelues. 138.b

Againſt ſuch as carrie *hate* in their heartes, and diſſemble it. 530.a.b

Hateful.

Of the ſtudie of the *hateful*, and what he ſeeketh. 531.a

Of *hateful* women ſundrie examples, and how troubleſome they are. 620.a

That the malice of the *hateful* ſhalbe diſcouered. 531.a

Of ſeuen abhominations which are in the heartes of the *hateful*. 530.b.531.a

Wee muſt not beleeue him that is *hateful*, though hee ſpeake neuer ſo fayre, and why. 530.b

Haters.

Of two ſortes of *haters*, and that we muſt not be like vnto them. 530.b

Hatred.

Of *hatred*, and what miſchiefes the ſame worketh among men. 138.a.b.139.a

Hatred ſeparateth vs from God, and hindereth vs from hauing acceſſe vnto him. 138.b

What filthineſſe and wickedneſſe there is in *hatred*. 306.a

Admonitions to keepe vs from them which beare vs *hatred*. 306.a

Contention is the fruite of *hatred*, and how. 532.b

Howe and in what ſenſe *hatred* is attributed vnto

vnto God.88.a.b

Of *hatred* againſt the poore, and that ſuche *hatred* is manſlaughter.271.a

Hautineſſe.

The *hautineſſe* of the riche reprooued.450.b.

Health.

What wee muſt doe, if wee deſire *health*. 217.b

Why Solomon calleth the tongue of the wiſe, *health*. 217.a

That the Papiſtes are al deſtitute of *health*, and why.217.b

Of *health* and ſtrength, and that they are the giftes of God.36.b

That we muſt not enuie the *health* & ſtrength of the wicked, and why.36.b

That we cannot deſerue *health* through the good gouernment of our ſelues.36.b

That we muſt aſke *health* of God, who promiſeth *health*, and why. 37.a

Heart.

That the *heart* may be iudged by the outward workes.207.208.a

When the worlde iudgeth the *heart* of man vpright and perfect.215.a

That the *hearte* is made manifeſt by the tongue.218.b

The mouth is the organ of the *heart*. 161.b

Of the *heart* of the vngodly, and that it is nothing worth.147.b.148.a

By outward thinges the vanitie of the *heart* is knowne.148.a

Solomons wordes impugned, ſaying that the preparatiō of the *heart* is in man.322 a

Of a ioyful *heart*, and who haue, and haue it not.301.b.302.a

By what ſignes we may knowe what a man is in *heart*.410.a

Of cleanneſſe of *heart*, and wherein the ſame conſiſteth.453.a

Wherein ſoundneſſe of the *heart* conſiſteth. 282.a.b

Of keeping our *heart*, and that the keeping of the ſame is not in our owne power.67.a.b

The meaning of Solomon, by theſe wordes, Hee that hath a *heart*, &c. 386.a.b.

Of a ſound *heart*, and Solomons meaning by the ſame.282.a

That fewe will hate and abhorre the *heart*, though it bee neuer ſo euill, and why. 90.b

The wayes of a declining *heart*, and what they are. 264.a

That an *heart* imagining wicked enterpriſes, is one of the ſeuen thinges which God hateth, and why.90.b

Heartes.

With what weapons wee muſt keepe our *heartes*.67.a.b

By what meanes wee looſe our *heartes*, and conſequently our life.67.b

The *heartes* of men compared to running water.543.a

Heauen.

Of certaine men which haue bene tranſlated into *heauen*.601.a

What *heauen* ſignifieth, and that it cannot be reached vnto.601.a

Of aſcending vp into *heauen*, and howe the ſame may be compaſſed. 601.a

In what ſenſe the holie Ghoſt is ſaide to deſcende from *heauen*. 601.b

Of our conuerſation in *heauen*, though our bodies be in earth. 601.b

Heauineſſe.

That couetouſneſſe loadeth the heart of man with *heauineſſe*, and howe.224.a

What we muſt doe, if wee will be deliuered from *heauineſſe*, &c.224.b

What we muſt doe, to put away *heauineſſe* of heart.224.a

Againſt *heauineſſe* of heart, and how the ſame is ingendred. 223.b.224.a

Heretikes.

Heretikes are to bee holden for deſperate, and howe they ought to bee vſed. 121.b. 122.a

Holineſſe.

What wee muſt doe to be *holineſſe* vnto the Lord.424.a

The meaning of theſe wordes, It is a ruine for a man which deuoureth *holineſſe*. 424.a

Honour.

Man naturally deſireth to bee exalted vnto *honour*.164.a. Looke *pride*.

The *honour* that women ſhal attaine vnto, if they bee gracious, ſet downe in pointes. 181.b
The meanes that many vſe to get themſelues goods and *honour*. 448.a.b
Wherein the *honour* of children to their parentes, doeth conſiſt. 575.a
What *honour* God would haue vs to doe vnto him. 424.a
The way to attaine vnto *honour*, is to be gracious. 181.a
Of the *honour* of the humble, and ſuche as feare the Lorde. 448.b
The cauſe why we feare not to depriue God of his *honour*. 424.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, The Kinges *honour* is to ſearch out a word. 503.b
Notable admonitions teaching vs howe to come to *honour*. 321.b
What we muſt doe, if wee wil be exalted to perpetual *honour*. 469.a
What that *honour* is, which is contrarie to pouertie and ſhame. 244.a
That *honour* is vnſeemely for a foole, and to what vnſeaſonable thinges ſuche honour is compared. 517.b.518.a
Meanes and wayes to attaine to true riches and *honour*. 243.b
Howe to behaue our ſelues towardes our neighbour, for to *honour* God. 284.a
That the moſt wicked wil make a ſhewe that they are zealous of the *honour* of God, and why. 283.a
Unto what *honour* wiſdome doth exalt them that exalt her. 59.a
Howe and in what reſpectes we giue our *honour* vnto others. 73.b.74.a
Of the principal *honour* which we can do vnto God. 283.a b
Of the *honour* of the righteous, and where the ful poſſeſſion of the ſame is. 54.a
What we muſt doe to obteine the *honour* of the iuſt and righteous. 54.a
That we muſt embrace wiſedome, if we wil come vnto *honour*. 58.b
What *honour* the ſame is, that is promiſed to the wiſe, and whereunto it is compared. 46.b

Hope.

We muſt haue *hope* in affliction, becauſe of the infirmitie of the fleſhe. 167.a
Fayth and *hope* are the guides of the righteous mans conſcience. 168.b
That there is no man in this world, but liueth in ſome *hope*. 171.a
A deſcription of the vaine *hope* of the wicked. 171.a.b
The *hope* of flatterers, and the end of them. 171.b
How, and after what ſort the *hope* of the righteous periſheth. 171.b.172.a
Of the *hope* of the wicked. 190.a
Of the *hope* of the righteous, and in what reſpect it ſeemeth nothing worth. 189.b
Of deferred or prolonged *hope*, and that it is the fainting of the heart. 239.a.b
That the Saintes, in looking for that which they *hope* for, doe languiſh, &c. 239.a
Of the *hope* of them that feare God. 472.a.b
That where *hope* is prolonged, patience is neceſſarie. 239.a
What we muſt doe to be aſſured of a ſtrong *hope*. 278.b
That they which are giuen vnto wickednes, can not *hope*, and why. 285.a
Of the *hope* of the righteous euen in death. 285.a
Hope onely in God, confoundeth not. 277.b
That a ſtrong *hope* is to be found in the feare of the Lorde. 277.b
Of *hope* in afflictions, and that it maketh not aſhamed. 56.b
Of the *hope* of the faithful, and how effectual the ſame is. 46.b

Houſe.

What Solomon meaneth by theſe woords, He that troubleth his owne *houſe*, ſhal inherite the wind. 195.b.196.a
What wee haue to learne by this, that the ſtate of the wicked, is compared to an *houſe*. 262.b
What is meant by deſtroying the *houſe* of the proude. 314.a.b
That the wicked build their *houſe* with iniuries, wronges, blood and murther, &c. 314.b

Humble.

Of ſuch as would be eſteemed *humble*, and yet burſt with pride. 165.b

That riches doe accompanie and folow the *humble*.165.b
That the *humble* ſhalbee farre from ſhame, and ſhalbee crowned with immortal glorie.165.b

Humilitie.

Of the *humilitie* of hypocrites, and who bee ſuch.165.b
Humilitie much commended, and not vnrewarded.165.a
Exhortations to *humilitie*.237.b.238.a
A promiſe made to ſuch as imbrace *humilitie*.165.a
The rewarde of ſuch as are indued with *humilitie*.448.a.b
Humilitie and feare are the wayes to aduauncement.448.b
Exhortations vnto *humilitie*, and that it goeth before honour.321.b
Wherein true *humilitie* conſiſteth, and that it is to be imbraced.506.a.b
Of true and ſpiritual humilitie, and why the holy Ghoſt inuiteth vs thereunto 506.a
Exhortations to *humilitie*, againſt hautineſſe of heart, and pryde of minde.505.b
Of *humilitie* and an exhortation thereuntoo. 53.b.

Husbands.

Of the duties of *husbands* required towards their wiues.78.b
Leſſons of wiſedome for married men, or *husbands* to learne, if they haue daintie dames to their wiues.102.a
Exhortations vnto *husbandes* concerning their dueties.377.b
How farre foorth, and in what reſpects *husbands* ſhoulde truſt their wiues. 629. a.b.
That *husbands* muſt beare with their wiues. and in what caſes.637.b
The duetie of good wiſe *husbands* towardes their wiues.629.a.b

Hypocriſie.

Hypocriſie will alwaies appeare holy & wiſe, and not fooliſh.134.b
The rebuke of *Hypocriſie*, &c and what euill commeth thereof.136.b.137.a
The danger of *hypocriſie* or diſſimulation. 145.a.b
That there is ſome *hypocriſie* in all eſtates, yea too much 173.b
Which is the moſt dangerous *hypocriſie* of al the reſt.173.b.174.a
By what thinges *hypocriſie* is knowne. 530.b
The horrible Plagues which haue followed *hypocriſie*.615.a
That *hypocriſie* muſt needes fil al places, and why.173.a

Hypocrites.

Hypocrites counterfeit ſaintes and Lambes, and by what meanes.434.a
Hypocrites belye the holy Ghoſt, and reſemble Judas.145.a
Of the humilitie of *hypocrites*, and who bee ſuch.165.b
Againſt *hypocrites*, which make themſelues beleeue that God is their debter.21.a
Of *hypocrites* which perſwade themſelues to bee pure in their owne eyes. 614. b. 615.a
That the world doeth flowe with *hypocrites*, The ſcripture teſtifying no leſſe 173.a
That we muſt haue care to take heede of *hypocrites*, and how we ſhoulde come by that care.173.b
The mouth of *hypocrites* compared to a ſword.173.b
Hypocrites, which loue to be ſeene and prayſed, reproued.429.b
Hypocrites called corrupt ſiluer, by compariſon.504.b
Hypocrites condemned, notwithſtanding their fayre ſhewe of holineſſe and religion. 173.b
What we muſt doe, that *hypocrites* may not hurt vs.173.b
Unto what the eſcaping of the danger of *hypocrites* is to be imputed.174.a.

I.

Idleneſſe.

Againſt *Idleneſſe*.231.b
Idleneſſe reproued, and labour commended by a forefolde compariſon. 620. b. 621.a
Againſt *Idleneſſe* or ſlouthfulneſſe. 130. b.

The inconueniences that folowe *idlenes* and ſlouth.132 b

Againſt *idleneſſe*, and the rewarde of the ſame.571.b

Of the bread of *idleneſſe*, and who eateth not thereof.636.b.637.a

Idolatrie.

Idolatrie doeth comprehende in it al kinde of ſinnes 608.b

Idolatrie an enimie to the true ſeruice of God.608.b

The abuſe of riches to *Idolatrie*, ſhewed by examples.610.a

What wil happen vnto vs, if we turne to ſuperſtition and *idolatrie*.45.b.

Ielouſie.

Ielouſie, and what it worketh in the heart of him that loued his wife before ſhe plaide the whore.98.b.

Ignorance.

That *ignorance* is vnprofitable and hurtful. 200.a

What *ignorance* that is which is humblenes before God.533.a

Repentance a remedie againſt the not imputing of ignorance.126.b

Ignorance is not imputed vnto the faithful. 533.a

Ignorance is dangerous, and excuſeth not the ignorant.126.a.b

Of *ignorance*, & remedies againſt the ſame. 397.a

That al men couet to ſeeme wiſe, and to abhorre *ignorance*.362.a.b.

Impatience.

Of *impatience*, and that ſuch as are weake amongeſt Gods children are tempted therewith.38.b.

Inconſtancie.

Of *inconſtancie*, and who haue it in them. 218.b

Our *inconſtancie* the cauſe of our great trouble and moleſtation.538.a

The *inconſtancie* of men taxed by way of compariſon.536.b.537.a.b.

Indignation.

That the hope of the wicked is *indignation*, and how.190.a

By what kinde of wayes wee ſhal auoide *indignation*.190.a

Ingratitude.

Of *ingratitude*, both againſt God and our neighbour.270.b.271.a.

Iniquitie.

In what ſenſe it is ſaide that we worke none *iniquitie*.220 b

The meaning of this place, But horror is to them that worke *iniquitie*.437 a

What is meant by theſe woordes, to drinke *iniquitie*, and who doe ſo.521.a

Howe and in what reſpectes *iniquitie* is not imputed to the iuſt.220.b

Who is a man of *iniquitie* and violence. 342.a

Solomons wordes impugned, ſaying, There ſhal no *iniquitie* come to the iuſt.220.a.

Innocent.

Of hauing pitie on the *innocent*, a general doctrine.486.b

How ill the *innocent* are vſed and intreated at the hands of the wicked.434.a

In what reſpect the *innocent*, though they dye, are notwithſtanding ſaued, &c. 422.b

The number of the righteous and *innocent* very ſmal.578.a

That wee are not *innocent* before the iudgement of God, though we ſeeme ſo in mans reaſon.9.b

That the worlde afflicteth not his owne to ſpare the *innocent*.438.b

Of the *innocent*, and howe wee ought to vſe them.9.a.

Inſtruction.

Of *inſtruction* and reformation, either receiued or refuſed.144.a.b

Foure of the ſmalleſt beaſts of the earth, of whome Solomon would haue vs learne *inſtruction*.620 a.b

What wee muſt doe, if wee wil keepe *inſtruction*, and not forſake correction.145. a.

The end of *inſtruction* is to bee wiſe & learned.114.a

Without *inſtruction*, without wiſedome. 114.a

Much excellent doctrine touching *inſtruction*.200.b

What we muſt doe to receiue the *inſtruction* of the wiſe.240.b

Of *inſtruction*, the neceſſitie thereof, and wherein it conſiſteth.2.b
That we cannot receiue *inſtruction*, if we be giuen to earthly and worldly things, and why.2.b
Examples of ſuch as haue refuſed *inſtruction*.244.a
Many neceſſarie doctrines concerning *inſtruction*.5.b.6.a.b.
That ſuch as neuer eſteeme *inſtruction* are not meete to haue authoritie ouer others. 228.b
In what pointes *inſtruction* conſiſteth. 228.a
The promiſe of life made vnto thoſe that receiue inſtruction.81.b
What death is denounced againſt them that neglect and contemne *inſtruction*.81.b
Wherein conſiſteth *inſtruction*.200 b
That the greateſt part of the world wanting *inſtruction* muſt needs periſh, & why. 82.a
At what age one is capable of *inſtruction* and knowledge.450.a
How we muſt ſpare our ſelues to receiue *inſtruction*.228.b
Threatenings againſt ſuch as refuſe *inſtruction*.243.b
That *inſtruction*, without the working of the holy Ghoſt, is dead, &c.240.b
Of refuſing & receiuing *inſtruction*. 294.a b.
That the *inſtruction* of the wiſe is a wellſpring of life, and how.240.b
That *inſtruction* naturally doeth diſpleaſe al, and why.299.b
What manner of perſons they ought to bee, which take vpon them the *inſtruction* of others.240.b.241.a
Of the *inſtruction* of the Prieſtes and Doctors of the Gentils.403.a
What *inſtruction* or doctrine it is that leadeth to error.403.a.b
Solomon deſpyſed not the *inſtruction* of his mother, &c.624.a
Whence it is that men hate *inſtruction*. 75.a

Inſtructions.

Three neceſſarie *inſtructions* teaching vs to acknowledge the Lorde in al our waies. 35.a.

Integritie.

Integritie and vprightneſſe, vertues inſeparable.166.a.b
The *Integritie* of the Patriarches.166 b
God giueth *integritie* and vprightnes. 166.b
Wherein *integritie* and vprightneſſe doe conſiſt.166.b
The force and power of *integritie* & vprightneſſe in Iob.166.b
Who they be that walk in *integritie*, and that ſuch are iuſt.411.a
A ſingular bleſſing for ſuch as walke in *integritie*.411.b
Notable doctrine touching *integritie* of life. 411.a.b.

Intemperance.

A phraſe of ſpeeche vſed to expreſſe the *intemperance* of men 625.b.

Inuocation.

Of *inuocation* or calling vppon GOD. 15.a.b.

Ioy.

Of *ioy*, and wherein true *ioy* conſiſteth.301.b.302.a
That the *ioy* of the world is nothing but ſorrow, and why.302.b
Of *ioy* in wordes, in the word of God ſpecially.311.b.312.a.

Ioyes.

Two kinde of *ioyes*, the one worldly and carnall, the other ſpirituall and diuine. 302.a.

Iudge.

That it is a dangerous matter to haue to do with an ignorant *Iudge*.374.a
What the office of a *Iudge* requireth. 374. a.b.
The office of a *Iudge* what it is, and wherein it ſtandeth.488 a.b.

Iudges.

A doctrine concerning *Iudges* & magiſtrates. 9.a
A complaint againſt *Iudges* & magiſtrates. 487.a.b
That *Iudges* and magiſtrates ought not to haue reſpect of perſons, and why.495.a.
A complaint againſt *Iudges* and gouernors, &c. for neglect of iuſtice and equitie.628. a.b.
Admonitions to *Iudges* and gouernours, &c. to open their mouth for the dombe, &c. 627.b.628.a.b.

Eternall death threatened againſt wicked *Iudges*,&c.436.a.b
Againſt wicked *iudges* which take gifts.360.a.b.
That *iudges* which receiue gifts are theeues and murtherers,&c.360.a.b
The wickedneſſe of corrupt *iudges* diſcouered by Solomon.360.b
An admonition to *iudges* about the adminiſtration of iuſtice.360.b
Of wicked and parciall *iudges* lead by ſome corrupt affection.366.a
Reaſons why *iudges* ought to iudge euery man rightfully.374 a.b
Againſt ſuch *iudges* as puniſhe theft more ſharply than adulterie.96 a
Corrupt *iudges* reproued for their iniuſtice.373.b
Wicked *iudges* and magiſtrates called great men,and why.374 a
A notable leſſon for *iudges* and magiſtrates, touching the abaſing of themſelues.374.a.

Iudgement.

Of the ſeate of *iudgement*, what it ſignifieth, and who muſt ſit in it.412.a.b
Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, To change *iudgement*,&c.626.a.b
To walke in the path of *iudgement* & iuſtice, what it is.109.a
That wee muſt bee armed our ſelues, & doe what we can to arme others with *iudgement* and righteouſneſſe.109 a
What is to bee done for the eſtabliſhing of right *iudgement* and opinion.172.a
Wee muſt take heede howe wee leane to the *iudgement* of our eyes,and why.141.b.
What kinde of people or perſons are ſaide to be of a froward *iudgement*.105.b
That the *iudgement* of the world is not to be truſted,and why.189 b
Againſt parcialitie in *iudgement*.208.a
The dooing of iuſtice and *iudgement* better than ſacrifice 429.a.b
Wherein conſiſteth the right vnderſtanding of *iudgement*.560.b.561.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, Euery mans *iudgement* commeth of the Lorde. 598.b.
The meaning of theſe worde, It is not good to knowe any mans face in *iudgement*, 145.a.b
Whome Solomon meaneth, when he ſaith, they vnderſtande not *iudgement*.560.b.
That the worlde is much voide of ſounde *iudgement*,and why.95.b
Notable doctrine vppon theſe wordes, A king by *iudgement* mainteineth the Countrie.581.b.582.a.b
The meaning of Solomon,ſaying, that they may keepe the wayes of right *iudgement*.23.a
Againſt ſuch as peruert *iudgement*. 360 a.b.

Iudgementes.

That *iudgements* in old time were holdē in the gates,&c.270.a
The *iudgements* of God againſt the ſcornefull.404.b.405.a
That the faithfull ought to tremble at the *iudgements* of God,and why.52.a
That God executeth his *iudgementes* vppon the righteous for their trial.199.a
Howe wee muſt examine the *iudgementes* of God.325.b.326.a

Iuſt.

The meaning of theſe wordes,There ſhalbee an end for the *iuſt*,&c. and no ende of the euil man.493.a
That the *iuſt* are ſooneſt oppreſſed, and of their feebleneſſe.490.a
Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, The iuſt man inſtructeth the houſe of the wicked.434.b.435.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, Hee that is firſt in his owne cauſe, is *iuſt*.374.a.b
Of the falling downe of the *iuſt* man before the wicked.516.a
Why God ſuffereth the *iuſt* to ſinne ſometimes grieuouſly.490.b.491.a
The meaning of theſe wordes,The *iuſt* man falleth ſeuen times,&c.490.a.b.

Iuſtice.

Iuſtice peruerted, and by what meanes. 487.a
What is the cauſe of reioycing in them that doe *iuſtice*.437.a
Vnto whome the adminiſtration of *iuſtice* belongeth,and what foloweth the neglect of the ſame.432.a.b

Iuſtice taken for the obedience to Gods voice.287.a.b
Wherein gouernours and magiſtrates obſerue and breake *iuſtice*.436.b.437.a
That they which folow *iuſtice*, are moſt commonly ſcorned.287.a.

Iuſtification.

Of the *iuſtification* of the wicked, and that it is againſt God.356.a.b
Of *iuſtification* obtained by the remiſſion of our ſinnes.327.b.

K.

King.

When and at what time a *king* doeth truely reigne like a *king*, and when lyke a tyrant.107.a

Kings.

That *kings* and Rulers ought not to bee furious and cruel.333.a
Of the duetie of *kings* notably deſcrybed. 331.a
What manner of men *kings* ought & ought not to haue about them.333.a
Of wrath in *kings*, and when it is alowable, and not alowable.333.a.b
Leſſons for *kings* ſet down by the holy Ghoſt. 332.a.b
Notable doctrine for *kings*, &c. touching their conuerſation.625.a.b
Certaine circumſtances concerning *kings* worthie to be conſidered 625.b.626.a
It is not lawefull to rebell againſt *kings*, though they bee wicked, and why. 107. b.
The cauſes why God remoueth and taketh away *kings* often.558.a
The great eſtimation of *kings* in the world. 427.b.428.a
It is neceſſarie that *kings* ſerue god in truth. 426.a
That *kings* haue neede of wiſedom, and why. 424.b
That *kings* ought to bee mortall enimies to the wicked, &c.424.b
God giueth vnto *kings* his owne titles of honour.427.b
God inclineth and turneth the heartes of *kings* diuers wayes whether hee will. 428.b
God hath power to pull downe the hautie hearts of *kings*.428.a
That *kings* are not culpable when they doe euil, ſeeing God inclineth their heartes thereunto, &c.428.b
What *kings* muſt doe, if they woulde reigne long in peace.425.b
The hearte of *kings* compared to riuers of water, and how.428.a
What *kings* & iudges haue iudged the poore in truth.589.a
A bleſſing pronounced to come to ſuch *kings* as iudge the poore in truth.589.a
The hearte of *kings*, &c. compared to the heauen in height, and the earth in depth. 504.a
Of the generall care and wakefulneſſe which ought to bee in *kings*. 505. a. b.
How and in what ſorte *kings* ſhoulde behaue themſelues towardes the wicked.333.a. b and how towards the good.334.a
What danger inſueth if *kings* bee giuen to wine.626.a
How and in what reſpects *kings* are forbidde̅ to drinke wine.625.b
What kinde of *kings* they bee which abhorre the wicked, &c.453.a
Foure ſeueral points to be marked touching the heart of *kings*.504.a.b
What *kings* ought to learne and followe of their predeceſſors.503.a
What maner of perſons *kings* chiefly chooſe to be neere about them.453.a

Kiſſe.

That an honeſt woman cannot *kiſſe* a ſtranger without ſome ſhame.100.b
Who it is that doeth *kiſſe* her which anſwereth with vpright words.497.b
To what kinde of *kiſſe* we are inuited in the ſcripture.497.b.498.a

Kiſſes.

The ſundrie ſorts of *kiſſes*, and the ende why *kiſſes* are giuen and taken.497.b
Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, The *kiſſes*, of an enimie are harde.535.b
Of vnſhamefaſt *Kiſſes*, and that they are dangerous and dannable.72.a

In what caſe they ſhalbe, that delight in the *kiſſes* of an harlot. 72.b.

Knovvledge.

Knovvledge is a neceſſarie prouiſion, and how a wiſe man eſteemeth of the ſame. 140.b.

The lacke of *knovvledge*, and the danger therupon depending. 141.a

That we muſt be liberal of our *knovvledge*, to the benefiting of others therby. 296.a.b

Our *knovvledge* muſt be communicated vnto others, that they may haue benefite thereby. 140.b

What maner of man Solomon meaneth to be a man of *knovvledge*. 258.b

What wee ought to doe to declare that wee haue great neede of the gift of *knovvledge*. 20.a

That *knovvledge* ought not to be kept ſecret. 221.b.222.a

What *knovvledge* it is whereby the wiſe man will worke. 242.a

The commendation and neceſſitie of *knovvledge*. 200.a

The fooliſhe lacking *knovvledge* worketh his owne deſtruction, and howe. 140.b. 141.a

What we muſt doe to learne howe to guyde our ſoules by *knovvledge*, &c. 291.a

What are the principall organs and inſtruments to ſet forth *knovvledge*. 296.b

What we haue to learne by the compariſon of *knovvledge* vnto ſeede. 297.a

Circumſtances depending vpon true *knovvledge*. 362.b

That wee haue neede of increaſe of *knovvledge*. 302.b.303.a

Of the certaine and infallible *knovvledge* of God, from which nothing is hidde. 487.b.

What is the cauſe that *knovvledge* is not vſed ſo much as it ought. 291.b.

What *knovvledge* that is, whereunto the eies of God haue regard. 454 a.b

Of the *knovvledge* of ſaintes, and why it is ſo called. 600.b

That *knovvledge* is a faire poſſeſſion, and why fewe doe attaine to it. 373.a

Of the *knovvledge* of liberal arts, which are the giftes of God. 373.a

A leſſon for ſuch as haue *knovvledge* in Philoſophie, not to be highminded. 45.b

The way to attaine vnto true *knovvledge*, & wherein it ſtandeth 4.b

Of the tree of *knovvledge* of good and euill, differing from the tree of life. 44.a.b.

Of the true *knovvledge* of God, and what excellent benefites followe the ſame. 21.a.

That without *knovvledge* children become ſtiffenecked, &c. 3.a

What is needful for vs to doe, if we be void of *knovvledge*. 3.a

The *knovvledge* and vnderſtanding of *Chriſtians* and what it is. 2 a.b.

L.

Labour.

A commendation of *labour*, and of thoſe that doe vſe it. 85.a

Man muſt worke and *labour* according to the time and ſeaſon of the yeere. 132.a

Labour is a burthen which the Lorde hath laide vpon vs. 131.a

Neceſſarie points of doctrine concerning *labour*. 182.b.183.a

The neceſſitie of *labour*, and that it is the decree of God the father. 131.b

We muſt not *labour* for feare of being poore, nor with a deſire to bee riche, and why. 130.b

Labour putteth not away pouertie, except God bleſſe our *labour*. 131.a

The good and euill that is gotten and auoyded by ſpending the time in *labour*. 132.b

Of the man which cannot *labour*, and howe he is to be intreated and vſed. 182.a

The *labour* of the righteous wherein it is employed. 144.a

Of *labour*, and that neceſſitie is laide vppon man to worke. 182.a

The ende why wee *labour*, what it is. 185.b.

What wee muſt doe if wee will not looſe our *labour*. 184.b

It is not neceſſarie that all men occupye themſelues in bodily *labour*.182.b

An exhortation vnto *labour*, and a promiſe thereunto annexed.208.b

Exhortations to *labour*.232.a

That he which neglecteth *labour* is deſtitute of vnderſtanding, and the iſſues of the ſame.209.a.b

Rules to followe, if in dooing any thing wee wil not looſe our *labour*.448.a.b

The commendation of rurall *labour* or huſbandrie.498.b

Reaſons inducing and drawing men to *labour* in their ſeueral callings.409.a

The large ſignification of this woorde *labour*, and what is meant by Winter. 407.b

That ſtrength & *labour* is taken for the goods that a man getteth by his worke, to ſuſtaine life.74.a

By what reaſons we are moued & prouoked to apply and ſet our ſelues to *labour*.339.b.340.a

Chiefe and ſpecial cauſes inducing vs to *labour* and trauel.346.b

Labour commended vnto vs by ſundrie reaſons.336.a.b

What wee muſt doe, if wee will haue God to bleſſe our *labour*.274.a.b

Labour commended and commanded vnder notable compariſons.621.a b

Solomons wordes impugned, ſaying, in all *labour* there is abundance.274.a

The *labour* of a man is for his mouth, &c. 16.b.

Labours.

Diuerſe vocations, diuerſe *labours*. 182.b.

The *labours* of the wicked, and how they are recompenſed.16.b.17.a

Lampe.

The ſundrie vſes of a cleere ſhyning *lampe*. 425.a

The worde of God compared to a *lampe*, and why.425.a

The meaning of theſe woordes, The *lampe* of the Lorde is the ſoule of man, &c. 425.a.

Why the lawe is not vnto vs a cleere *lampe*, to reioice and quicken vs.425.b

The meaning of this woorde *lampe* in ſcripture.421.a

What is threatened vnto vnrulie children vnder this worde *lampe*, taken for iſſue and poſteritie.421.a

That this word *lampe* ſignifieth ioy and proſperitie.420 b.

Lavve.

The *lavve* is the rule of perfect righteouſneſſe.168.a

We ought not to ſeparate the *lavve* from the promiſes.425.b

That wee are accurſed and condemned by the *lavv*, and why.425 a

What Solomon meaneth by this woorde *lavv*, in ſaying, he that kepeth the *lavv*, &c. 561.b.562.a

What children muſt doe if they will keepe the *lavv* wel.562.a

Who they are that forſake the *Lavve* after the ſentence of Solomon.559. b. 560. a.

What it is to forſake the *lavve*, and who keepe it.560 a

What is required of vs towards the keeping of the *lavve*.591.b

Why the *lavv* which condemneth adulterers is compared vnto fire.95.a

That the *lavve* foloweth the nature of the lawgiuer, and how.95.a

Why the length of our life is attributed vnto the *lavve* and the commaundementes. 30.b

The office of the *Lavve* and the Goſpel. 12.a

What wee are bounde to doe vnto our parents by the *Lavve* of nature. 613. b. 614.a

Of the greateſt point in the *lavve*, and what the ſame is.327.a

Of the *Lavv* of God, many notable and ſingular doctrines.31.a b

The *Lavve* of GOD is the way of good men.30.a

The manner how we ſhoulde not forget the *lavve* of God.30.a

The *lavv* deuided into mercy and truth. 31. a
Of the *lavve* of grace and the *lavve* of ſeueritie. 98. a. b.

Learning.

The meaning of theſe woordes, And the eare of the wiſe ſeeketh *learning*. 373. b.

Liberal.

What benefites God beſtoweth vpon vs for being bountiful and *liberal*. 191. a
Who are *liberal*, and what promiſes are made vnto ſuch. 191. a
Perſuaſions to moue vs to bee *liberal*. 192. b.
That Chriſt admoniſhed his diſciples to bee *liberal*, and how. 194. a.

Liberalitie.

The praiſe of *liberalitie*, and the profit which it bringeth to ſuch as vſe it 128. b
Againſt ſuch *liberalitie* as conſiſteth only in promiſes. 509. a
Perſuaſions to induce vs to *liberalitie*. 193. a.
What ought to be our behauiour if wee bee diſpoſed to vſe *liberalitie*. 509. b.

Libertie.

When and in what caſes we ſhew our ſelues to haue true *libertie* and freedome. 592. a
That we are not at *libertie* of our ſelues, neither can be. 592. a
Of *libertie*, and the commodities of the ſame, and that there is nothing better. 363. b. 364. a
Of corporal and ſpiritual *libertie*, and how wee are depriued of the ſame. 363. b. 364 a.

Lier.

That a *lier* ſhal not eſcape vnpuniſhed. 383. a. b. 386 b. 387. a
What it is to make God a *lier*, & what manner of perſons doe ſo. 298. a. b.

Liers.

That euerie man is a *lier*, and who are the greateſt *liers*. 145
That the world is ful of *liers* from the prince to the people. 348. a. b
That *liers* bee daungerous, and why. 348. b.
What wee muſt doe, if wee wil not bee called *liers*, 348. b.

Lies.

Lies againſt God, and *lies* againſt our neighbour. 232 b
That we loue *lies* in two ſortes. 232. a. b
Of *lies*, and when wee hate to heare them. 232. a. b
That *lies* are in fained and counterfeite workes, and why. 224. b
Againſt ſuch as ſpeake *lies*, and that God wil puniſh them ſeuerely. 89. a. b
Of the meate of *lies*, what it is, &c. and of not eating the ſame. 465. a.

Life.

Of two ſorts of people which are out of the way of *life*. 144. b
Euerlaſting *life* followeth the promiſe of earthly and temporal *life*. 29. a
Who they bee that are aſſured of euerlaſting *life*. 29 a
That the length of *life* ſtandeth not in the multitude of yeeres, and in what. 93. a.
What we muſt doe if we deſire *life*, and abhorre death. 29. a. b. 30. a
He that findeth wiſdome, findeth fauour and *life*. 115. a
Life is not deſerued, but commeth of fauour, and why. 114. b
That the *life* of the wicked, though they liue many yeeres, is not to bee counted long. 158. a
Of the *life* of the ſoule, promiſed to ſuch as embrace wiſedome. 46. b
Why the worlde which perſecuteth the wiſe doeth not ſee the *life* of the ſoule, &c. 46. b.
Death commeth by deſert, but *life* by promiſe. 114. b
Why and wherefore eternall *life* is called a reward. 185. b
Where *life* is founde without the danger of death. 227. a
Of the way leading to *life*. 227. a
Of *life* eternal, and *life* temporal. 186. a. b
That temporall *life* is not without death. 227. b
Why Solomon ſignifieth the fruition of eternal life by eating. 229 b
That where there are no wiſe men, there is no ſpring of *life*, &c. 241. a

The Table.

In what thinges worldlinges thinke that *life* conſiſteth. 293.a

That this preſent *life* is counted a bitter and troubleſome death. 282.a

Our ſtate & condition in this *life* liuely diſciphered by compariſon. 539.b

What we muſt doe, if we wil doe wel before we die and depart this *life*. 607.b

Two thinges moſt neceſſarie for this preſent *life*. 607.a.b

The promiſe of *life* to a ſounde heart, with an aduertiſement thereunto annexed. 282.a.b

What thinges are neceſſarie for the *life* of the ſoule and bodie. 608.a.b. 609.a. 610.b.

Life ſtandeth onely in the way of wiſedome. 60.b

What we muſt doe, if wee deſire long *life*. 59 b

That we loue nothing ſo naturally, as this preſent *life*. 386.a

Of the ſpring of *life*, what it is, and how we ſhoulde attaine vnto it. 338.a

What wee muſt doe, that the ſpring of *life* may not die in vs. 338.a

The meaning of theſe wordes, The feare of the Lorde bringeth a man to *life*. 399.a

The *life* preſent, but a ſhewe of the *life* to come. 399.a

The *life* of them that feare God, is in heauen. 399.a.b

That we make this earthly *life* miſerable, by defiling it by our ſinnes. 66.b

That a miſerable and painful *life* is counted no *life*, but death. 67.a

Light.

The meaning of Solomon by theſe wordſ, The *light* of the righteous reioyceth, &c. 236.b

Of *light*, and who are compared, and called by the name of *light*. 236 a.b

Of the *light* of the wicked, and that it ſhalbe put out. 493.a

The meaning of theſe wordes, The *light* of the eyes reioyceth the heart. 318.b. 319.a

Lippes.

Againſt wicked and vngodly *lippes*, and that they ought to be puniſhed. 231.a

Of being ſnared by the ſinne of the *lippes*, and what it meaneth. 210.b. 211.a

What we muſt doe, to be deliuered from lying *lippes*. 211.b

Of the *lippes* of the wiſe, and the *lippes* of the fooliſh. 296.b. 297.a

What is meant by the talk of the *lippes* which bringeth want. 275.a

The wicked mans *lippes* compared to a burning fire, and howe. 341.a.b

Of the ſweeteneſſe of the *lippes*, and what is meant by the ſame. 337.b

Lot.

What doctrine is to bee gathered out of this ſentence, The *lot* cauſeth contention to ceaſe. 375.a b

Why God ordeined that the lande of Canaan ſhould be diuided by *lot*. 375.a

Lottes.

The antiquitie or ancientneſſe of caſting *lots* 345.a

That it is lawfull to vſe *lotterie*, and *lottes*, with certaine caueats. 345.a

That we muſt attribute to Gods prouidence whatſoeuer we obteine by *lottes*. 345.a.b

Loue.

That mutuall *loue* can not bee mainteined without vnitie in religion. 92.a

That in *loue* there ought to bee no reſpect of perſons. 271.b

In what reſpectes we ought to *loue* the rich. 271.a.b

The *loue* of Chriſt ſet foorth by Saint John. 184.b

The deſcription of true *loue*, and howe it is affected. 184.a

Sundrie inſtructions concerning *loue*. 384.b

The conditions and properties of *loue* which we are exhorted to folow. 612.b

Of *loue* towards our neighbours when they offende. 138.b. 139.a

Of *loue*, and the fruites or exerciſes of the ſame. 138.b

Of the *loue* of parentes, to their children, and who doe faile therein. 395.a.b

The *loue* of our neighbour, is a ſigne of our *loue* towardes God. 430.a

That we are beloued of God, before wee *loue* him, is prooued. 107.b. 108.a

That ſecrete *loue* is not ſo good as open rebuke. 535.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, *Loue* couereth the multitude of ſinnes. 139.a
Whether *loue* and feare can ſtand together. 278.a
That *loue* is the ſauce which maketh meate good. 306.a
Of the *loue* of God towardes the righteous. 298 b.299.a
The neceſſitie of *loue* grounded vppon good reaſon. 178.a
Our *loue* deſerueth not forgiueneſſe of ſins. 139.b
That our *loue* ſerueth our brethren to obteine forgiueneſſe of their ſinnes, and howe. 139.a
That the *loue* which is betweene knaues and whores, is no *loue*, and why. 102.a
Againſt the Papiſtes, who woulde haue vs dout whether God doeth *loue* vs or not. 5.a

Louer.

The meaning of theſe wordes, The wounds of a *louer* are faithful. 535.b

Lovvlineſſe.

Of *lovvlineſſe*, and what reward it hath. 37.a.b
Lovvlineſſe muche commended, and not vnrewarded. 165.a

Luſtes.

That the *luſtes* of our fleſhe beeing naturall, are hard to be tamed. 281.a
That the fooliſhe and vndiſcreete are not excuſable in folowing their fleſhly *luſtes*, although they be tempted, and why. 103.b

M.

Magiſtrate.

That wrath in a *Magiſtrate* is lawfull, and howe. 215.a

Magiſtrates.

A leſſon for *Magiſtrates*, concerning puniſhment. 140.a
Howe and wherin *Magiſtrates* doe ſhew forth righteouſnes. 206.a
Why and to what ende *Magiſtrates* are placed in the ſeate of iudgement. 412.a
The office of *Magiſtrates*, and wherein the ſame conſiſteth. 70.a
Certaine ſpeciall dueties of *Magiſtrates* and Gouernours. 389.a
A doctrine concerning Iudges & *Magiſtrates*. 9.a
Againſt *Magiſtrates* which loue giftes and rewardes. 351.a
What *Magiſtrates* ſhoulde doe, in time of inſurrections and rebellions. 270.a
The charge of *Magiſtrates* in puniſhing euill doers. 96.a

Malicious.

Of malice, and *malicious* men. 282.b.283.a
We muſt not frequent our ſelues with the *malicious*, and why. 492.b
That a *malicious* man is nothing but a carrion, and of his foule and ſhameful end. 618.a
Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, *Malicious* men vnderſtande not iudgement. 560 a.b
Howe God puniſheth the *malicious*. 560.b
Certaine diſguiſings which the wicked and *malicious* vſe to bring their miſchiefes to paſſe. 342.b.343.a
Againſt *malicious* and frowarde perſons. 341.b.
What rewarde the *malicious* deſerue. 267.b.268.a

Marriage.

Why *marriage* is moſt meete for the flower of youth, and that olde folkes may marrie. 78.a
The ſtate betweene man and wife in *marriage*, what it ought to be. 629.a
Admonitions to young men which take maides in *marriage*. 629.b
The prepoſterous reſpects that are commonly had in *marriage*. 433.a
What a man ſhould do before he couple him ſelfe to a wife in *marriage*. 439.a
Why God oftẽtimes ouerturneth the lawes of *marriage*. 433.a
We muſt be careful what wife we chooſe in *marriage*. 540 b.541.a
To what ende God ioyned man and woman together in *marriage*. 433.a

What pointes wee muſt obſerue in the attempt of *marriage*. 540.b
Of *marriage*, and married folke. 77.b.78.a
The ende of *mariage*, and why it was inſtituted. 78.a
Againſt ſuche as doe breake *marriage* lawfully made, and howe. 27.a
Conſiderations to bee vſed, in vndertaking *marriage*. 391.b
Againſt ſuche as violate their promiſe made in *marriage*. 25.a.b
That it is not lawful for man and woman to dwel together, except they be knit in *marriage*. 25.b
For what reaſons wee ought to haue the eſtate of *marriage* in reuerence. 377.a
Marriage ordeined for neceſſitie, and mutual ioye and comforte of the parties married. 79.a
Of two kindes of people that make a mocke of *marriage*. 79.a.b

Member.
No *member* of man but God hath made the ſame. 415.b

Members.
What we muſt learne if there be any likelihood of goodneſſe in our *members*. 415.a
Notable doctrine touching the eare and the eye, two *members* of man. 414.b. 415.a.b.

Merchandiſe.
That no *merchandiſe*, &c. can aſſure vs to liue long. 42.a
Difference betweene *merchandiſe* and wiſedome, and the caſualties of the one. 41.b
Wiſedome compared to *merchandiſe*, and whome ſhe is like. 41.b
Of *merchandiſe*, and who are counted moſt bleſſed by them. 41.b
Howe *merchandiſe* muſt be occupied, vſed, and put to ſale 41.b

Merchant.
God compared to a *merchant*, and in what reſpectes. 323.a

Merchantes.
Howe and in what caſes *merchantes* doe abuſe the ſea and riuers, &c 630.b. 631.a
Vnto whome the *merchantes* of this worlde ſhalbee Iudges at the laſt day. 42.a
A leſſon for ſuche *merchantes* as count themſelues Chriſtians. 42.a
Of *merchantes* and their occupying. 41.b
Againſt the ſuttletie of *merchantes*, and occupiers in buying and ſelling. 413.b
That the greateſt *merchants* are in moſt feare to die, and why. 42.a b
A compariſon betweene *merchantes* and wiſemen, and howe they differ. 43.b

Mercie.
A heauie threatening againſt ſuche as haue no *mercie* nor pitie vpon the poore. 435.b 436.a
That he which hath no *mercie*, ſhall finde no *mercie*, &c. 435.b. 436.a
The great and wonderful *mercie* of God, ſet forth. 112.b
Perſwaſions to moue vs vnto *mercie*. 192.b
Mercie and pitie commended vnto vs vnder theſe wordes, A good eye, &c. 451.b. 452.a
That *mercie* is the fruite of faith. 327.b
Of *mercie*, & the commendation of the ſame. 284.a
For what cauſe the poore faithfull ones are tempted to forget *mercie*. 51 a.b
What deſires we muſt put from vs, if we wil folowe *mercie*. 51.b
Of *mercie*, and that it is one of the partes whereinto the lawe is deuided. 31.a
Of *mercie*, and that wee muſt be mercifull in giuing, &c 37.b.38.a
Vnto whome *mercie* and trueth ſhal be granted. 273.b
Vpon whome wee ought to haue compaſſion and *mercie*. 272.a

Mercifull.
Of mercie or compaſſion, and who is *merciful*. 183 b
Hee is not *merciful* that is good to him ſelfe. 184.
What bleſſing is promiſed vnto the *merciful*. 272.b
Howe and after what ſort we ſhalbe *mercifull* to our owne ſoules. 183.b
Vnto what kinde of perſons Kings ought not

not to be *merciful*. 333.a b
What we muſt doe, if we will haue God *merciful* vnto vs. 327.a.b

Merites.

That we can challenge nothing of God, by our *merites*, and why. 440.b
The Papiſtes confuted in their doctrine of *merites*. 168.a
Againſt ſuche as make a reckoning of their *merites*. 394.b
Againſt the damnable doctrine of *merites*. 247.a.b

Meſſenger.

He that maketh a foole his *meſſenger*, compared to one that cutteth of the feete, & why. 520.b
When and in what reſpect a man is called a *meſſenger*. 243.a
That a wicked *meſſenger* is a murtherer, and bringeth death. 242.b
The commendation of a faithfull *meſſenger*, ſet foorth by compariſon. 508.b.509.a
Wherein a *meſſenger* is not truſtie, but wicked. 242.b
The meaning of Solomon, by theſe wordes, A cruel *meſſenger*. 353.b.354.a
Of the double fal of a wicked *meſſenger*. 242.b

Meſſengers.

That wee are all *meſſengers* of the moſt high God, &c. 509.a
Why the Miniſters of Gods worde are called *meſſengers*. 243.a
Who are Gods principal *Meſſengers* in this world. 242.b

Mightie.

The meaning of theſe wordes, A wiſe man ſcaleth the Citie of the *mightie*, and who is ſuch a one. 441.a
Unto whom this word *mightie* appertaineth, and who may be ſo called. 524.a
What Solomon meaneth, by making partition among the *mightie*. 375.a.b
What is meant by the *mightie*, and who are to be ſo called. 344.b
How *mightie* men do eſteeme of themſelues. 344.a
Mightie men condemned, & in what reſpects. 344.a.b
Great & *mightie* in ſundrie reſpects. 616.a.b
The meaning of theſe woordes, The *mightie* man doth al things by him ſelf, &c. 523.a.b
In what reſpectes a *mightie* man is accounted a wel dooer. 410.b

Miniſter.

The duetie of Gods *Miniſter* in preaching, and what it is. 104.b
That the ignorant and fooliſh deſerue to be deceiued by lies, &c. and the office of the *Miniſter* therein required. 104.b

Miniſters.

Notable admonitions for the *Miniſters* of Gods word. 11.a
That we muſt be careful to take heede of the *Miniſters* of Satan, and why. 148.b
The *Miniſters* of the Church, by their preaching, doe feede the beleeuers vnto eternal life. 148.b
The duetie and office of *Miniſters* ſummarily ſet foorth. 84.a
They that rebell and contemne the *Miniſters* of the Church, ſeeke their owne deſtruction, and why. 117.b
A leſſon for the *Miniſters*, to learn out of theſe wordes, Wiſedome hath ſent her daughters, &c. 119.b
A defence of true *Miniſters*, the aſſurance of their vocation, and who are true *Miniſters*. 132.b
The *Miniſters* of the worde haue nothing wherein to glorie, though they be the pillers of the Church. 117.b
Leſſons for the *Miniſters* of the Churche to learne, by hauing this title and name of pillers giuen them. 117.a
Miniſters of the word, are the inſtruments of wiſedome, and a leſſon for their learning. 113.a
The ende of the doctrine of Gods *Miniſters*, and their preaching. 104.b.105.a
Wee muſt heare the *Miniſters* of wiſedome, that is, the Sonne of God, and how. 113.b.114 a
Miniſters of the word are heraldes, &c. of the moſt higheſt, and of their charge. 157.6
The *Miniſters* of the worde, are the huſbandmen and labourers vnto whome the Lord hath let out his vineyarde. 161.b
That *Miniſters* ought to bring to the people, the pure word of God. 55.a

That *Miniſters* of the Church ſtande chiefly in great neede of wiſedome.197.b
That *Miniſters* are the mouth of God when they faythfully exerciſe their office.57.a
That *Miniſters* ought to haue the reward of their labour.207.a
Howe and in what reſpectes *Miniſters* of the word do preach righteouſnes.216.a
What affection Paſtors and *Miniſters* ought to beare to the Lordes flocke.473.a
Why the charge of *Miniſters* is greater then that of carnal parentes.493.a
The ende whereto the crye of Gods *Miniſters* ſhould ſerue.13.a
Howe the lippes of *Miniſters* ſhould obſerue knowledge.72.a
Of the *Miniſters* of Gods word and that they ſhoulde not bee dumbe.19.b
The *Miniſters* of the worde, ought to be careful to ſpeake the ſincere trueth, and why.68.b
Howe *Miniſters* ſhoulde behaue themſelues towardes them whome they teache.65.a.b
The duetie of *Miniſters* in their Miniſterie.11.b
That to heare the *Miniſters* of the truth, is to heare Chriſt.457.a

Mirth.

What *mirth* that is, whoſe ende is heauineſſe.264.a
Of *mirth*, and what laughing it is, wherein the heart is ſorowfull. 263.b. 264.a.

Mocke.

The danger wherein we runne by making a mocke at ſinne.154.a
What we muſt doe, if we will not haue God to deride and mocke vs.14.a b
The cauſe why the vngodly, and a foole doth laugh and *mocke*, when he worketh wickedneſſe.154.a

Mockerie.

Of *Mockerie*, and whether it bee a meete thing for the wiſdom of God to mock.14.a
What the *mockerie* of God and his wiſdome is.14.a

Mockers.

Mockers are as beaſtes without any knowledge, and therefore feare not to doe euill.153.b
How and when wee prooue our ſelues fooles and conſequently *mockers*.154.a
Of our owne nature we cannot be any better than *mockers*.153.b
Of *mockers*, and mocking of the poore, and how the ſame is done.349.a
The reward of ſuch as are *mockers* and ſcorners of their parents.617.b.618.a
Such as perſecute the poore members of Jeſus Chriſt, are *mockers*.153.b
Examples of *mockers* ſet downe for our erudition and learning.153.b
Againſt *mockers* and contemners of religion, and that they muſt be puniſhed.485.b.
That fooles and *mockers* deſire not to mortifie their fleſh, &c.20.b.

Monkes.

Againſt *Monkes*, Prieſtes, and ſchoole Doctors.125.b.126.a
Againſt the wiſedome of *Monkes* and Fryers in Poperie.132.b
We muſt take heede of *Monkes* and Fryers, and why.136.b.

Mother.

The loue of Solomons *mother* declared by certaine patheticall ſpeeches. 624.b 625.a
In heauineſſe of the *mother*, there is threatening of death and damnation. 128.a. Looke *Children*.

Mothers.

How vertuous *mothers* are honored of their children.637.a.b
That children muſt receiue and obey the commandements of their *mothers*, & why 618.a
Why Solomon attributeth inſtruction vnto mothers, &c.618.a.b
A leſſon for *mothers* touching the gouerning of themſelues in youth.475.a
How *mothers* ſhoulde ſpende their time with their children.624.a.b.

Mourning.

Of *mourning* and lamentation.74.b
With what kind of *mourning* God is pleaſed.74.b
The *mourning* of whorekeepers & ſpendthriſts, & from whence the ſame proceedeth.75.a

The fruitleſſe *mourning* of waſtgoods, and meanes to auoide the ſame.74.b.75.a.b

When and in what reſpects *mourning* and lamentations are profitable.74.b

Mouth.

Of the vſe of the *mouth*, and howe wee muſt order and applie the ſame.212.a.b.

Of the fruite of the *mouth*, and what the ſame is.229.a b

Two principall wayes of keeping the *mouth*. 230.a.b

The vſe and office of the *mouth*, moſt neceſſarie and excellent.229.a.b

What is meant by hauing the rodd of pride in our *mouth*.255.b

Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, Laye thy hande vpon thy *mouth*.623.a.b

That it is a harde matter to keepe the *mouth*, and why.230.b

That the *mouth* hath feete, and what thoſe feete be.87.a

The meaning of theſe wordes, With the fruites of a mans *mouth* ſhal his bellie be ſatiſfied.376.a.b

That we muſt doe away frowardneſſe from our *mouth*, and howe.68.a b

Of the reformation of the *mouth*, and what we muſt doe in that caſe.68.a

Of putting away a wicked *mouth* from vs, and how that may be done.316.b.317.a

That the wicked mans *mouth* babbleth euill thinges.317.a

Mouthes.

Of the *mouthes* of gluttons and drunkardes. 230.b

Howe the wicked occupie their *mouthes* both towardes God and man 87.a

That our *mouthes* are ful of poyſon, and in what reſpectes they are ſo.69.a

Multitude.

Howe Princes and great men ſhal get them a *multitude* of ſubiectes.280.a

That we muſt not folowe the *multitude*, and why.7.b

The way to holde a *multitude* of people in obedience and gouernment.280.a

What kinde of *multitude* deſerueth to be called a people.280.b

Murther.

Howe execrable and accurſed *murther* is in Gods ſight.90.a

Of *murther* and manſlaughter before God. and who are guiltie of the ſame 8.a

Murtherer.

Wherein a man ſheweth him ſelfe to bee a *murtherer*.586.a

Murtherers.

Of ſundrie ſortes of *murtherers*.90.a.b

All hatefull men, whatſoeuer they bee, are *murtherers*.586.b

What wee muſt doe, if wee will not be counted *murtherers* and bloodie men. 586.b

Of *murtherers*, and what kinde of men are ſuch. 10.a

What kinde of riche men are *murtherers*, and what kinde not.10.a.b

N

Name.

That wee ought to deſire and chooſe a good *name* aboue al other thinges.446.a.b

The vaine ſuperſtition of the Iewes, not daring to pronounce the *name* of God. 368.b.369.a

That the *name* of the Lorde is him ſelf.369.a

The *name* of the Lorde compared to a ſtrong Tower, and howe 369.a

Of the *name* of the Lorde, and that it is not a baſe word.368.b

Neighbour.

That we ought not to deſpiſe our *neighbour*, and why.167.b.177.a

That Chriſtians ought to take heede howe they deſpiſe their *neighbour*.177.a

The ſignification of this worde *neighbour*. 176.b

That euerie man, howe ſtrange ſoeuer he be, is our *neighbour*.82.b

That the ſoule of a man is meant for his *neighbour*, and howe.183.b

Howe wee muſt behaue our ſelues towards our *neighbour*, if wee bee offended with him.507.a

Chriſtian behauiour and vſages towardes our *neighbour* in ſundrie reſpectes.68.b. 69.a

That we may giue our worde for our *neighbour*,

bour, but in what caſes.358.a
That wee cannot proſper in hurting and doing any euil vnto our *neighbour*. 273. a.

Neighbours.

That we muſt not be importunate and too bolde with our *neighbours*. 510.b. 511. a.
That we muſt be careful to doe good to our needie *neighbours*, & not euil. 193.b.194.a.
In what eſtimation we ſhould haue our good *neighbours*.538.a
We ought to eſteeme the ſoules of our *neighbours* as our owne, and why, 185.b
That we ought to cheare vp our *neighbours*, and howe.301.b
Of offending our *neighbours*, and the iſſue growing thereby. 289.a.b
That we muſt abſteine from the goods that are our *neighbours*.76.b
The way howe to ſaue our *neighbours* life, is taught vs by Solomon.276.b
The great deſire that the wicked haue to hurt their *neighbours*.61.b
What dueties wee owe vnto our *neighbours*, and howe wee ſhoulde liue with them.49.a.b.50.a.b
That the wicked ſhall feele God to be ſuche towardes them, as they haue beene towardes their *neighbours*.24.b.25.a
In what reſpect the ſcripture calleth *neighbours*, brethren.91.b

O.

Obedience.

Of *obedience*, and diſobedience, with the rewarde of both. 134.b
Of *obedience* due to parentes from their children, &c.182.a
Of *obedience*, and when the ſame is imputed vnto vs.287.
That God exalteth nations by *obedience*. 287.b
What kinde of *obedience* God requireth of vs to his lawe.31.a
Of *obedience* to the lawe of God, and his commandements. 30.b
The wiſe of this worlde giue God no obedience that pleaſeth him, and why.33.b

Obſtinate.

The *obſtinate*, and into what miſerable caſe they are threatened to fall. 14.a.b. 15.a
That the *obſtinate* begin their hell and damnation euen in this life.14.b

Orphans.

God hath poore *Orphans* in great eſtimation. 468.a.b
Orphans, notwithſtanding their weakeneſſe, are not quite voide of ſuccour.468.b

P.

Parents.

In what ſchoole *Parents* ought to ſtudie. 474.b
In what pointes we ought to obey our *Parentes*.474.b
That *Parents* ought to bee poſſeſſours of trueth, and why.475.b
Of *Parents*, and howe careful they ought to be to gouerne their children.55.b
The cauſe why *Parents* haue no reſt nor ioy in their children. 591.a

Pathes.

That our *pathes* is our outwarde conuerſation, our manners, &c. 70.a
Our *Pathes* are taken for whatſoeuer our affections leade vs vnto. 70.a
Howe and in what ſort God doth ponder the *pathes* of euerie man. 80.b
Much excellent doctrine vpon theſe wordes, Ponder thy *pathes*. 70.a.b
Howe the wiſe of this world doe ponder and weigh their *pathes*. 70.b
How and after what maner the diſſolute and wanton ponder their *pathes*.70.b

Patience.

That the children of God haue great neede of *patience*, and why.155.a
That where hope is prolonged, *patience* is neceſſarie.239.a
The great neceſſitie of *patience* in looking

for goodneſſe in true righteouſneſſe. 168. a

That *patience* is neceſſarie for ſuche as loue inſtruction, and correction. 200. b

That *patience* is begotten of tribulation. 304 a

Peace.

Of the counſellers of *peace*, and who haue that name. 219. b

What account God maketh of ſuche as loue *peace*, and procure the ſame, 527. b

That we are called vnto *peace*, and therefore muſt ſeeke it. 462. a

That there is no *peace* to the wicked, & why. 369. b

That the wicked are neuer in *peace*, and why. 489. b

The way both to haue *peace* with God and men. 594. b

Of *peace*, and that it is a precious bleſſing. 327. b.

Of ſeeking *peace* with men, & of the meanes vſed to obteine the ſame. 328. a

Of the wayes of *peace*, and what they are. 328. a

What wee muſt doe to haue *peace* with our enemies. 328. a. b

Perfection.

That we muſt be careful to aſpire vnto true *perfection*. 234. a

Of hypocritical or Papiſtical *perfection*. 233. b

Of the *perfection* which God requireth of vs in this world. 233. b

What *perfection* is required of vs one towardes another in worldly affaires. 164 a

That we muſt grow to *perfection* by the Miniſterie of the word. 63. a

Againſt ſuche as bragge that they are in the ſtate of *perfection* 62. b. 63 a

Perfumes.

The *perfumes* of a whore, are a meere enticement, &c. 101. b

The *perfumes* of the wicked are ſtinke, & their deinties poyſon, &c. 101. b

Sweete ſmelles and *perfumes* allowed, and howe. 101. b

Periurers.

Of *periurie* and *periurers*. 91. b

That *periurers* ought well to bee eſteemed falſe witneſſes, and why. 91 b

Pillers.

The Pope and his mainteiners are in no wiſe *Pillers* of the houſe of wiſedome. 117. b

Why the holie Patriarkes, Prophets, Apoſtles, Euangeliſts, &c. are called *Pillers* of the houſe of wiſedome. 117. a

By the *Pillers* of wiſedomes houſe, the Paſtours of the Church are ſignified. 117. a

Though the Miniſters of the word are the *Pillers* of the Church, yet haue they nothing wherein to glorie. 117. a

Leſſons for the Miniſters of the Church to learne, by hauing this title and name of *Pillers* giuen them. 117. a

Of the ſeuen *Pillers* wherein the houſe of wiſdome is ſet. 117. a

Pleaſures.

The meaning of theſe wordes, *Pleaſures* are not ſeemely for a foole. 387. a

The greateſt *pleaſures* of Princes and great men, what it is. 387. b

Pleaſures are not forbidden, if wee vſe them ſoberly, &c. 388 a

What hindereth vs from hauing the true vſe of *pleaſures*. 388. a

That it is neceſſarie to haue wiſedome in the poſſeſſing and vſing of worldly *pleaſures* well, and why. 439. b

Pouertie and want threatened againſt ſuche as are ſold to vaine *pleaſures*. 438. a

Of the lawfull vſe, and vnlawfull abuſe of *pleaſures* and delightes. 438. a

In what thinges we ought to take *pleaſures*, and of a benefite thereby. 458. a

Pledge.

In what reſpects the taking of a *pledge* is admitted. 417. b

That the taking of a *pledge* is neceſſarie, and why. 418. a

That for the ſuretie of ſuche goods as wee lende, we may take a *pledge*. 417. b

Admonitions about giuing of handes vpon *pledge* and ſuretiſhip. 462. b

Of whom the lawe alloweth to take a *pledge*. 417. b 418 a

Pope.

The *Pope* and his Prelates put in the ranke of of fooles, and why.524.a.

Poore.

That it is lawful and neceſſarie for vs, beeing riche, to make our ſelues *poore*. 234.b.235.a
That the *poore* endure many miſeries, and are deſpiſed.431.a.b
The meeting of the *poore* and the rich, with the manner thereof.446.b.447.a
Notable doctrine for al eſtates, vppon theſe wordes, Poll not the *poore*, &c.460.a.b.461.a.b
What we muſt doe if we wil not be accuſed as pollers of the *poore*.462.a
Why Solomon putteth vs ſo often in mind of our dutie to the *poore*.460.a
A threatening againſt ſuch as poll and oppreſſe the *poore*.461.b
That the Lord maketh *poore* and riche, and what we learne thereby.447.a
Reaſons prouing that wee ought not to hate the *poore*, and why.270.b.271.a
That we are *poore* both in body and ſoule. 271.a
That wee ought to diſtribute to the *poore*, and to relieue them.271.a
Expreſſe commandementes for ſuccouring of the *poore*.271.a
That it is a miſerable thing to bee *poore*, except patience bee ioined therewith. 271.a.
Of the profitable *poore* man, and who is ſuch a one.379.b
That to get much foode, wee muſt become *poore*, and how.249.250.a
That it is a miſerable thing to be *poore*, and why.385.a
That we ought not to deſpiſe the *poore*, and why.382.b
Remedies, which if we vſe, we ſhal not long remaine *poore*.378.a.b
That by our creation we are *poore*.378.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, The *poore* ſpeaketh with prayers.377.b.378.a
Howe and in what manner wee mocke the *poore*.349.a.b
What honor the lord doth to them that haue pitie on the *poore*.394.a
What kinde of ſinners they be that haue no care of the *poore*.271.b
That the *poore* are deſpiſed and contemned in diuers ſorts.271.b
The meaning of theſe woordes, That hee which giueth to the *poore* ſhal not want. 576.b.577.a
Againſt ſuch as are cruel and churliſh to the *poore*.577.a
That the ſimple *poore* man is better than the rich, and how.560.a.b
One *poore* man oppreſſing another compared to a raging raine, &c.559.a.b
Admonition for the *poore* that ſtande in need of reliefe.559.b
Admonitions to the *poore* touching their behauiour in their pouertie.611.b.612.a
The meaning of theſe words, The *poore* ſhal try the rich, &c.565.a.b
God is a fauourer of the *poore*.393.b
The cauſe why the *poore* are reiected, deſpiſed and ſet at naught.393.b
The meaning of theſe wordes, He that hath pitie vpon the *poore*, lendeth to the Lorde. 393.b.394.a
That the *poore* are tempted to thinke and ſay that God forgetteth them, and why.461.b.
A comfortable leſſon for the *poore* to learne. 385.b
How we muſt vſe the *poore* ſtanding in need of our helpe.385.b
Who they be that hate the *poore*, and againſt ſuch.385.b.

Pouertie.

That it is not lawefull to bee ſeaſed with the feare of *pouertie*.131.a
Of *pouertie* and riches, neceſſarie leſſons. 142.b
What we muſt do euen in our *pouertie*, to be rich, and haue no need.235.a
To what end God puniſheth vs with *pouertie*.435.b
The meanes to fal into beggerie & extreeme *pouertie*.156.b
Of *pouertie*, and of the ſundry fallings into the ſame.190.a.b
The greateſt *pouertie* of al pouerties, what it is.190.b
Againſt what kinde of perſons *pouertie* is threatened.438.a.b
What our behauiour ought to be in *pouertie*

and want.438.b
That *pouertie* conſtraineth men to become ſeruants 450.b.451.a
A conſolation for ſuch as are in *pouertie*, and feare God.447.a
We do naturally feare *pouertie* and flee from it, &c.431.a
How the haſtie man commeth to *pouertie*, & why.431.a
Admonitions how to be prepared aginſt *pouertie* and need, 256.b
Sodaine *pouertie* compared to a traueller or wayfaring man 502.b
The meanes and waies to auoide *pouertie* & ſhame.243.b.244.a
That *pouertie* beateth downe the hornes of pryde.378.a
A comforte for ſuch as honouring the Lorde with their ſubſtance, do often ſuffer much *pouertie*, contrary to his promiſe.38.b
Pouertie moſt aptly compared vnto meate, and how.571.b
Pouertie commended before riches gotten with couetouſneſſe.10.a
Why Solomon requireth of god not to giue him *pouertie*, wherevpon dependeth notable doctrine.609.b.611.b.

Praier.

Of *Praier*, and whoſe *Praier* is acceptable vnto the Lord.297.b.298.a
How and to what end wee ſhoulde reſorte to publike *Praier*.21.b
That the righteous drawe neere vnto God by their *Praier*.318.a
Of acceptable *Praier* vnto God, and howe it ſhould be made.318.b
The cauſe why we haue to vſe *praier* alwaies vnto God.15.a
How we ought to be affected in *praier*, if wee looke to obtaine.607.a.b
What we muſt doe if we wil make our *prayer* truly vnto God.608.b
Of ſundrie kindes of *Praier*, and which is accepted, &c.563.b
True *Praier* is the principal ſeruice that wee can doe to God.563.b.

Praiers.

The meaning of theſe woordes, The poore ſpeaketh with *Praiers*, 377.b.378.a.
Faith is the true foundation of our *Praiers* 563.b
The neceſſitie of faith in making our *praiers* vnto God.563.b
What mens *Praiers* are abhominable before God.563.b.

Praiſe.

For and in what reſpects vaine worldlings *praiſe* themſelues.533.b
What we muſt doe, and God will raiſe vp men to *praiſe* vs.533.b.534.a
Who they be that muſt *praiſe* vs if wee bee praiſeworthie.533.b
Againſt ſuch as *praiſe* themſelues, and howe great their follie is therein.533.b
What women muſt doe if they wil obtaine true *praiſe*.638.b
That we muſt not bee haſtie to publiſhe the *praiſe* of men, and why.540.a
What it is to *praiſe* the wicked.559.b

Preaching.

What they that deſpiſe the *preaching* of the worde doe enterpriſe and vndertake.110.b.111.a
The inconueniences which folow the deſpiſing of *preaching* 110.a
The *preaching* of the worde is the meate and drinke that preſerueth vs from hunger and thirſt.118.b
That outward *Preaching* is not vnfruitefull, and why.110.a
The behauiour of ſcorners and fooles in deſpiſing of *Preaching*.15.b
Againſt ſuch as contemne *preaching* and reading of holy ſcripture.3.b.

Preparation.

Of the *preparation* of the heart, and whether it be in man, as Solomon ſaith or no.322.a.b.

Preſeruation.

What we muſt doe if we wil haue *preſeruation*.233.b
Of the *preſeruation* which a faithfull Ambaſſadour and a Phiſition doeth bring.243.a.b.
What we muſt doe, if we wil haue *preſeruation*.256.a
What *preſeruation* that is which is aſcribed to the lippes of the wiſe.256.a

Of *preſeruation*, and howe God preſerueth. 23.b.24.a

Of the *preſeruation* and ſafetie of ſuch as imbrace wiſedome.47.a.b.

Preſumption.

The aſſurance and ſafetie which the wicked labour to haue, is a vaine *preſumption*, &c. 154.b

The boldneſſe and hardineſſe of ſuch as are led by *preſumption*.442.a

What titles and names Solomon giueth to ſuch as doe things vpon *preſumption*.442.a

Pride.

The miſchiefes and villanies that haue followed *pride*.237.b

That by *pride* only contẽtion is moued.237.a.b.

Pride and arrogancie are euils, cleane contrarie to the feare of God.106.a

Of *pride* and the iſſues of the ſame. 164.a.b.

That ſhame is the rewarde of *pride*. 164.b.

From whence the externall ſignes and tokens of *pride* haue their iſſue.615.b

Againſt *pride*, and that it is abhominable before God.326.a.b

That wee muſt renounce *pride*, and wherein chiefly the ſame conſiſteth.326.b

That the *pride* of the wicked is ſhewed in ſumptuous and coſtly buildinges. 314.a.b.

The diuerſe and ſundrie wayes that a man ryſeth in *pride*, ſhewed by examples. 595.a.b.

That *pride* goeth before deſtruction, & howe. 335.a.b

That God deteſteth and abhorreth *pride* and highmindedneſſe.88.b.89.a

What is meant by hauing the rodd of *pride* in our mouth.255.b

Pride a vice naturally rooted in vs.378.a.

What *pride* is, and meanes to fly and auoid it.335.b.

Prince.

The meaning of theſe wordes, Many hang vpon the face of the *prince*.283.b. 284.a

The meaning of theſe wordes, Separateth the *prince*.352.b

Wherein the honour of a *prince* conſiſteth, & wherein his deſtruction.280.a.b

Princes.

How and in what reſpects *princes* are forbidden to drinke ſtrong drinke.625.b

The manner of preparing *princes* and greate mens tables and of the diſorders there vſed. 464. a.b.

What vices doe reigne in the Courtes of *princes* and kings.452.b

That *princes* muſt keepe their promiſes faithfully, if they will raigne peaceably. 425.b.

An admonition to *princes* concerning their charge, &c.384.b

Againſt whome *princes* and magiſtrates ſhould roare like Lyons.389.a

Of rebuking *princes* for their diſorders.352.a.b.

A threatening and plague againſt ſuch *princes* as delight to heare lying tales. 587 b.

Sundrie reaſons prouing that *princes* ſhould haue wiſedome and vnderſtanding.569.b

The libertie and licentiouſnes of *princes* notably ſet foorth.352.a.b

Plentiful doctrine for *princes*, magiſtrates, & gouernours.279.b.280.a

That *princes* ought to be like the Lyon, the Greyhound and the Goate, and in what reſpects.622.b.623.a

For what cauſe *princes* haue officers and ſeruants vnder them.587.b

What manner of men good *princes* deſire to haue about them.587.b

The indignation and fauour of *princes*. 388.b.389.a

That wee muſt not flatter and ſooth *princes* in their greatneſſe.389.a.

Prodigalitie.

Againſt *prodigalitie* and ryot.190.a.b

Dehortations from *prodigalitie*, and waſtfull ſpending of our goods.74.a.b

Counſel againſt *prodigalitie*, which is termed vanitie, and why.238.a.b.

Prodigall.

Againſt ſuch as are *prodigall*.196.a

The *prodigall* reprooued.316.a.

Profeſſion.

Of outward *profeſſion*, and that it is a thing which wiſedome requireth. 19.b.20.a.

Promiſe.

Gods *promiſe* to the faithfull in deliuering them from danger. 455.a
A *promiſe* of comforte made to the faithfull for their comfort againſt feare. 18.a
Againſt ſuch as violate their *promiſe* in marriage. 25.a b
Promiſe made to ſuch as walke in the way of good men, and what it is. 27.b.28.a.b
That the *promiſe* made to Abraham doth belong vnto vs. 131.a
The vnfaithful vſe riches, but without the *promiſe* of God. 150. b
The faithful haue the *promiſe* of this preſent life, &c. 150.b
This worlde and the life preſent apertaineth to the righteous by *promiſe*. 160 b
Many neceſſarie doctrines, by wayes of obiection and anſwere, vpon theſe wordes of *promiſe*, For the iuſt ſhal dwel in the land. 27.b.28.a b.29.a
Euerlaſting life followeth the *promiſe* of earthly or temporal life. 29.a
The meaning of this *promiſe*, So health ſhalbe vnto the nauel, &c. 36.a b
That al commeth by *promiſe*, and nothing by deſert or worthineſſe. 29.b.

Promiſes.

The *promiſes* of God reach further than this world. 130.a
That they whome God iudgeth vnworthie of temporal *promiſes*, cannot looke for any other felicitie then they haue in this life. 150.b
The *promiſes* of God require fayth. 130. a
That we muſt not iudge of Gods *promiſes*, after mans reaſon. 274.b
Vnto whome the *promiſes* of ſaluation doe appertaine. 14.a
That the gracious *promiſes* of god are a part of his word. 66.a
The *promiſes* of peace, life, ſaluation, felicitie, and proſperitie vnto whome they appertaine 154.a.b
Vaine promiſers and *promiſes* compared to dry cloudes, and why. 569.a.b
That wee muſt lay holde vppon the *promiſes* of God by faith. 33.a
That god wil not, nor cannot goe againſt his *promiſes*, and why. 33.a
That the *promiſes* of God are ſure, and that he wil accompliſhe his promiſe. 30.b.

Proſperitie.

The *proſperitie* of the righteous no *proſperitie* in the eyes of mans reaſon. 174.b
That *proſperitie* is a ſtate which all deſire. 303.b
What we muſt doe, if wee wil proſper, and haue ioy in *proſperitie*. 229.a
Of the *proſperitie* of fooles, and howe it deſtroyeth them. 17.a.b
How the *proſperitie* of the righteous is to be taken and vnderſtoode 174.a b
Meanes and wayes to obtaine *Proſperitie*. 319.a
Proſperitie & eaſe vnderſtoode by this phraſe of ſpeech, to make fat. 319.b
That we ought greatly to deſire the *proſperitie* of the iuſt, &c. 566.a
Of the *proſperitie* of the wicked. 284.b
That we muſt not put our truſt in worldly *proſperitie*, how great ſoeuer it bee. 180.b. 181.a
The wordes of Solomon impugned, where he ſaith, In the *proſperitie* of the righteous the citie reioiceth. 174.b
That the *proſperitie* of the wicked is not continual. 169.b.

Proude.

Againſt the *proude* and preſumptuous. 164.b.165.a
In what thinges the *proude* doe boaſt and vaunt, and a complaint againſt them. 615 b.616.a
A harde and ſeuere ſentence againſt the *proude*. 314.a
The preſumptuous opinions and thoughtes of *proude* worldlings. 314.a

Prouidence.

Of the *prouidence* of GOD caring for all things. 207.a
Admonitions to waite vpon the *prouidence* of God. 336 b
That our wit and vnderſtanding proceedeth from Gods *prouidence*. 447.b
That al thinges come to paſſe by the *prouidence* of God. 486.a

Againſt ſuch as thinke that Gods *prouidence* hindereth vs to counſel howe wee ſhoulde rule our ſelues in our buſineſſe. 330.a.b

That the knowledge of Gods *prouidence* doth not deliuer vs from care.324.b

That we muſt commit our ſelues to Gods *prouidence*:and the benefites of ſo dooing. 324.a

Againſt al ſuch as acknowledge not the *prouidence* of God.328.b.

Prouiſion.

Prouiſion without couetouſneſſe, lawful and commended.132.a.

Prudence.

The *prudence* and intelligence of the faithful, and wherein it conſiſteth.285.b

That God delighteth in a man which can gouerne himſelfe with *prudence*.287.b.

Prudent.

When and in what reſpects we are to be reputed *prudent*.269.a

Howe and in what manner the *prudent* are crowned with knowledge.268.b.269 a.

Who they bee that thinke themſelues wiſe and *prudent*.260.a

What wee muſt doe, if wee will ſhew our ſelues wiſe and *prudent* indeede. 260. b.

The poore,though neuer ſo *prudent*,reiected as vnprofitable,&c.379.a

Of the wiſdome of the *prudent*, and the effects of the ſame.285.b.286.a

The behauiour of a *prudent* man beeing among fooles.286.a

That the Nicodemites cannot boaſt that they are prudent, and why.286.a.

Puniſhment.

That the fire of *puniſhment* muſt bee vſed to purifie ſubiects. 505.a

That kings & magiſtrates ſhoulde not ſpare the wicked,or mitigate their *puniſhement* 396.b

The *puniſhment* of ſuch whoſe waies are crooked.25.a

The *puniſhment* of God vpon the ſcornefull. 404.b.405.a

Againſt parcialitie in *puniſhment*.401.b.

Puniſhments.

That the *puniſhments* of the wicked ought to ſchoole vs,and why.434.a.b

Of the *puniſhmentes* of God laid vpon the elect and the reprobate,and how they differ.39.a

That the wicked are Gods inſtrumentes to execute his *puniſhments*.9.b

Neceſſarie doctrine concerning the *puniſhments* of ſuch as offend.135.a.b.

Purgatorie.

Purgatorie condemned by reaſon and example.125.a.

R.

Ranſome.

Of the *ranſome* of life by riches.235.b.236.a.

That the blood of Chriſt is our *ranſome* from death,&c.235.b

Solomons wordes impugned,That the vngodly ſhalbe a *ranſome* for the righteous. 438.b

To be partakers of Chriſtes ranſome, it is neceſſarie to haue faith.235.b

Of the *ranſome* of life which Solomon meaneth.235.b

A leſſon for the wicked to learne,in that they are called *ranſome*.439.a

Ieſus Chriſt the *ranſome* of the wicked and vngodly.438.b

Reaſons proouing that the wicked are the *ranſome* of the righteous,and howe.438.b.439.a.

Rebellion.

Of *rebellion* againſt God, and the end of the ſame.353.b

Rebuke.

That they which *rebuke* vs,are well worthie to be bleſſed,and why.497.a

What is required of them which take vpon them to *rebuke*.497.a

That open *rebuke* is better than ſecret loue. 535.a

Neceſſarie doctrine,touching *rebuke* and correcting.121.a.b

What manner of perſons wee muſt exhorte and *rebuke*.122.a

What our behauiour ſhould be whether we *rebuke*,or be rebuked.579.a

A wiſe man ſhoulde loue them which inſtruct and *rebuke* him, and why. 123.a
What we muſt doe, meeting with ſuch as we are ſure that neither *rebuke* nor correction wil amend. 123 a
Though we be wiſe, yet we may do thinges worthie of *rebuke*. 122.b
When wee *rebuke* wiſe men, our due ought not to be to winne their loue, and why. 122.b
The ſundrie taking of *rebuke* in the wiſe and humble, and the contrarie. 574.b
They that *rebuke* vs ought to bee beſt welcome vnto vs, and why. 574.b
That they which *rebuke* vs are Gods inſtrumentes, &c. 574.b.

Rebukes.

Againſt ſuch as are hardeharted, and paſſe not for *rebukes*. 578.b
Of alluring *rebukes*, and reforming ones ſelfe thereafter. 353.a
Who doe patiently ſuffer *rebukes*, and who diſdaine thereat. 353.a.

Recompenſe.

Why the ſinner deſerueth the greater *recompenſe*. 198.b
The *recompenſe* of the righteous in this life. 198.a.b
That the *recompenſe* of the righteous is the reward of man, and how. 199.b
Excellent doctrine vpon theſe words, Unto the righteous God wil *recompenſe* good. 247.a b.

Recreation.

Recreation with offence of our neighbours is accurſed. 100.b.

Reformed.

The readie way to be *reformed*, is to receiue the word of trueth. 144.a.b.
Who and what they be that hate to bee *reformed*. 144.b.

Regeneration.

Of *regeneration*, and who bee regenerated. 188 a.

Reioice.

At what things wee *reioice*, and *reioice* not. 175.a
The children of God ought not to *reioice*, at the perdition of the wicked. 175.a
That the comming of the ſonne of righteouſneſſe ought to reioyce vs, &c. 63.a
Who they bee that *reioice* in doing euill. 24.b.

Reioicing.

Of the *reioicing* which the word of God miniſtreth to the faithful. 224.b
That the couetous haue no true *reioycing*, though they ſeeme to be neuer ſo *ioyfull*. 224.b
What we muſt doe if wee woulde haue our *reioicing* durable. 437.a
That the *reioicing* of the wicked is no true *reioicing*, and why. 437.a
The common trade of *reioicing* vſed in the world. 436.b
The *reioicing* of the iuſt man, and what it is. 436.b
Sundrie kindes of *reioicing* of parents in their children. 470.b
Of *reioicing* our hearts in the Lord, and how the ſame may be done. 302.a.b
That there is no better *reioicing* then in the worde of God, and why. 457.a
Three reaſons to reſtraine vs from *reioicing* in our enimies fal. 491.b. 492.a
Of ſundrie kindes of *reioicing* in ſundrie reſpects. 308.b
What we muſt doe, if we wil holde the true *reioicing*. 159.a
Reioicing is attributed vnto righteouſneſſe, and why. 158.b
The *reioicing* of the righteous deſcribed. 158.b
Of *reioicing* in this life. 158.a.b
The cauſes of our *reioicing*, and what they be. 566 a
What the *reioicing* of the father is, & how the ſame is wrought. 581.a
The onely way of *reioicing* God our father what it is. 538.b. 539.a
What ought to bee the *reioicing* of ſuch as haue charge, &c. 539.a
Of a kinde of *reioicing*, wherevpon followed miſerie and deſtruction. 579.a.b
That wee may not giue ouer *reioycing*, though God ſmite vs with ſickneſſe. 359.b. 360,a

What the *reioicing* of married folkes ſhoulde be.77.b.

Religion.

In what pointes Chriſtian *religion* doeth conſiſt.444.a

Repentance.

That deſtruction euerlaſting foloweth, where there is no *repentance*.239.b
Unto whome *repentance* is denied, and not denied.525.a
Repentance is neceſſarie to the making pure of the conſcience.413.a
That by *repentance* we abhorre euil, and loue good.287.a
How and in what manner *repentance* ſhoulde be preached.352.a
Of *repentance*, and that it is not a worke of man.12.a.b.

Repetitions.

That *repetitions* are vſed in holy ſcripture, & why they are profitable.16.a
What kinde of *repetitions* are moſt profitable.16.a
That *repetitions* are not ſuperfluous, but neceſſarie.16.a
That the Prophetes, Apoſtles and Euangeliſtes, doe greatly vſe *repetitions*. 16.a.b.

Reputation.

Of *reputation* and good name.204.b.205.a
The way to come to *reputation*.181.a
Of *reputation*, and the neceſſitie thereof.181.a.
That *reputation* or a good name maketh the bones fat, and how.319.a
What wee commonly doe to haue the *reputation*, and name of wiſe men, &c. 337.a.b.
What wee muſt doe to obtaine the *reputation* to be counted righteous.61.a

Reſpect.

That in iudgement there ought to be no *reſpect* of perſons.575.a
Why the hauing of *reſpect* of perſons is not good.573.b
The vileneſſe of ſuch as haue *reſpect* of perſons declared by compariſon.573.b.

Retribution.

In what ſenſe the Lorde is ſaid to make *retribution* to them that lende vnto him. 394.a.
In what reſpect the kingdome of heauen is called *retribution*.394.b.395.a
Retribution commeth not by merites, but by pure grace.395.a
Howe many wayes, and in what places *retribution* is made of the Lorde, &c. 394.b.
Retribution of the Lord in this worlde, and wherein it conſiſteth.394.b
Retribution in the laſt reſurrection.394.b.

Reuengement.

That it is not meete for vs to requeſt God to take *reuengement* vpon our enimies. 422.b
That one ought not to take *reuengement* of his enimie.500.b
The effect of *reuengement* ſpringeth from the heart.501.a
That wee muſt referre al *reuengement* to the Lord.422.a
Reaſons withdrawing vs from *reuengement*. 421.b.422.a.

Reuerence.

Of *reuerence*, and that the wicked doe *reuerence* the good.269.b 270.a.

Revvard.

The meaning of theſe wordes, A priuie *revvard* pacifieth diſpleaſure.436.a
The *revvard* of them which continewe in doing wel. 440.b.441.a.

Revvardes.

That it is not lawfull to take *revvardes* for iudgement.351.b.352.a
Againſt ſuch as hauing an euil cauſe, do notwithſtanding giue *revvardes*.352.a.

Riche.

What the behauiour of *riche* men ought to be in this world.10.b
The *riche* of the world accuſed of tyrannie towardes the poore.450.b
Leſſons of inſtruction for mercilles *riche* men to marke.451.b 452.a
Of ſuch as make haſt to bee *riche*, and what dangers they incurre.421.b
Of ſuch as, to waxe *riche*, oppreſſe the poore, and of their reward.456.b

Riche men warned not to communicate their goods to the ſlouthful, &c 409.b
The deſcription of a worldly *riche* man by way of compariſon. 141.b.142.a
The meaning of theſe words, Striue not to be *rich*. 465.b.466.a
The opinion of the *rich* is falſe, and his hope fruſtrate. 143.a
Leſſons for the *rich* to learne, concerning the diſpoſing of their goods and riches. 142.a.
Howe and by what meanes it is lawful, and not lawful to make our ſelues *riche*. 234.b.
The *riche* deceiue themſelues, truſting in their riches, and why. 142.a
A charge to ſuch as are *rich*, and mindfull of their recreation, &c 102.b
That *rich* men are wiſe in their owne conceit, and how 565.a
That *rich* men are Idolaters, and why. 611.b.
Why the *rich* are accurſed, and depriued of the kingdome of heauen. 572.b
What ought to be our demeanour when we are *riche*. 565.a.b
Admonitions to the *riche* touching their behauiour in their riches. 612.a
Riche worldlings taxed of follie, and why. 379.b
The meaning of theſe wordes, The *riche* anſwereth roughly. 378.a
Of worldly *rich* men, of whome ſome are named. 378.a
Of *rich* men which feare the Lord, and how they vſe their tongues. 378.a.

Riches.

That wee make *riches* our God, and howe. 194.b.195.a
Againſt truſt and confidence in *riches*. 194.b.195.a
Of the abuſe of *riches*, and the reward of ſuch abuſe. 194.b
When and in what reſpectes our *riches* are precious vnto vs. 226.b
What *riches* wee ſhoulde deſire and in what manner. 209.a
The ſiniſter meanes that men vſe to attaine to *riches*. 431.b
That we doe naturally loue *riches*, &c. 431.b.
Of the vanitie and vnprofitableneſſe of *riches*. 466.a.b
The meanes and waies to attaine vnto abundance of *riches*. 295.a.b
That it is laweful for parents to lay vp *riches* in ſtore for their children. 249.a
Riches compared to the flying of an Eagle. 466.a
That the faithful doe truly attaine to *riches*, and why. 183.b
Neceſſarie points of doctrine concerning *riches*. 182.a
The way to get *riches*, is to ſtudie for righteouſneſſe. 182.b
Howe to abounde in worldly wealth and *riches*. 190.a
The commendation of *riches*, their vſe, and to what ende they are ordeyned. 128.b.
The Lorde caſteth away the ſubſtance and *riches* of the wicked diuerſe wayes. 129.b.
Wee muſt not put our truſt in goods and *riches* though wee abounde in them, &c. 129.b
What is meant by this, that God threateneth to caſt away the ſubſtance and *riches* of the wicked. 130.b
Againſt ſuch as put their truſt in their *Riches*, neglecting thinges of more weight. 129.b
That it is not lawful to couet *riches*, & why. 131.a
Euery man deſireth *riches* naturally, and why. 149.a
For what cauſe man attributeth vnto his owne power the *riches* that he poſſeſſeth. 149.a
What we ought to doe, when wee ſee our ſelues abound in *riches*. 149.a.b
A deſcription of their inwarde diſpoſition & nature that deſire *riches*, and cannot attaine vnto them. 142.b
Whereunto *riches* ought and ought not to be attributed. 149.b
Of the vſe and abuſe of *riches*. 142.a.151.a.
How *riches* muſt be beſtowed. 151.b

It is not lawfull for vs to couet *riches*, and why. 151.b
What miſchiefes followe the ſetting of our heartes vpon *riches*. 151.a
Riches are good, and it is lawful to vſe them, and why. 151.a
What *riches* we muſt looke for in ſeeking after wiſedome. 108.a
To what purpoſe thoſe *riches* ſerue, which wiſedome giueth to her louers. 109.a
We may aſke *riches* of the Lorde, and howe farre. 151.b
The *riches* of this worlde doe not fil the treaſures, and why. 109.a
The way and meanes to bee riche with the true *riches*. 108.a
That *riches* of the wicked ſhal not profite or doe them any good in the day of wrath. 167.a.b
That it is vanitie and fooliſhneſſe to truſt in *riches*, and why. 167.a
Of the abuſe of *riches* and worldly wealth. 275.b.276.a
Unlawful meanes of getting *riches* condemned. 562.a
Of the *riches* of the wiſe, and what they are. 275.b
Of ſuch as make haſt to get *riches*, and what their ende ſhal be. 574.a
The chiefeſt paine for *riches* yl gotten, ſtandeth in eternal death. 573.a
What ſinnes abounde in the wicked, by the plentie of *riches* and wealth. 611.a.b
That *riches* hidden and hourded vp, are vnprofitable. 77.a
The reaſons why Solomon requireth of God not to giue him *riches*. 610.a.b.611.a.b
Why Solomon compareth *riches* and wealth vnto fountaines of water. 77.a
That it is a verie dangerous thing to couet *riches*, and why. 10.a
That the rich mans *riches* are his ſtrong Citie, and howe. 370.a.b
That it is not lawful for vs to abuſe *riches*, and other the good giftes of God. 74.b
Howe we muſt vſe our *riches*, and other the good creatures of God. 38.a
That the *riches* which are gotten by wiſedome, doe not change. 40.b
That in *riches* there is nothing but curſedneſſe, and when 41.a
The inceſſant and reſtleſſe care of the couetous for *riches*. 20.a

Righteous.

That the Lorde wil reſtore the *righteous*, to a proſperous eſtate, though they ſeeme neuer ſo miſerable. 195.a.b
Howe and in what order the *righteous* deſpoſeth his *riches*. 196.b.199.a
That the *righteous* ſhal not be without aduerſitie. 212.a
The *righteous* man compared to a fiſher, and in what reſpectes 197.a b
That al the ſeede of the *righteous* are not the children of God, and why. 188.a
Faith and hope, are the guides of the *righteous* mans conſcience. 168.b
The ſtate of the *righteous* after their reſtoring to reſt. 161.a
We cannot iudge by our outward wit what the *righteous* are. 191.a
The troubleſome and afflicted eſtate of the *righteous* in this life, before he attaine to life. 168.b
That wee cannot claime the title of *righteous*, if we vſe not charitie. 443.a
The fruitfulneſſe of the *righteous*, commeth from within. 210.b
The meaning of Solomon, when he ſaieth, The deſire of the *righteous* is onely good. 189.b
This worlde and the life preſent, appertaineth vnto the *righteous* by promiſe. 160.b
The *righteous* compared to a good tree, and what fruites he bringeth foorth. 161.b
That the *righteous* ſhall neuer be remooued, and howe this is meant. 160.b.161.a
Theſe wordes of Solomon (The *righteous* ſhal neuer be remooued) impugned, and defended. 160.a.b
A certaine and vndoubted proofe to knowe whether we be *righteous* or no. 335.a
That it is a profitable thing for a nation, whē it wanteth not *righteous* men. 579.b
What maner of man is to be counted *righteous*, and neuer forſaken of God. 251.b

That we haue knowledge enough, if wee be *righteous*. 584.a
The *righteous* regardeth the cauſe of the pore, &c. 583.b. 584.a
The meanes whereby the *righteous* doeth not ceaſe to bring foorth wiſedome. 162.a
That the number of the *righteous* is not great, and why. 161.b. 162.a
Who they be that are counted *righteous*. 261.a
The ſtate of the *righteous*, and how God doth preſerue them. 21.b. 22.a.b
The wordes of Solomon impugned, that the iuſt and *righteous* ſhal dwel in the land, &c. 28.a.b
The *righteous*, is not carried away by temptation. 168.b
The reaſon why it ſeemeth that the *righteous* are forgotten before God. 133.b
God puniſheth the wicked for the *righteous*, and ſetteth them vnder the iuſt. 173.a
That the *righteous* of them ſelues, are no better then the moſt wicked. 186.b
Howe wee ſhalbee the ſeede of the *righteous*, from what ſtock or roote ſoeuer we come. 188.b
In what reſpect the *righteous* are the children of wrath. &c. 188.a
The words of Solomon impugned, ſaying, The ſeede of the *righteous* ſhal eſcape. 187.b. 188.a
The profite that enſueth the counſell of the *righteous*. 137.a
The manifolde miſeries of the *righteous* in this life, doeth make men thinke they are not bleſſed. 133.a
Why Solomon calleth the *righteous* a ſtrong foundation. 156.b
The behauiour of the *righteous* in his ſpeach and communication. 162.b
The lips of the *righteous* feede a whole multitude, and howe. 148.b
God forgetteth not the *righteous* in the time of neede. 133.b. 134.a
Who is to bee reputed *righteous*, and what maketh a *righteous* man. 144.b.

Righteouſneſſe.

The cauſe why the *righteouſneſſe* of the perfect man ſhall direct his way. 169.b
The *righteouſnes* of the iuſt, doth make plaine and direct their way. 170.a
Righteouſnes beeing giuen and imputed vnto vs, is counted as ours in ſcripture. 176.a.b.
The proſperity of the wicked, & poore eſtate of the faithful, tempteth Gods children to renounce al *righteouſnes*, &c. 129.a
Howe the *righteouſnes* of the iuſt man ſhalbe vnprofitable vnto him. 516.a
The rule of perfect *righteouſnes* is the lawe. 168.a
Howe and after what ſort *righteouſnes* doeth deliuer from death. 168.a
Righteouſnes taken for a right and ſound conſcience. 168.b
Righteouſnes is not founde in the wicked, diſſemblers, hypocrites, &c. 168.b
The *righteouſnes* of the iuſt, is not properly his owne. 169.b
What is meant by ſowing of *righteouſneſſe*, and howe it is done. 185.a
To ſtudie for *righteouſneſſe* is the way to get riches. 182.b
The meanes and wayes to attaine vnto *righteouſneſſe*. 108.a
To walke in the pathe of *righteouſneſſe*, and what it is. 109.a
That *righteouſneſſe* leadeth to life, a neceſſarie doctrine. 186.a
Of *righteouſneſſe* by imputation. 174.a
The wil of God is the onely rule of perfect *righteouſneſſe*. 298.b
Righteouſnes taken for the conſcience of man, and howe. 167.b
That riches ſerue to bring foorth *righteouſneſſe*. 195.b
That riches ſeeme to bring foorth *righteouſneſſe*. 195.b
What *righteouſneſſe* it is, that ſhall deliuer a man from death. 167.b
When, and by dooing what deedes, wee are ſaide to walke in our *righteouſneſſe*. 254.b. 255.a
Righteouſneſſe is the cauſe that man taketh pleaſure in doing his duetie. 308.a
Of *righteouſneſſe* proceeding from a purified heart. 298.b.

Rule.

There is no *Rule* ſo general, but hath ſome exception, and howe. 174.b

Rulers.

Wicked *rulers* ouer people compared to roaring Lions and hungrie Beares, and why. 768.b.569.a
What kinde of men wicked *rulers* do fauour. 569.a
Howe we muſt behaue our ſelues towardes wicked *rulers*. 569.a

S.

Sacraments.

The word and *Sacraments* compared to victual and wine. 118.b
The adminiſtration of the *Sacraments*, are the meates and drinkes to preſerue vs from hunger and thirſt. 118.b
The operation of the word and *Sacraments* in our ſoule and bodie. 119.a
That the vſe of the *Sacraments* ought to bee continually in the Church, and why. 365.b

Sacrifice.

Againſt the *Sacrifice* of the maſſe, and the celebraters of the ſame. 298.a
What Solomon meaneth by this woorde *Sacrifice*. 297.b.

Sacrifices.

That God alloweth not the *Sacrifices* of the wicked. 297.a.b
That the *Sacrifices* of the wicked are an abhomination, and why. 443.b
Sacrifices ordeined at the giuing of the tenne Commandements. 429.a
That the *Sacrifices* of the faithleſſe, neuer pleaſed the Lord, and why. 429.a.b
What be the true *Sacrifices* which we ought to offer vnto God. 229.a
The *Sacrifices* of the faithful alwayes acceptable before God, and why. 429.a
Of *Sacrifices*, and what kinde of *Sacrifices* the Lorde alloweth and refuſeth. 37.a.b
Againſt the *Sacrifices* of Prieſtes, Monkes, and Nunnes. 37.b

Safetie.

That al our *ſafetie* ſtandeth in the name of the Lorde. 369.b
In what thinges wicked worldlinges repoſe their *ſafetie*. 369.b.

Saluation.

Whether the doctrine of *ſaluation*, &c. is not indifferently appointed, as well for the good as the euil. 121.b
In what thing the principall part of *ſaluation* conſiſteth. 571.a

Satiſfaction.

Againſt Papiſtical *ſatiſfaction*, and in what pointes it conſiſteth. 235.a.b
Againſt Popiſh *ſatiſfaction*. 139.a.

Scorners.

Howe to knowe whether men be *ſcorners* or not. 301.a.b
That *ſcorners* are murtherers, and why. 301.a
Whether it be lawful for vs to abſtain from rebuking of *ſcorners*, for the auoiding of hatred. 122.b
Achab and Iezabel ſhewed them ſelues verie wicked and deſperate *ſcorners*. 122.a
Solomons woordes impugned, in attributing wiſdome vnto thoſe that rebuke *ſcorners*. 301.a
What vices doe make *ſcorners* vnpatient to beare a rebuke. 123. a
Of the hatred of *ſcorners* towardes ſuche as rebuke them. 300.b.301.a
Scorners are dogges and ſwine, and deſerue not to haue holie thinges, and why. 121.b
Scorners ought to be feared with the horrible vengeance of God. 122.a
Scorners muſt not bee rebuked, but terrified with Gods iudgements, &c. 122.a
That *ſcorners* and proude perſons are all of one order. 53 b
Why the ſcripture calleth the enuious froward *ſcorners*. 53.b.
That naturally we be al *ſcorners*, and what we ought to doe in this caſe. 53.b
Neceſſarie pointes of doctrine for fooles and *ſcorners*. 15.a
Why *ſcorners* and fooles are ſaide to ſeeke God, doing nothing leſſe. 15.a
The behauiour of *ſcorners* and fooles in deſpiſing of preaching. 15.b

That we haue knowledge enough, if wee be *righteous*. 584.a
The *righteous* regardeth the cauſe of the poore, &c. 583.b.584.a
The meanes whereby the *righteous* doeth not ceaſe to bring foorth wiſedome. 162. a
That the number of the *righteous* is not great, and why. 161.b.162.a
Who they be that are counted *righteous*. 261. a
The ſtate of the *righteous*, and how God doth preſerue them. 21.b.22.a.b
The wordes of Solomon impugned, that the iuſt and *righteous* ſhal dwel in the land, &c. 28.a.b
The *righteous*, is not carried away by temptation. 168.b
The reaſon why it ſeemeth that the *righteous* are forgotten before God. 133.b
God puniſheth the wicked for the *righteous*, and ſetteth them vnder the iuſt. 173.a
That the *righteous* of them ſelues, are no better then the moſt wicked. 186.b
Howe wee ſhalbee the ſeede of the *righteous*, from what ſtock or roote ſoeuer we come. 188.b
In what reſpect the *righteous* are the children of wrath. &c. 188.a
The words of Solomon impugned, ſaying, The ſeede of the *righteous* ſhal eſcape. 187. b. 188.a
The profite that enſueth the counſell of the *righteous*. 137.a
The manifolde miſeries of the *righteous* in this life, doeth make men thinke they are not bleſſed. 133.a
Why Solomon calleth the *righteous* a ſtrong foundation. 156.b
The behauiour of the *righteous* in his ſpeach and communication 162.b
The lips of the *righteous* feede a whole multitude, and howe. 148.b
God forgetteth not the *righteous* in the time of neede. 133.b.134 a
Who is to bee reputed *righteous*, and what maketh a *righteous* man. 144.b.

Righteouſneſſe.

The cauſe why the *righteouſneſſe* of the perfect man ſhall direct his way. 169.b
The *righteouſnes* of the iuſt, doth make plaine and direct their way. 170.a
Righteouſnes beeing giuen and imputed vnto vs, is counted as ours in ſcripture. 176. a.b.
The proſperity of the wicked, & poore eſtate of the faithful, tempteth Gods children to renounce al *righteouſnes*, &c. 129.a
Howe the *righteouſnes* of the iuſt man ſhalbe vnprofitable vnto him. 516.a
The rule of perfect *righteouſnes* is the lawe. 168.a
Howe and after what ſort *righteouſnes* doeth deliuer from death. 168.a
Righteouſnes taken for a right and ſound conſcience. 168.b
Righteouſnes is not founde in the wicked, diſſemblers, hypocrites, &c. 168. b
The *righteouſnes* of the iuſt, is not properly his owne. 169.b
What is meant by ſowing of *righteouſneſſe*, and howe it is done. 185.a
To ſtudie for *righteouſneſſe* is the way to get riches. 182.b
The meanes and wayes to attaine vnto *righteouſneſſe*. 108.a
To walke in the pathe of *righteouſneſſe*, and what it is. 109.a
That *righteouſneſſe* leadeth to life, a neceſſarie doctrine. 186.a
Of *righteouſneſſe* by imputation. 174.a
The wil of God is the onely rule of perfect *righteouſneſſe*. 298.b
Righteouſnes taken for the conſcience of man, and howe. 167.b
That riches ſerue to bring foorth *righteouſneſſe*. 195.b
That riches ſeeme to bring foorth *righteouſneſſe*. 195.b
What *righteouſneſſe* it is, that ſhall deliuer a man from death. 167.b
When, and by dooing what deedes, wee are ſaide to walke in our *righteouſneſſe*. 254.b.255.a
Righteouſneſſe is the cauſe that man taketh pleaſure in doing his duetie. 308.a
Of *righteouſneſſe* proceeding from a purified heart. 298.b.

Rule.

There is no *Rule* ſo general, but hath ſome exception, and howe. 174.b

Rulers.

Wicked *rulers* ouer people compared to roaring Lions and hungrie Beares, and why. 768.b.569.a
What kinde of men wicked *rulers* do fauour. 569.a
Howe we muſt behaue our ſelues towardes wicked *rulers*. 569.a

S.

Sacraments.

The word and *Sacraments* compared to victual and wine. 118.b
The adminiſtration of the *Sacraments*, are the meates and drinkes to preſerue vs from hunger and thirſt. 118.b
The operation of the word and *Sacraments* in our ſoule and bodie. 119.a
That the vſe of the *Sacraments* ought to bee continually in the Church, and why. 365.b

Sacrifice.

Againſt the *Sacrifice* of the maſſe, and the celebraters of the ſame. 298.a
What Solomon meaneth by this woorde *Sacrifice*. 297.b.

Sacrifices.

That God alloweth not the *Sacrifices* of the wicked. 297.a.b
That the *Sacrifices* of the wicked are an abhomination, and why. 443.b
Sacrifices ordeined at the giuing of the tenne Commandements. 429.a
That the *Sacrifices* of the faithleſſe, neuer pleaſed the Lord, and why. 429.a.b
What be the true *Sacrifices* which we ought to offer vnto God. 229.a
The *Sacrifices* of the faithful alwayes acceptable before God, and why. 429.a
Of *Sacrifices*, and what kinde of *Sacrifices* the Lorde alloweth and refuſeth. 37.a.b
Againſt the *Sacrifices* of Prieſtes, Monkes, and Nunnes. 37.b

Safetie.

That al our *ſafetie* ſtandeth in the name of the Lorde. 369.b
In what thinges wicked worldlinges repoſe their *ſafetie*. 369.b.

Saluation.

Whether the doctrine of *ſaluation*, &c. is not indifferently appointed, as well for the good as the euil. 121.b
In what thing the principall part of *ſaluation* conſiſteth. 571.a

Satisfaction.

Againſt Papiſtical *ſatiſfaction*, and in what pointes it conſiſteth. 235.a.b
Againſt Popiſh *ſatiſfaction*. 139.a.

Scorners.

Howe to knowe whether men be *ſcorners* or not. 301.a.b
That *ſcorners* are murtherers, and why. 301.a
Whether it be lawful for vs to abſtain from rebuking of *ſcorners*, for the auoiding of hatred. 122.b
Achab and Iezabel ſhewed them ſelues verie wicked and deſperate *ſcorners*. 122.a
Solomons woordes impugned, in attributing wiſdome vnto thoſe that rebuke *ſcorners*. 301.a
What vices doe make *ſcorners* vnpatient to beare a rebuke. 123. a
Of the hatred of *ſcorners* towardes ſuche as rebuke them. 300.b.301.a
Scorners are dogges and ſwine, and deſerue not to haue holie thinges, and why. 121.b
Scorners ought to be feared with the horrible vengeance of God. 122.a
Scorners muſt not bee rebuked, but terrified with Gods iudgements, &c. 122.a
That *ſcorners* and proude perſons are all of one order. 53 b
Why the ſcripture calleth the enuious froward *ſcorners*. 53.b.
That naturally we be al *ſcorners*, and what we ought to doe in this caſe. 53.b
Neceſſarie pointes of doctrine for fooles and *ſcorners*. 15.a
Why *ſcorners* and fooles are ſaide to ſeeke God, doing nothing leſſe. 15.a
The behauiour of *ſcorners* and fooles in deſpiſing of preaching. 15.b

Againſt *ſcorners*, their kinde of ſpeeches, and that they ſtriue againſt God.89.a

In what caſes fooles and *ſcorners* doe cal vpon God.15.b

Howe and in what ſort *ſcorners* ſeeke for wiſdome, and miſſe her.258 a.b

Scornful.

What is required towardes the driuing out of the *ſcornful*.452.b

Howe troubleſome a *ſcorneful* man is, and that ſuch a one is not to be ſuffered, &c. 452.b

Who he is that is called *ſcornful*.442.a.b

The meaning of theſe wordes, *Scornful* men bring a Citie into a ſnare, a notable doctrine.584.b.585.a

The *ſcornful* compared to a ſpring ful of water, and howe.405.a

That the *ſcornful* are not to be ſpared, but puniſhed. 405.b

That there are diuers *ſcornful* perſons in the world, &c.404.a.b

God hath prepared iudgements for the *ſcornful*, and what they be.404.b

Reaſons why Solomō would haue the *ſcornful* ſmitten. 401.b.402.a

Leſſons for the *ſcornful* to learne at wiſdoms mouth.11.b.12.a

Who are *ſcornful*, and that ſuche doe hate knowledge. 11.b

Scripture.

The *Scripture* is diuinely inſpired, and indited by the holie Ghoſt.442.a

The *Scripture* flattereth no man, but dealeth vprightly, &c.442.a.

Scriptures.

Againſt ſuch as contemne preaching and reading of holie *Scriptures*.3.b

The profite of holie *Scriptures*, and howe they are giuen.12.b

Againſt ſuche as forbid the common people to reade the holie *Scriptures*. 141.a

The holie *Scriptures* are our true knowledge. 141.a

That the *Scriptures* are repleniſhed with counſels and learning.459.b

With what care and diligence wee ſhoulde read the holie *Scriptures*.21.a.b

Secret.

Why the couenant of God with the faithful, is called a *Secret*.52.b

What is meant by this ſaying of Solomon, The *ſecret* of the Lorde.52.b

The *ſecret* of the Lorde is his couenant with the faithful.52.b

Wherein the *ſecret* of the Lord conſiſteth, and what it teacheth. 52.b

Secrets.

Reuealers of *ſecrets* to doe hurt, condemned by Solomon to eternal death.178.b

Againſt ſuche as reueale *ſecretes* to the defaming of their neighbours. 506.b.507.a.b.

A reuealer of *ſecrets* no better then a backbiter.420.a

Againſt reuealers of *ſecrets* to do their neighbours hurt.177.b

Sermons.

The profite that commeth by reſorting vnto *Sermons*.305.a

Againſt ſuch as loathe *Sermons*, being full before they come at them.303.a.b

Seruant.

In what reſpectes a man is ſaide to bee his owne *Seruant*.206.a.b

Righteouſneſſe attributed vnto him that is his owne *Seruant*.207.a

A promiſe made vnto the man that is his owne *Seruant*.208.a

What Solomon meaneth by this ſpeech, Is his owne *Seruant*. 206.a

Of a lewde *Seruant*, and who are reputed and taken to be ſuch. 288.b

Of the anger of a King againſt a lewde *Seruant*.289.a

Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, Accuſe not a *Seruant* vnto his maiſter, &c.612.a.b

The large ſignification of this word *Seruant*. 593.b

By what meanes the *Seruant* wil become as the ſonne.594.a

Of the proude behauiour of a *Seruant* when he reigneth, &c.619.a.b

Seruants.

That wee ought to abaſe our ſelues to doe the workes of *Seruants*. 206.a

Of wiſe *Seruants*, and who are eſteemed ſuch. 288 a b

Of diſcrete *Seruants*, and who are reputed

and counted ſuch. 346.b.347.a
The miſerable ſtate of *ſeruantes* that haue backfriends & euil willers.612.a.b.613.a
The cauſe why Princes Courtes and dominions are ful of lewde *ſeruantes*. 288.b.
The reward of true *ſeruantes*, vnder a compariſon of the Figtree.542.a
In what caſes *ſeruantes* &c. doe ware hautie and proude, and howe ſuche muſt be vſed. 594.a

Seruice.
The commendation of *ſeruice* by compariſon.205.b
That they are fooles which ſtraie from the true *ſeruice* of God.213.a
What manner of mens *ſeruice* God abhorreth.563.a
That the *ſeruice* which Papiſtes doe to God, is nothing but filthineſſe.563.a
Of *ſeruice* due to God and our neighbours. 469.a
That *ſeruice* is (after a ſort) a rewarde of ſinne. 205.b
Of the *ſeruice* of wicked men, and that God doeth not accept the ſame.297.a.b

Shame.
The loſſe of *shame*, is the abounding in whordome.100.b
That *shame* is the rewarde of pride. 164.b
The cauſe why the olde world fel into *shame* and deſtruction.164.b
The way to auoide *shame*, is to bee humble. 165.a
There is a *shame* that leadeth to repentance, peculiar to the godlie.164.b
The *shame* of the reprobate deſcribed what it is.164.b
The cauſe why the proude are put to confuſion and *shame*. 164.b
The meanes and wayes to auoide pouertie and *shame*.243.b.244.a
What Solomon meaneth by theſe words, That he which couereth *shame*, is wiſe. 214.b.215.a
That the humble ſhalbee farre from *shame*. 165 b.

Sickneſſe.
That wee muſt not giue ouer reioycing, though God ſmite vs with *ſickneſſe*. 359.b.360.a
Of *ſickneſſe*, and howe we muſt behaue our ſelues to Godwarde in that caſe. 36.b.37.a
That we muſt impute our *ſickneſſe* to our ſinnes.37.a.

Silence.
In what ſenſe *ſilence* is taken in holie ſcripture. 177.a.b
In *ſilence* all things are quiet, without noiſe, &c.177.a
Of whome wee muſt learne *ſilence*. 177.b
Silence is taken in ſcripture for abſtinence. 177.b
That in *ſilence* there is great wiſedome, and howe.363.a
Of the *ſilence* which pleaſeth God, and wherein the ſame conſiſteth.363.a

Simple.
Wiſedome refuſeth not the *ſimple*, but calleth them to her, and why. 120.b
That wee ought to be *ſimple*, and in what reſpectes.3.a
The younger ſorte are commonly *ſimple*. 3.a.
Of the *ſimple*, and who they bee that are ſo counted.2.b
Who are *ſimple*, and that wee are all (naturally) *ſimple* and voide of witte. 120.a
The *ſimple* are the bidden gueſtes to wiſedomes banket, 120.a

Simplicitie.
Of *ſimplicitie*, from whom the ſame firſt flowed. 2.b.3.a
Howe farfoorth we ſhould forſake *ſimplicitie*. 3.a
Simplicitie ioyned with wiſedome and knowledge, much commendable.3.a

Sinne.
The eſtate of man before *Sinne*, & after.205.b
Notable proofes that none can vaunt himſelfe to be free from *ſinne*.413.a
What we muſt doe vpon the knowledge of our *Sinne*. 152.b
That none is exempt from *Sinne*, and why. 412.b

***

412.b

That the iuſt is not hee which hath no *ſinne*, who then. 220.b

None can bee ſo iuſt, but hee muſt needes *ſinne*.432.b

That God is not the authour of *ſinne*, a notable doctrine.428.b

That *ſinne* came by diſobedience. 287.b

Of beeing ſnared by the *ſinne* of the lippes, and what it meaneth.210.211.a.b

In what reſpectes wee are ſaide to leaue *ſinne*, though it forſake not vs, &c. 567.a

That we muſt not ſuffer any to *ſinne* in our preſence, and why.68.b

That *ſinne* againſt the holie Ghoſt can neither be pardoned nor repented of.579.a

Sinnes.

Of *ſinnes* committed vpon ſet purpoſe.152.b.153.a

He that hideth his *ſinnes* ſhal not proſper, and howe that is meant.566.b

What we muſt doe to obteine pardon of our *ſinnes*.567.a

What is meant by this, That the wicked ſhalbe holden with the roddes of his owne *ſinne*.81.a.

To what end Solomon compareth the *ſinnes* of the wicked vnto roddes.81.a b

Sinners.

Sinners of purpoſe deſerue well to bee called fooles, and why.153.a

Againſt what kinde of *Sinners* we ſhould not be enuious, and why.481 b

Of *Sinners* which ſinne of ignorance, and of purpoſe.481.b

The cauſe why one is enuious againſt *Sinners*.472.b

What *Sinners* they be whome God wil heare, and not heare. 15.a

Howe, and in what ſenſe the purſe of *Sinners* is ſaide to be one.8.b

The wayes and pathes of *ſinners* what they are.8.b

A reaſon why we muſt not conſent vnto *Sinners*, nor walke in the way with them. 8:b

The great deſire of *Sinners* to be riche, deſcribed.8 a

The ſcripture doeth not call Gods children *ſinners*, and why.7.a

Of *Sinners*, and who are to be called by that name.7.a.b

What perſuaſions *Sinners* vſe, to entice others after them.7.b

In what ſenſe the ſcripture calleth vs not *Sinners*, but Saintes.234.a

Of the afflictions which doe folowe *Sinners*. 247.a

What is meant by theſe wordes, To be enuious againſt *Sinners*. 472.a

Who be *Sinners*, and deſerue that name.471.b

That *Sinners* haue nothing in the worlde, which properly belongeth vnto them.249.a.

Slanderers.

Of *Slanderers*; and what kinde of fooles they are.145.b

What dueties are required of vs, concerning *Slanderers*.178.b

Slanderers condemned for ſundrie weightie reaſons. 178 a

That *Slanderers* are murtherers, and howe. 178.a.b.

Slaues.

That *Slaues* were handled worſe thē beaſts. 612.b

That we are all *Slaues* by nature, and why. 594.a

That wee muſt confeſſe our ſelues to bee *Slaues*, yea, bondſlaues.592.a

The ſtate of *Slaues* that were bought from hande to hande.592.b

In what reſpect we ſhewe our ſelues no better then *Slaues*.592 a

In what reſpect hirelinges are reputed *ſlaues*.592.b

Sleepe.

Vpon what kinde of *ſleepe* pouertie dependeth.415.b.416.a

That *ſleepe* doeth not proceede of ſinne. 415.b

That *ſleepe* muſt bee moderately vſed, & why. 415.b

That *ſleepe* is both naturall and neceſſarie. 415.b

Sleepe is one of the chiefeſt partes of the eaſe of this life. 61.b

That too much *ſleepe* maketh a man dul witted and heauie.85.b

Of *ſleepe*, and that the fulneſſe of the riche wil not ſuffer him to *ſleepe*.47.b
Howe a wiſe man ſhould *ſleepe*, and how the vnſatiable and intemperate.47.b
That God giueth *ſleepe*, though it ſeeme a thing natural.47.b
What we muſt doe if we *ſleepe* quietly, and what if wee cannot *ſleepe* with eaſe. 47.b
That quiet *ſleepe* is a part of our daily bread, &c.47.b.48.a.

Slouthfull.

That the *ſlouthful* giue them ſelues to doe nothing but hurt.86.b
Leſſons of admonition for the *ſlouthful*. 84.b
Unto what man Solomō ſendeth the *ſlouthful* to learne.84.b.85.a
Reaſons why Solomon dealeth ſo often againſt the *ſlouthful*. 400.b
The *ſlouthful* ſet out by a liuely deſcription. 400.b.401.a
The deſert of the *ſlouthful*, by the iudgement of Solomon and Paule.401.a
The ſhameful & miſerable ſtate of the *ſlouthful*.401.a
That the *ſlouthful* is hurtfull both to himſelfe and others.156.b
The *ſlouthful* compared vnto vineger and ſmoke, and why. 156.b
The *ſlouthful* is cauſe of much ſorrowe and anger, and why. 156.b.157.a
Of *ſlouthfull* perſons which are wiſe in their owne conceites, and who be ſuch. 527.a.b
A threatening againſt the *ſlouthful*. 392.a.
The *ſlouthful* and the craftie compared together.392.a.
The meaning of Solomon, ſaying, The *ſlouthful* mans way is an hedge of thornes, &c.307.b
That it is euill ſpoken, to ſay, that the *ſlouthful* man is an honeſt man. 307.b.308.a
That *ſlouthful* and careleſſe perſons are to bee counted wicked waſters, and howe. 368.a
Who they be that deſerue to bee called and eſteemed *ſlouthful*.308.a
Of ſundrie appellations and names giuen to the *ſlouthful* 86.b
Negligence, contempt, and ingratitude in the *ſlouthful*.501.b
Howe deſirous the *ſlouthful* are to forge excuſes.526.a.b
What kinde of reſt it is, which the *ſlouthfull* haue.526.b.527.a
The *ſlouthfull* rebuked of too muche ſleepe and lazineſſe. 502.a.b
A deſcription of the *ſlouthful*, in louing ſleepe. 85.b
That the *ſlouthful* ſhalbe taken with ſpiritual hunger, &c.231.b
The puniſhment of the *ſlouthful*, and the ſpending waſter alike.368.b
The care of the *ſlouthful* is not properly care, but a beaſtlyke greedineſſe. 443.a
That *slouthful* perſons are no better then theeues and murtherers, and why. 368 a
The *slouthful* mocked and derided by Solomon 455.a
Sundrie ſortes of *slouthful* perſons, and who be ſuch.455.a
Of ſuche as wil not ſeeme *slouthful*, and yet are.409.a
That beeing *slouthful*, wee are grieuous and troubleſome euen vnto God.157.a
In what reſpectes a *slouthful* perſon is compared to a hunter.226.a
The *slouthful* & the righteous contrarie, and why. 443.a
A deſcription of the *slouthfull* mans fielde. 501.b.502.a
The *slouthful* threatened with neede and nakedneſſe.409.b
That the *slouthful* are profitable neither to them ſelues nor other. 85.b
In what ſort the *slouthful* are aſſaulted with pouertie.85.b
To what ende Solomon doeth ſcoffe & flout the *slouthful*.527.a

Slouthfulneſſe.

Againſt idleneſſe or *Slouthfulneſſe*. 130.b.

What wee muſt doe to auoide *ſlouthfulneſſe*, euerie man for his owne parte. 157. a.b
Of the deteſting of *ſlouthfulneſſe*, but not as we ought. 231.b
The danger of *ſlouthfulneſſe*, and what vices enſue the ſame. 527.a.b
Perſuaſions to mooue vs to forſake *ſlouthfulneſſe*. 226.a
Againſt *ſlouthfulneſſe*. 226.a.b
Sobrietie.
Of *ſobrietie*, and temperance. 76.a
Sonne.
Of a wiſe *Sonne*, and who is to be ſo reputed. 228.a
Of a fooliſh *Sonne*, who are to be ſo accounted, and what diſcomfortes they bring. 361.a.b.
Soothſaying.
Againſt *Soothſaying*, and *Soothſayers*. 331. a.
Sorrovve.
That the contempt of godlie *ſorrovve* is dangerous. 152 b
The difference betweene godlie *ſorrovv* and worldly *ſorrovve*. 152.b
Godly *ſorrovve* cauſeth repentance vnto ſaluation. 152.b
That the *ſorrovve* of the heart maketh the minde heauie. 302.b
That all *ſorrovve* is not euill, nor to be fled from. 302.b
That the begetting of a foole, is the begetting of *ſorrovve*, and howe. 359. a.b
What we muſt do, to be deliuered from heauineſſe and *ſorrovve*. 261.b. 262.a
Of *ſorrovve* proceeding of the obedience to the Commandements. 30.b
Soule.
That the *Soule* in ſcripture, is ſometime taken for our neighbour. 184.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, If thou bee Lord ouer thy *Soule*. 465.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, Offendeth againſt his owne *Soule*. 407.b
Why the *Soule* of man is ſaid to be precious. 94.b
Soules.
What Solomon meaneth by theſe wordes, And he that winneth *Soules*, is wiſe. 197.a
Of being mercifull to our owne *Soules*, and rewarding them. 183.b
The nettes which Miniſters ſhoulde vſe to caſt ouer the Sea of this worlde to catch *Soules*. 197.b
That they which fiſhe for *Soules*, haue their rewarde. 197.b
That in Poperie there is neither fruit, nor taking of *Soules*. 198.a
That God is the keeper of all mens *Soules*, yea, euen of the wicked. 488.a
Of the ſuſtenance of our *Soules*, proceeding from the Goſpel. 240.b
Two principal wayes of keeping the *Soules*. 230 a.b
What we muſt do, if we wil keepe our *ſoules*, &c. 449.a.b
That the *Soules* of the wicked haue not the true ioye, when they haue attained their deſires. 244.b
Of deſpiſing the ſoule, and who deſpiſe their owne *ſoules*. 320.a.b. 321.a
That God taketh care, and hath alway had a care for our *Soules*. 276.b. 277.a
What wee muſt doe, to keepe our owne *Soules*. 392.b.
Speaking.
Of *ſpeaking* pleaſant, and frowarde thinges. 162.b. 163.a
Of *ſpeaking* wel, and the fruites which it doth bring. 137.b. 138.a
That we runne to deſtruction, if wee giue eare to the wicked, and delight in their *ſpeaking*. 176.a.b
Spirite.
That the *Spirite* of a man is not alwayes taken for the ſoule of a man. 372.b
Of the *Spirite* which is contrarie to the outwarde man, and howe to come by it. 372.b
Excellent operations of the *Spirite* working in vs. 372.b
The meaning of Solomon, ſaying, That the *Spirite* of a man will ſuſtaine his infirmitie. 372.a.b
Of the *Spirite* and courage of effeminate perſons.

perſons.372.b.

Steppes.

What manner of man hee is, whoſe *ſteppes* the Loꝛd gouerneth.423.a

That the *ſteppes* of man are in the hands of God, and how.423.a

Strangers.

What manner of perſons wee muſt eſteeme as *ſtrangers*.418.a

That we ought to haue nothing to doe with *ſtrangers*, and who are ſo called.77.a.

Strength.

The meaning of theſe woꝛdes, Giue not thy *ſtrength* to women.625.a

From whence *ſtrength* of ſpirit commeth, & wherein it conſiſteth.483.a

Of the foꝛce and *ſtrength* of this woꝛld.482.b.483.a.

Strife.

Reaſons to induce vs from *ſtrife* and variance 408.a.b

The iudgement of the holy Ghoſt againſt ſuch as be giuen to *ſtrife*.409.a

A man giuen to *ſtrife* compared to wood and cole, and why.528.b,529.a

Towardes whome our *ſtrife* and variance muſt ceaſe.408.b

Howe to ſtay *ſtrife*, and what is the cauſe that it ceaſeth not.528.b.529.a

Hee that medleth with the *ſtrife* not belonging to him, compared to one that taketh a dogge by the eares.528.a

That it is our duetie to appeaſe and quiet *ſtrife* where it is.527.b

Sundꝛie cauſes to withdꝛaw vs from *ſtrife*, and what is the pꝛincipal.506.b

A deſcription of a quarrellous man giuen to contention and *ſtrife*.506.b

Strife and debate pꝛoceed of furie and indignation.439.a.

Subiection.

What kinde of *ſubiection* that is which men doe moſt eſteeme.474.a

Subiects.

Exhoꝛtations to *ſubiects* concerning their dueties,&c.407.a.b

Why *ſubiects* ought to pꝛay foꝛ their ſuperiours.428.b

Benignitie and trueth two things required in *ſubiects*,&c.425.b

A leſſon foꝛ *ſubiects* to walke in obedience to their ſuperiours.504.b

That the change of kings and pꝛinces is not commonly pꝛofitable, and what *ſubiects* ſhould do in this caſe.426.a

That it is not ynough foꝛ *ſubiects* to ſay, God ſaue the king, but what is required of them further.332.a.b.

Succeſsion.

Of *ſucceſsion*, and that it is Gods oꝛdinance.391.a.

Suretie.

What is required of him that becommeth *ſuretie* foꝛ another.83.a.b.84.a.b

Reaſons why Solomon would not haue vs be *ſuretie* foꝛ our neighbour.83.a

Sureties.

Into what dangers they come that become *ſureties*.83.b

That we are captiues, if we become *ſureties* foꝛ our neighbours.82.b.

Suretiſhip.

Of *ſuretiſhip* foꝛ a ſtranger, and the vexation thereupon depending.180.a

In what reſpects *ſuretiſhip* may bee required.181.a

Certaine duties and behauiours to be vſed in *ſuretiſhip*.83.b.

T.

Talebearers.

Strife may ſoone be appeaſed if it were not foꝛ *Talebearers*.528.b

Talebearers compared to wood laid vpon the fire, and how.528.b

That *Talebearers* are very dangerous.529.b.

That *Talebearers* doe great hurte, yea, that they woꝛke deſtruction.367.b

Talebearers compared vnto murtherers, and how.367.b.

Taletellers.

Againſt *Taletellers*, and how dangerous they be.342.a

That ſcripture foꝛbiddeth vs to be *taletellers*.342.a

That *taletellers* make diuiſion among princes, and how.341.b.342.a
Temperance.
Exhortations to *temperance*, and ſobrietie. 306.a.b
Temperance in diet commended vnto vs by Solomon.464.b.465.a
Temperance in vſing Gods creatures, commanded, the contrarie forbidden. 536.a.
Temptation.
Why he that abydeth *temptation* ſhalbee bleſſed.156.b
The righteous is not caried away by *temptation*.168.b
Who they be, that willing to be riche, fal into *temptation*.194.b
Of *temptation*, and what it is to tempt God. 455.a
An admonition againſt the *temptation* of impatience in Gods children.38.b.
Temptations.
How the righteous comforteth himſelfe in *temptations*.168.b.169.a
The eſtate of the righteous in the *temptations* of this world.168.b.
Theft.
Of *theft*, and the kindes thereof.49.a b.
Theefe.
That a *theefe* is not ſo hurtful to a commonwealth as an adulterer 98.b
That a *theefe* is not ſo euill as an adulterer, and why.95.b
In what reſpectes a *theefe* is borne withall, and excuſed.95.a.b
That they which puniſh a *theefe* more thē an adulterer, doe iniurie vnto God.96.a.
Theeues.
Theeues and their partakers compared to great maſtiue curres, &c 596.b
Theeues haue not men only againſt them, but fal into the hands of God.612.a
What manner of perſons wee eſteeme to be *theeues*.595.b
The cauſe which maketh *theeues* deteſtable. 595.b
Of ſundrie ſortes of *theeues*, and which bee moſt dangerous.595.b.596.a
Of taking part of ſtolne and ill gotten goods with *theeues*.595.b.596.a
That *theeues* by ſtealing & robbing deſtroy their owne ſoules.596.a
Of the ſhame which lighteth vppon *theeues* and their partakers.596.a b.
Thought.
That ſpeech is taken in ſcripture for *thought*, and how.422.a.
Thoughts.
That the *thoughts* of the fooliſh is ſinne, and how.485.a.b
Who is an imaginer of miſchief, and of wicked *thoughts*.485.a.b
Of pure and cleane *thoughts* from whome proceed pleaſant and acceptable wordes. 315.b
The abhominable *thoughts* which wicked perſons haue in their hearts.315.a
The meaning of theſe words, Confirme thy *thoughts* by counſel.419.a
The *thoughts* of mans hearte compared to deepe waters 410.a
Who they bee that haue filthie *thoughts* in their hearts.315.b
Of the *thoughts* of men, and howe they come to naught.310.b
What we muſt doe if wee will not haue our *thoughts* come to nothing.310.b.311.a
The meaning of Solomon, in ſaying that there are many *thoughts* in the hearte of man 397.b
Our *thoughts* are as preſent with God, as if we ſhoulde expreſſe them by woordes or workes.409.b
That GOD will giue a good iſſue to our *thoughts*, vpon condition.311.a.
Thriftineſſe.
Of *thriftineſſe*, and that it is commendable. 316.a.
Tongue.
What Solomon meaneth, ſaying that a whaleſome *tongue* is as the tree of life. 293 b
The danger of a naughtie *tongue*, proceeding from a froward heart.358.b.359.a
Of the *tongue* of deſtruction, and who they be that haue ſuch a *tongue* 348.a.b
What miſchiefes enſue, if wee had a falſe *tongue*.89.b.90.a
The place of the *tongue*, and howe the ſame ought to be vſed and applyed.89.b

Why Solomon ſaieth that the *tongue* of the frowarde ſhalbee rooted out.163.a
Sundrie terrible examples proouing that God hateth a falſe *tongue*.90.a
The vſe of the *tongue*, and whereto wee ought to make it ſerue.147.a
The *tongue* of the iuſt ſeeketh nothing but the glorie of God,&c.148.a
Unto the *tongue* many wickedneſſes are attributed.162.b
Why Solomon calleth the *tongue* of the wiſe,health.317.a
Of the *tongue* of the wiſe,and what benefites the ſame bringeth.217.a
The fruites of a froward *tongue* called euill fruites.162.a
The office of the *tongue* when God hath it in ordering.322.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, A ſoft *tongue* breaketh the bones 510.a
The *tongue* of the righteous compared vnto ſiluer,and why.147.b
That the frowardneſſe of the *tongue* procureth the loſſe of our ſoules, and howe. 294.a
That a lying *tongue* is one of the ſeuen things which God hateth.89.a.b
The meaning of theſe wordes,A falſe *tongue* hateth the afflicted.532.a.b
A reaſon why Solomon giueth a hande to the *tongue*.376.b
The vſe of the *tongue*, and howe it ought rightly to be applyed.377.a
Who they bee that delight to haue an euill *tongue*.377.a
The excellencie of the *tongue* commended in holy ſcripture.291.a.b
That the *tongue* of the wiſe vſeth knowledge aright,and how.290.b.291.a.b.
The rewarde of ſuch as are buſie of *tongue*, with an admonition to keepe it. 441.b. 442.a
That death and life are in the power of the *tongue*.376.b.

Tongues.

The reward of froward *tongues*, after their miſvſage at pleaſure.162.a.163.a
With what kinde of *tongues* the world is filled.230.b
Againſt euil *tongues* and lying lippes. 211.a
The complaints of holy ſcripture, againſt wicked and accurſed *tongues*.256.a.b
How the wicked that are in authoritie, doe whet their *tongues*, both againſt God and man.255.b
What we muſt do to make our *tongues* weapons of righteouſneſſe.89.b
Againſt ſuch as haue babbling *tongues*, &c. 371.b.

Traditions.

The doctrines and *traditions* of men are called ſtolne waters and hid bread,and why. 126.a.

Tranſgreſsion.

Of the ſnares that are in the *tranſgreſsion* of an euil man.583.a
That *tranſgreſsion* increaſeth when the wicked increaſe,and how.590.a.b.

Tranſgreſſour.

What is meant by this worde *Tranſgreſſour*, and of wages giuen to ſuch.523.b.

Treaſure.

What we muſt do if we wil haue our dwelling places repleniſhed with *treaſure* and oyle.439.b
What thinges are meant and vnderſtoode by theſe woordes *treaſure* and oyle. 439.b.
That our principal *treaſure* muſt be the feare of God,and why.439.b
Why the goods which God giueth the wiſe man, are called *treaſure* and oyle. 440.a.
Howe and in what ſenſe the houſe of the righteous is ſaide to haue much *treaſure*. 295.b
What duties are required of vs to godward, for the *treaſure* of his wiſedome.46.a.

Treaſures.

What Solomon meaneth by the *treaſures* of wickedneſſe,ſaying,that they ſhal not profit.128.b.

Triall.

The *triall* of God compared to a fining pot or furnace.347.a.b
The *triall* of heartes, and wherein the ſame conſiſteth.347.b
To what end God hath our hearts in *tryall*. 347.b

That

That it is good for vs to abide the Lordes *trial*, and why.347.b.

Trinitie.

A neceſſarie doctrine touching the *Trinitie*. 111.a b.

Trouble.

The meaning of Solomon by theſe wordes, *Trouble* is the place of the righteous.172.b.

The wicked ſhall come into *Trouble* for the iuſt, and why.172.b.173.a

The cauſe of the wickeds *trouble* ought to be imputed vnto none but himſelfe, and why.173.a

What kind of men they be that *Trouble* and ſet al things out of order.196.b

Of the *trouble* which Solomon ſetteth againſt the feare of God.305 a.b

The righteous eſcapeth out of *trouble*, not of himſelfe, but by meanes.173.a.

Troubles.

The righteous are not excepted from *Troubles*.172.b

The righteous counted miſerable for their *Troubles* ſake.172.b

The neceſſitie of patience in *Troubles*. 172.b.

Trueth.

Whatſoeuer is contrarie to *Trueth* is wickedneſſe, &c.104.b

Why Solomon placeth *Trueth* againſt wickedneſſe, and wherein *Trueth* conſiſteth. 104.b

Speaking of *Trueth* conſiſteth not only in the mouth, but in workes.216.a

The nature of *Trueth*, and of whome ſhee taketh the ſame.218.a

Of the *lippe* of *Trueth*, and what doctrine is to be learned thereby.217 b.218.a

That God loueth *Trueth*, and commendeth it.257.b

That there is one *Trueth*, but many wayes of ſpeaking *Trueth*.215 a.b

That he which wil not heare Gods woorde, muſt needes bee voide of trueth. 444.a.

The knowledge of the *trueth* ſufficeth not, but a further thing is required 489.b

Of *trueth*, and that it is one of the partes whereinto the lawe is diuided.31.a

The meaning of theſe wordes, Buy *trueth* and ſel it not.475.b.476.a

That there is no word of excellencie but the pure *trueth*.350.b.351.a

The Churche is the piller and ſtrength of *trueth*.6.a.

Truſt.

Againſt vaine *truſt* and confidence in riches, 167.a

Againſt *truſt* and confidence in riches. 194.a.b

Of him that putteth his *truſt* in man, and him that putteth his *truſt* in God.195.b

That we muſt not *truſt* to the good deeds of others.230.a

Sundrie meanes ordeyned of God, and teaching vs to put our *truſt* in him.459.a.b.

Confidence and *truſt* in an vnfaythfull man in time of trouble like a broken tooth, and a ſlyding foote.512.a.b

That we cannot put our *truſt* in God, but by Jeſus Chriſt.459.a

The ſure and happie eſtate of ſuch as *truſt* in the Lord.604.b 605.a

It is ill done to *truſt* in temporal and worldly helpes, and why.159.a

Of aſſured *truſt*, and wherein the ſame conſiſteth.278.a

What it is to *truſt* in the Lorde. 576.a.

The ſtate of them that put their *truſt* in the Lord.156.a

What it is to *truſt* in our owne hearte, and that ſuch *truſt* is forbidden. 576.a.b.

Truſt in the Lorde compared to a ſtrong and high tower, &c.597.b

That wee muſt not looke to men to *truſt* in them, and why.542.b.543.a

That al our *truſt* ought to be onely in God. 368.b

What kinde of *truſt* it is that wee muſt put in our neighbour.50.b

Of vaine and fooliſhe *truſt*, and that it is againſt the worde of God.50.b

Carnall *truſt* holdeth men in geering and mocking.153.b

What we muſt doe to *truſt* in God with all our hearts.33.b

That there are but fewe which *truſt* in the Lord as they ought, and why. 33.b
That we cannot *truſt* in God except we loue him. 33.b
That the wiſe of this world haue no *truſt* in God, and why. 33.b
Of *truſt* in the Lorde, and howe neceſſarie it is. 33.a

V.

Vanitie.

Vanitie comprehendeth in it all kinde of ſinnes. 608.b
Vanitie is the corruption and wickedneſſe wherein we are borne. 608.b
The fruites of *vanitie* if we yeeld thereunto. 608.b. 609.a.

Vertue.

Exhortations to parents to teach their children *vertue* in youth, and why. 426.b.
What the world doeth account and cal *vertue*. 426.b
What kinde of *vertue* it is wherein nobleneſſe conſiſteth. 426.b
What we muſt doe that our *vertue* war not feeble. 486.a
The nobilitie of yong men is *vertue*. 426.a.b.

Vices.

Of great contrarietie euen betwixt *vices*. 427.a.b.

Victorie.

That *victorie* commeth of the Lorde, and of none other. 445.b
Victorie called ſafegard, as appeareth by the ſentence of Solomon 483.b.

Violence.

Of *violence*, and wherein the ſame conſiſteth. 229.b
Of *violence* done to the poore, called by the name of Deſtruction. 349.b
Violence againſt the blood of a man is done diuerſe wayes. 570.a.b
Examples moſt lamentable of ſuch as haue done *violence* againſt blood. 570 b.

Viſion.

Wholeſome doctrine of a *viſion* and that we muſt receiue it. 591.b
The meaning of theſe wordes, Where there is no *viſion*, the people decay. 591.a
What kinde of *viſion* hath euer bene neceſſarie in the world, and why. 591.a.

Vnderſtanding.

Who they be that are ſaid to be deſtitute of *vnderſtanding*. 309.b. 310.a.
That the man of *vnderſtanding* walketh vprightly, and who is ſuch a one. 310.a
Of *vnderſtanding* gotten by the word of God, and why it is called good. 32.a.b
Of *vnderſtanding* gotten by mans wit, &c. that it cannot bee called good, and why. 32.b
The meanes and wayes to get *vnderſtanding*, and what they be. 41.a.
To what ende God preſerueth vs, through the *vnderſtanding* that hee putteth in vs. 24.a
Of *vnderſtanding* both in the ſheepe and the ſhepherd, &c. 19.b. 20.a
Of *vnderſtanding*, and of the benefites obtayned by the *vnderſtanding* of Solomons prouerbs 4.a.b
What benefites are promiſed to the man of *vnderſtanding*. 3.b
The taſte of holy things ſtandeth in *vnderſtanding*. 124.a
When *vnderſtanding* is ſaide to thunder with her voice. 104.a
Wee ought to bee children of *vnderſtanding*, and why 137.a
Of the vnprofitable *vnderſtanding* of the world, and of good *vnderſtanding*. 241.a.b.

Vnfaithfulneſſe.

Of *vnfaithfulneſſe*, and that it is no ſmal euill, 26.a
Wherein the *vnfaithfulneſſe* of an adulterous woman doeth ſtand. 26.a.

Vnmerciful.

A ſharpe and ſeuere ſentence againſt ſuch as be *vnmerciful*. 49 b.

Vnrighteouſnes.

Of *vnrighteouſnes* and wickedneſſe among men, and the cauſe thereof. 165.b. 166.a.

Vnitie.

Of the *vnitie* of ſinners and wicked men 8.a.b.

****

Vovv.

The meaning of theſe wordes, What? the ſoune of my *Vovv*.624.b.625.a.

That we ought to keepe our *vovv* made vnto God in baptiſme.424.a.

Vovves.

To what ende wee vſe often to make *vovves*, 624.b

Vpright.

That the *vpright* in his way is abhomination to the wicked, prooued by examples. 599. a.b.

How we muſt behaue our ſelues towardes them that are *vpright*.586.a

That bloodie men hate him that is *vpright* how, and why.586.a.

Vprightneſſe.

What *vprightnes* it is that the beſt of vs hath in this life.135.b

Vprightneſſe wherein it conſiſteth, and that the worlde maketh no account thereof. 135.b

Vprightneſſe and integritie are vertues depending one vpon another.166.a b. Looke *integritie*.

The falſe opinion of man touching *vprightneſſe*, &c.432.b

How he that delighteth in *vprightnes* of hart, wil temper his tongue, and order his ſpeech.529.b.

Vſurer.

The meaning of theſe wordes, The poore and the *vſurer* meete togither. &c. 588. a. b.

Upon what the minde and affection of the *vſurer* is ſet.588.a

The ſenſe of theſe wordes, The Lorde lighteneth the eyes of the *vſurer*, and of the poore.588.b.

Why the *vſurer* hauing a couetous hearte contemneth the poore.588.a.

Vſurers.

Againſt *vſurers* and couetous men.252 a.

Againſt *vſurers* a heauie iudgement and ſentence.190.b

Vſurers are wicked inſtrumentes whereby God gathereth riches, &c.562.b.

Vſurers ſeeme in a manner tollerable, but it is nothing ſo.562 b.

Vſurie.

Dehortations from *vſurie* and intereſt taken for mony, &c.562.a

Vſurie after a ſorte and vpon a ſodeine ſight thought tollerable.562.a.b

Remedies to make vs abhorre *vſurie*, &c.191 b.192.a

Why the riche men of the world are giuen to *vſurie*,588.a.

W.

VVay.

Who haue walked in the euil *vvay*, and how that came to paſſe.564.a.b

Of the *vvay* of life on high, and of hell below.312.a.b

What this word *vvay* ſignifieth in ſcripture, and for what the ſame is taken.307.b

The *vvay* of the wicked compared vnto darkneſſe, and what followeth by walking in ſuch *vvay*.63.b.64.a

The *vvay* of the righteous compared vnto light, and why.62.a.b

Neceſſarie doctrine of the *vvay* of the Lorde. 159.b.160.a

Of the broade *vvay* leading to death.23. a. 24.a and of the narrowe *vvay* leading to life 23.a.b

Of foure things which order wel their *vvay*, and are comelie in their going. 621. b. 622.a.b

To walke in the *vvay* of the Lord, and to bee perfect is al one.159.b

Whether it commeth of mans owne power, that hee walketh and perſeuereth in the *vvay* of the Lord.159.b.160.a

That our *vvay* is right in our owne eyes, and why it is called ours. 213. b.

The *vvay* of the Lorde is that which hee teacheth and commandeth vs by his worde. 159.b

Of the *vvay* leading to life, and the *vvay* leading to death.227.a

Who they be that walke not in the ſhyning *vvay* of the righteous.62.b

That the *vvay* of the wicked is the wickedneſſe wherein they walke.298.b.

VVaies.

What we muſt do, if we will haue our *vvaies* pleaſe the Lord. 328 a. b

That all the *vvayes* of a man are cleane in his owne eyes, and how. 323. a

Againſt ſuch as eſteeme their *vvayes* cleane, 323. a. b

A notable leſſon howe to order our *vvaies* aright. 70. b. 71. a

What wee haue to learne by the *vvayes* of the righteous compared vnto light. 63. a

Forceable reaſons why we ought to ſhunne the *vvaies* of the wicked. 61. a. b

Our going in the *vvaies* of the wicked, compared to the goeing of ſeacrabs. 61. a.

In what horror and execration wee ought to haue the *vvayes* of the wicked. 61. a.

What is meant by our *vvaies*, when Solomon ſaieth, In all thy wayes, &c. 34. a.

Of acknowledging the Lorde in all our *vvaies*, and what is meant thereby. 34. a. b. 35. a

Three neceſſarie inſtructions teaching vs to acknowledge the Lord in al our *vvaies*. 35. a

Of ſuch whoſe *vvaies* are crooked, and of their puniſhment. 25. a

What is meant by this, that a declining heart ſhalbe ſatiate with his owne *vvaies*. 264. b

Of the *vvaies* of God, and the *vvaies* of man. 255. a

The meaning of theſe words, how then ſhal a man know his owne *vvaies*. 423. b

Of the *vvaies* of God, what they are, and of our *vvaies*. 393. a

What *vvaies* they bee which we are charged to renounce. 393. a. b

What is meant by the reforming of a mans *vvaies*. 445. a

VVaies of righteouſneſſe and what they are. 24. a

Of the *vvaies* of darkeneſſe, and what they are. 24. a. b.

VVant.

Againſt vaineglorious needie boaſters, which colour their *vvant*. 206. b. 207. a.

VVarre.

To what ende men make preparations for *vvarre*. 445. b

Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, That *vvarre* muſt bee made with good aduiſe. 482. b

That wiſedome ſhoulde bee the direction of Princes in *vvarre*. 419. b

What Princes ſhoulde thinke vppon when there is queſtion of *vvarre* 419. a

That Princes ought not to make *vvarre* to inlarge the limits of their lande. 419. b.

Of the ſpiritual *vvarre*, whereunto we are often inuited in ſcripture. 441 a. b.

VVealth.

Notable doctrine vpon theſe wordes, Many daughters haue gotten *vvealth*. 637. b. 638. a

Meanes and waies to teache vs how to abounde in *vvealth*. 238. a. b.

VVeight.

The perfect *vveight* which pleaſeth GOD, what it is. 164. a

Of *vveight*, balance, and meaſure. 164. a.

Looke *Balances*.

VVeights.

Of iuſt *vveights* and meaſure. 331. b

Againſt ſuch as occupie falſe *vveightes*, one for buying, and another for ſelling. 413. b. 414. a

That they which cauſe iuſt *vveightes* to bee kept, doe the worke of God, & how. 331. b.

Againſt ſuch as vſe, and ſuch as ſuffer to bee vſed falſe *vveightes*. 331. b.

In what caſes we ſhould not neede balances nor *vveightes*. 332 b,

VVhoredome.

What filthie vices hang at the tayle of *vvhoredome*. 477. a

Of *vvhoredome* corporal and *vvhoredome* ſpiritual 478. a

Who they be that are eaſily allured to *vvhoredome*. 487. a

That there is bitterneſſe in *vvhoredome*, is prooued by foure ſimilitudes. 102. b. 98. b verſe. 22. 23.

A leſſon for women to learne, if they

will not bee ſuſpected of *vvhoredome*.100.a.
To diſcouer *vvhoredome*, it is needfull to vſe ſubtilitie.99.a
What we muſt doe, if we wil auoide *vvhoredome* and adulterie.98.a
They which giue themſelues to *vvhoredome*, ſeeke holes and corners.99.b
Againſt ſuch as bring reaſons to mitigate the heynouſneſſe of *vvhoredome*.69.a.

VVhore.

The deſcription of a *vvhore* and of her behauiour.100 a
A *vvhore* calleth euen the very act of whoredom, by the name of loue.102.a.
A *vvhoore* compared to a deepe ditche, and why.477.b. and to a narrowe pit.

VVhores.

Meanes and wayes to be kept from the deceit of *vvhores* and whoremongers.73.a.
Of vnſhamefaſt *vvhores* and their practiſes. 73.a.b
That *vvhores* and whoremongers make no account to preſerue life.72.b
VVhores are as vnſatiable as graues, and that they bring deſtruction, &c. 625.a.
Againſt ſuch as thinke it a tryfling matter to keepe companye with knaues & *vvhores*. 103.a
The chiefe remedie to auoid *vvhores* and vncleanneſſe, what it is.102.b.
Againſt *vvhores*, and that there is nothing in the worlde ſo infectiue as they. 189.b.
The mouth of *vvhores* compared to a deepe pit, and why.455 b.

VVhoremongers.

That *vvhore mongers* are much worſe than theeues, and why.95.b
Againſt *vvhoremongers* and adulterers.25 a.b
Of wicked *whoremongers* and their practiſes.73.a.b
The behauiours of *vvhoremongers* and harlots in talke and otherwiſe.25.b
Very ſore comminations or threateninges againſt *vvhoremongers*.94 b.95.a
VVhoremongers ſtand more in feare of men than of God, and why.99.a
VVhoremongers and drunkardes aptly compared.101.b.

VVicked.

Comminations and threateninges againſt the *vvicked*.284.b
That the *vvicked* is an abhomination to the iuſt, and of their rewarde, prooued by examples.598.b.599.a
In what reſpects the Lord is ſaid to be farre from the *vvicked*.317.b.318.a
That wee ought to abhorre and deteſt the maners of the *vvicked*.60.b.61.a.
The curſed eſtate of the *vvicked*, and their end.229.a.b
That the *vvicked* haue vſed to bely thoſe that haue threatned them in the name of God. 262.a
The goodly ſhewe of the *vvicked* is nothing but vanitie, &c.129 b
The *vvicked* cannot bee worthy of the bleſſed life, and why.130.b
There is no conſtancie in the mouth of the *vvicked*, with a deſcription what they are. 137.b
The *vvicked* compared to a ſtrong and mighty tempeſt, and why.155.b
The reioicing of the *vvicked* when they come to the ende of their deſires condemned. 101 a
That the *vvicked*, though they bee neuer ſo mightie, cannot exempt themſelues from death.187.a.b
Why the *vvicked* muſt needes periſh in their ſinnes.136.a.b
The *vvicked* begin their hell in this life, and how.136.a
The reſtles eſtate of the conſciences of the *vvicked*, deſcribed by compariſon. 152.a.
The *vvicked* are thought happy and bleſſed. 133.a
The *vvicked* are al of one minde and conſent, but not in God.101.a
That the *vvicked* ſeeke one for another, and why.101.a
That the name of the *vvicked* ſhall rotte. 134.a
Why the faythfull ſhoulde not bee afraide of the

of the *vvicked*.155.b

That the fierceneſſe of the *vvicked* doeth not long continue, is prooued. 155.b

The ſtate of the *vvicked*, notwithſtanding their felicitie, moſt miſerable. 161.a

The felicitie of the *vvicked* in this life. 161.a

The *vvicked* man compared to a hunter, and why. 209.b.210.a

Why and for what cauſe the *vvicked* cannot ſpeake wel. 163.a

God puniſheth the *vvicked* for the righteous. 173.a

The proſperitie of the *vvicked* is not continual, and why. 169.b

Of the workes of the *vvicked*, and that they come to naught 184.b

Of the *vvicked* and their woorkes, whereby they deceiue them ſelues. 184.b.

VVickedneſſe.

Such as worke *vvickedneſſe* cloſely, are moſt hurtful. 136.b

The *vvickedneſſe* of the wicked, is his owne fall, &c. 169.b.170.b

The *vvickedneſſe* of the wicked, commeth of him ſelfe. 169 b

VVidovve.

That God wil ſtabliſhe the borders of the *vvidovve*, and what is the meaning of this worde *vvidovve*. 314.b.

VVife.

That a *vvife* is the good thing of her huſbande, and why ſhee is ſo called. 377.a.b

A notable deſcription of a good and vertuous *vvife*, woorthie to be read and folowed 628.b. 629.a.b. 630.a.b. 631.a.b. 632.a.b.633.a b.634.a.b.635.a.b.636 a b.637.a.b.

For what cauſes a man ſhould not eſteeme al the riches in the worlde ſo much as his *vvife*.629.a

A vertuous *vvife* compared to ſhips of merchandiſe.630.b.631.a

That a wicked *vvife* is the corruption of her huſbandes bones, and howe.203.a.b

Notable and excellent doctrine concerning the plague of a brauling *vvife*.433.a b

VVinde.

A riotous woman compared to *vvinde* and oyle, and in what reſpectes.541.a.b

Who they be of whom it is ſaide, They ſhal inherite the *vvinde*.196.a.b

In what ſignifications this worde *vvinde* is taken in ſcripture.196.a.

VVine.

The danger of *vvine* exceſsiuely taken, declared by a double compariſon.479 b.480 a

In what reſpectes *vvine* is ſaide to be ſcornefull.405.b.406.a

The inconueniences which come from immoderate drinking of *vvine*.405.b

The meaning of theſe wordes, Regard not thou the *vvine* when it is redde, &c. 479.a.b

That *vvine* is taken in ſcripture, for him that is addicted thereunto 406.a

Why Kinges, &c. are forbidden to drinke *vvine*.625.b

To what ende God giueth vs the vſe of *vvine*. 405.b

Againſt the often and exceſsiue vſe of *vvine* 405.b

The neceſsitie of *vvine*, and to whom it muſt be giuen.626.b.627.a

To what ende *vvine* muſt bee giuen to them that haue a heauie heart. 627.a.b

Unto whome the giuing of *vvine* (ſpirituall *vvine* I meane) doeth belong.627.b.

VViſedome

What kinde of reſt it is that Solomon attributeth vnto *vviſedome*. 285.b

Of the *vviſedome* of the prudent, and the effectes of the ſame. 285.b

Howe bleſſed they are which loue *vviſedome*, and of the contrarie. 581.a

Of the getting of *vviſedome*, and who poſſeſſe her. 56.b.57 a.b

After what three kindes of people *vviſedome* crieth.11.a

The wordes of Solomon impugned, when he biddeth vs exalt *vviſedome*.58.b

The opinion of trauellers into ſtrange countries, concerning *vviſedome*. 360.b.361.a.

That the welſpring of *vviſedome* is like a flowing riuer, and howe.365.b

That the *vviſedome* of the heart is ſhewed foorth in the lippes, and howe. 337.b.

The houſe of *vviſedome* is in heauen about the throne of God. 116.a
Howe and after what ſort *vviſedome* doth ſolace her ſelfe, and taketh her pleaſure on earth.113.a
VViſedome compared to the great Lordes of this worlde.118.a
The bountifulneſſe of *vviſedome*, and her liberalitie, ſet out by example. 124.b.
We looſe not our time, when wee giue our ſelues to *vviſedome*, and why. 124.b.
VViſedome calleth vs not to her banket, after the manner of the worldly wiſe.120.b.
VViſedome doeth not call vs to her table, after the manner of Princes. 120.a.
Of the *vviſedome* of Solomon, and that al Kinges, &c. ought to applie them ſelues thereunto.1.a
Solomon was a mirror of *vviſedome* in his time.1.b
What kinde of *vviſedome* Solomon promiſeth to teach vs. 1.b.2.a
That *vviſedome* is not a thing framed in the braine of men, &c.44.b
That *vviſedome* is of one diuine eſſence with God, &c.44.b.45.a
Of many goodly bleſſinges & benefits which come to vs by *vviſedome*.43.b
That *vviſedome* is a tree of life: whereupon dependeth much goodlie doctrine.44.a
The ſingular commodities that the faythfull haue in this life by *vviſedome*. 47.a.b
That there is a certaine kinde of *vviſedome* which we muſt deteſt, and what it is. 35.b
The wonderful workes of *vviſedome* deſcribed.45.a.b
That being voide of *vviſedome*, we doe not liue, but are in death, and why. 42.b.43.a
The wordes of Solomon impugned, ſaying, That length of dayes is in *vviſedomes* right hand. 42.b
VViſedome compared to a liberal riche man. Marke the circumſtances.43.a
VViſedome compared to merchandiſe, and whome ſhe is like, and not like 41
What we muſt doe, if we wil not haue *vviſdome* complaine of vs.13.b
The *vviſedome* of worldlinges, and wherein it ſheweth it ſelfe. 20.b
A reaſon of cōtraries, prouing that the ſweete voice of *vviſedome* muſt bee obeyed. 18.a.b.
That *vviſedome* is neuer idle, and howe God worketh by the ſame.10.b
What wee muſt doe to increaſe in *vviſedome* and learning. 3.b
VViſedome compared to a ſtrong man, and in what reſpectes. 42.b
How carefully and diligently we ſhould ſeeke after *vviſedome*. 20.a.b
That the worde of God is perfect *vviſdome*. 10.b.11.a
Our *vviſdome* is to keepe and to do the commandements of God.134.a
What wee muſt doe to liue in the houſe, and eate at the table of *vviſedome*. 120.b
VViſedome and her houſe is ſpirituall, &c. 118.a
Who are the maidens and damſels of *vviſedome*.119.a
Why God hath imparted his *vviſdome* to his Miniſters.104 a
Whether *vviſedome* crieth out for ioye or for ſorrowe.104.a
God hath neuer purpoſed, nor ordeined any thing in his eternal decree without *vviſedome*, and howe.110.a
VViſedome ſhalbe giuen, if it be aſked in true faith.114.a
VViſdome wil be here preſently, without putting off till to morrowe.113.b
As wee muſt heare without delaye, ſo wee muſt perſeuer to heare *vviſedome*.113.b
What true *vviſedome* is, and wherein it ſtandeth. 127.a
We haue nothing except God giue it vs by his *vviſedome*, and without it wee are neuer contented.109.b
VViſedome is equal with God, and is of the ſame eſſence with him.110.b
The heauenlie heritage cannot bee taken away from the children of *vviſedome*, &c. and why.

why. 109.a.b
VViſedome is the tree of life to them that lay holde vpon her. 108.b
VViſedome crieth by the voices of the Paſtors of the Church. 104.a
VViſedome is not without feare, nor feare without *vviſedome*. 150.a
VViſedome is alwayes profitable, becauſe it is alwayes in ſeaſon. 162.a
What kinde of perſons are accompanied with *vviſedome*. 165.a.b
VViſedome worketh yet ſtil, euen as ſhee did in the creation, and howe. 112.b
VViſedome hath not left off from her worke, &c. notwithſtanding man hath deſerued otherwiſe. 112.b
Of the generation of *vviſedome*. 111.a.b
The eternitie of *vviſedome* prooued. 112.a
The meaning of theſe wordes, *VViſdome* is ſet vp from euerlaſting. 110.b
The deſcription of *vviſdomes* eternal power. 109.b.110.a
The way to fill our treaſures to the brim, is to loue *vviſedome*. 109.b
The neceſſitie of *vviſedome*, euen in worldly affaires. 107.a
The meaning of theſe woordes, That our *vviſedome* is in the onely word of God. 110.a
That *vviſedome* is in GOD, vnſeparable from GOD, and conſequently God. 110.a
VViſedome loueth not in words, but in truth. 108.a
The *vviſedome* of God is his eternall ſonne, and his word. 110.a
The fruite of *vviſedome* is better then golde, &c. and why. 108.b
In what danger they are that contemne *vviſdome*. 108.b
That it is good and neceſſarie to loue and ſeeke *vviſedome*, and why. 108.a
VViſedome wrought with God in the creation, not as an inferiour, but as an equal fellowe. 112.a
To the attaining of *vviſedome*, the feare of God is required. 105.b
Reaſons to prooue *vviſedome* better then precious ſtones. 105.a
They that hate *vviſcdome*, loue death, and why. 115.a
What kinde of bread & wine is dealt at *vviſedomes* table. 120.a
Who they bee that haue no fellowſhip at the table of *vviſedome*, and why. 124.a
Of the meates and drinkes which *vviſedome* giueth, of their vſe and abuſe. 124.a
It is not lawfull for vs to vſe *vviſedome*, as the couetous vſe their riches. 124.b
The fruites which proceede from the true *vviſedome* of the heart. 135.a
Worldly *vviſedome* is nothing but rebellion, and why 135.a
By *vviſedome* and vnderſtanding we obteine life. 98.a
The Church & houſhold of God is the houſe of *vviſedome*. 117.a
Howe and after what ſort the houſe of *vviſedome* is made ours. 116.a
The next way to finde *vviſedome*, is to cleanſe our ſelues. 116.b
Howe man is and is not of the houſe of *vviſedome*. 116.b
Of the ſeuen pillers wherein the houſe of *vviſedome* is ſet. 116.b.117.a
The contemners of *vviſedome*, worſe then bruite beaſtes. 115.a
Howe and in what manner God hath ordeined *vviſedome* ouer his workes as his inferiour 110.b
VViſedome muſt be ſought by faith and repentance. 114.b.115.a
The ſubſtance and wealth of *vviſedome* is eternal, and why. 109.a
VViſedome is not a qualitie gotten by the induſtrie and labour of men, and why. 114.b
That wee ſhoulde be watchfull after *vviſedome*, is prooued by a familiar compariſon. 114.a
Howe wee may aſſure our ſelues to bee the children of *vviſedome*. 113.b
Of the highneſſe of *vviſedome*, and that it is to be wondred at. 484.a.b

The *vviſedome* of the heart will ſhew it ſelfe in the face and outwarde partes.470.b. 471.a
To what ende God giueth *vviſedome* vnto men.585.b
Of eſtimation proceeding and comming of *vviſedome*.205.a.b
What our conuerſation ought to be, thereby to obtaine *vviſedome*.246.a
That *vviſedome* reſteth not in fanſies, & good intentions of men, &c.471.a
Of giuing our heartes to *vviſedome*, and how the ſame is done.477.a
What we muſt doe, to enioye the goodneſſe and ſweeteneſſe of *vviſedome*.489.a
They that reſorte to the houſe of *vviſedome*, doe finde the table throughly furniſhed. 118.a
That it is not enough to knowe *vviſedome*, if we doe not finde it.489.a.b
Why it may ſeeme that there is neither goodneſſe nor ſweeteneſſe in *vviſedome*. 489.a
With what eyes it behooueth vs to ſee the wayes of *vviſedome*.477.a.b
The eternitie and euerlaſtingneſſe of *vviſedome*, ſet out at large.110.b.111.a
The meaning of Solomon in ſaying, And ſo make warre with *vviſedome* 419.b

VViſe.

What *vviſe* man Solomon meaneth, when hee ſayeth, Reproue the Wiſe. 402.a.
What Solomon meaneth, by lodging among the *vviſe*.320.a
That it is better to be *vviſe* late, then neuer. 397.a.b
That the *vviſe* are not like vnto diuers riche men, and wherein.43.b
That *vviſe* men liue in riches & honour, and why.43.a
Of being *vviſe* in our owne eyes, and of the contrarie 35.b
Who is *vviſe* in deede, and repleniſhed with true wiſedome.139.b
The number of *vviſe* men is verie ſmal, and almoſt none in this worlde, and why.139.b
The deedes of a *vviſe* man.106.a.b
Of ſuche as are *vviſe* in their owne conceite, and howe they are taxed.525.b. 526.a
What *vviſe* man he is that ſcaleth the Citie of the mightie.441.a
Of ſundrie ſortes of *vviſe* men, and who are reputed *vviſe*.457.a
That they which are truely *vviſe*, deſpiſe and reiect the wealth of the worlde, &c.275.b.

VVitneſſe.

That a falſe *vvitneſſe* which ſpeaketh lyes, is one of the ſeuen things which God hateth. 91.a.b
That a falſe *vvitneſſe* doeth ſinne of ſet purpoſe.499.b
The malice of a falſe *vvitneſſe*, is verie deteſtable, and why.500.a
The daunger that followeth the bearing of falſe *vvitneſſe*.91.a b
Why God hath a falſe *vvitneſſe* in horrible execration.91.a.b
A falſe *vvitneſſe* compared to a hammer, a ſworde, and a ſharpe arrowe, & how.511.b.512.a
Why many weigh not muche to beare falſe *vvitneſſe*.403 b
The damnableneſſe of a falſe *vvitneſſe*. 404.a.
That the falſe *vvitneſſe* deſerueth death.512.a.
That a falſe *vvitneſſe* ſhal not be vnpuniſhed. 383.a.b.386.b.387.a
Who it is that is a falſe *vvitneſſe*, and deſerueth that name.91.b
That a falſe *vvitneſſe* hath neither loue, faith, nor religion, &c.444.a.

VVitneſſes.

Of falſe *vvitneſſes*, and what they ſeeke.277.a
Of moſt profitable *vvitneſſes*, and who bee ſuch.277 a
The way to ſhewe our ſelues true *vvitneſſes*. 276 b
Falſe *vvitneſſes* compared to gluttons and drunkardes. 404.a
That of our owne nature we are al falſe *vvitneſſes*, and why? and what we muſt doe to amende this.257.b

What wee muſt doe, if wee will not bee of the number of falſe *vvitneſſes*.444.a

A threatening againſt falſe *vvitneſſes*, and what wee haue to learne thereby. 444. a.b.

VViues.

Againſt brauling and contentious *vviues*. 390.a.b

Exhortations vnto *vviues*, concerning their dueties. 377.b

A leſſon for *vviues* to heare and beare away. 202.b.203.a

Neceſſarie leſſons for *vviues*, cõcerning their dueties.181.a.b

Of the dueties of huſbands to their *vviues*. 78.b

Howe to tame wilde *vviues*, and make them loue their huſbandes companie. 78.b

The dueties of *vviues* tenderly loued of their huſbandes.78.b.79.a

What ſuche *vviues* as deſire to haue a good name ſhould doe.100.b

VVoman.

A contentious *vvoman* compared vnto a continuall dropping raine, and why. 540. b

To what end the *vvoman* is giuen of God vnto man.540.b

A *vvoman* is the principall temporal riches that a man can haue.391.a.b

The danger that foloweth by letting a *vvoman* haue her wil.628.b

Of the excellencie and preciouſneſſe of a vertuous *vvoman* 628.b.629.a

A notable and excellent deſcription of a vertuous *vvoman*, & a paterne for al women. 628.b.629.a.b 630.a.b.631.a.b.632.a.b.633.a.b.634.a.b.635.a.b. 636.a.b. 637.a.b

Much notable doctrine for a *vvoman* to conſider and carrie in minde.202.b.203.a

An angrie *vvoman* compared to a wilderneſſe, and why.439.a

What Solomon meaneth by the ſtrange *vvoman*.478.a.b

That God praiſeth and loueth the vertuous *vvoman*, and how.638.b

VVomen.

A natural vice in *vvomen* to be riotous, and the miſchiefe of ſuch.541.a

What kinde of *vvomen* Solomon calleth ſtrange *vvomen*.79.a.b

The meaning of theſe wordes, Giue not thy ſtrength to *vvomen*.625.a

Howe the *vvomen* of this age ſhould learne to be wiſe.253.a.b

What ſtrength Solomon requireth of *vvomen*.202.b

That wiſe *vvomen* are verie ſcant, and harde to finde.253.a

What kinde of *vvomen* they be that haue laid a good foundation. 254.a

Earinges of great antiquitie with maidens and *vvomen*, and yet at this day vſed. 508.a.b

VVord.

What preferment the *vvord* of God ought to haue, and why.402.b

The meate of our ſoules is the word of God, &c.536 b

True wiſdome is taught by the *vvord* of God. 134.b

That the adminiſtration of the *vvord* is verie neceſſarie, and why.457.a

That wee muſt folowe rightly the *vvorde*, if we will liue, &c.437.b

The cauſe why the *vvord* of God is deſpiſed, and of none account.437.b

Nothing can aſſure vs that we doe well, but onely Gods *vvord*.437.a

The peculiar workes of Gods holie and bleſſed *vvord*.224.a.b

To what ende the *vvord* of God is compared to golde, ſiluer, &c 417.a

That the *vvord* of God ſpeaketh to the world after diuers ſortes, and howe.239.b

The *vvord* of God, the principall rod to deliuer children from hell.470.a.b

They that haue a reuerence to the *vvorde*, mainteine the ordinance, and eſtabliſhe the gouernment of wiſedome. 111.a

Of the ſpirituall ſwoorde of Gods *vvord*, and againſt whome it muſt bee vſed. 487.a

The *vvorde* of God maketh man quicke, and liuely, &c.425.a

*****

To what ende the *vvord* is preached vnto vs. 473.a

That nothing is more precious than the *vvorde* of God. 417.a

The *vvorde* of trueth is the ſeede of life. 144.b.

The deſpiſing of Gods *vvoorde*, is the cauſe that the worlde is ſo euil gouerned, &c. 106.b

The *vvorde* of God ought to bee continually in the mouth of man, and why. 162.b.163.a

The *vvorde* and Sacramentes, compared to victual and wine. 118.b

The *vvoorde* of God interlaced with ſundrie deuiſes of men. 606.a

The reward of ſuche as put any thing to the *vvord* of God. 606.b

That wee muſt not mingle any thing with Gods *vvord* 605.a

Why God biddeth vs to put nothing vnto his *vvorde*, nor take any thing from it. 605.a.b

The excellencie, preciouſneſſe, and pureneſſe of the *vvord* of God. 604.a b

That the *vvorde* of God is the knowledge of Saintes, and for what cauſes. 600.b

The commendation of a good *vvord*, ſpoken in due time. 311.b

Ioy attributed to the *vvorde* of God, and taken away from the *vvord* of men. 312.a

That there is no euill, but that which is committed againſt the *vvorde* of God. 71.a.b

That the *vvord* of God ought to be the rule of our life, &c. 70 b.71.a

Fewe heare the *vvord* of life, and leſſe receiue it. 59.b

That the *vvorde* of God is not directed but vnto his children. 59 b

Why the *vvorde* of God ſerueth the wicked vnto their condemnation. 59.b

The *vvord* of God is the right entrie to come to true wiſedome. 397.a

That there is none other meanes to bee wiſe, but by the hearing of Gods *vvoorde*. 41.a

That the *vvorde* of God is the onely keye of the kingdome of heauen 18.a

In what manner wee ought to receiue the *vvorde* of God our Father. 19.a.b

That the *vvorde* of God is perfect wiſedome. 10.b.11.a

Without hearing the *vvorde* of God, no man can be wiſe. 4.a

That they which obeye Gods *vvorde* haue a bleſſed life, and howe. 92.b.93.a

Of obedience to the *vvorde*. 93.a.b

They that are attentiue to the *vvord* of God, to execute that wherewith they are charged, are the maidens and damſels of wiſedome 119 a

The way to forſake fooles, is to bee inſtructed in the pure *vvoorde* of God, &c. 121.a

Wiſedome and knowledge proceedeth from the *vvord* of God. 98.a

The wicked by contemning the *vvord*, worke the deſtruction of their owne ſoules. 97.b

Who they be that finde the *vvoorde* of God troubleſome and harde, &c. 105.a

That the *vvoorde* of GOD is our onely wiſedome and knowledge. 106.b

In what danger they are that contemne the *vvorde* of God, which is the true wiſedome. 108.b

The wicked which deſpiſe the *vvord*, haue filthie and polluted mouthes. 163.a

The deſerte of ſuche as make no account of Gods holie *vvord*. 102.b

VVordes.

When and in what exerciſes wee muſt take heede to vſe many *vvoordes*. 147.a

What *vvoordes* they be from whence ioy doth proceede. 311.b

Solomons meaning in this ſentence, The *vvordes* of a mans mouth are like deepe waters. 36.a.b

The meaning of theſe *vvoordes*, A wiſe man ſeeth the plague, and hideth himſelfe. 447.a.b

The ſingular commendation of *vvoordes* ſpoken in their due place. 507.b.508.a

The danger of ſweete *vvordes* compared to a honie combe.339 a

Of three ſeuerall titles and properties aſcribed and giuen vnto faire *vvordes*. 339.a.b.

Of wicked *vvordes* which point after twoo ſorts, and how.216.b

Who they bee, whoſe *vvordes* are compared to pearſing ſwordes.216.b

Of the *vvordes* of falſe Prophetes, and howe dangerous they be.216.b.217.a

That the *vvordes* of the fooliſh are like pricking ſwordes.216.a.b

Of the *wordes* of men, and what ioy they miniſter to the ſorrowful.224.a

What kinde of wicked perſons abounde in *vvordes* and that wee muſt auoide them. 147.a

That our *vvordes* muſt bee as cleane as water, &c.365.b.

VVorke.

A compariſon of the oxe, teaching vs howe wee ſhoulde bee occupied at our *vvorke*. 257.a

That God is alwayes at *vvorke*, and that nothing is done but by him, &c.329.b.330.a.

Of the *vvorke* of the righteous, and the wicked, with the fruites of them both. 143.a.

That wee ought to tye our ſelues to our owne, and not to meddle with others *vvorke* and office.208 b.

VVorkes.

That we muſt commit our *vvorkes* vnto the Lord, and of ſuch as haue, and haue not. 323.b.324.a

Againſt *vvorkes* of ſupererogation of Monks and Nunnes.605.b.606.a

Of *vvorkes* of ſupererogation excluding the grace and mercy of God.63.a

Againſt ſuch as woulde winne paradiſe by their *vvorkes*.49.a

Againſt ſuch as haue the goods of this worlde, and yet doe no good *vvorkes*, a heauie ſentence.129.a

Outwarde *vvorkes* are certaine fruites conceiued in the heart. 134.b

Why we regarde not to followe the *vvorkes* of the righteous, albeeit they bring life. 143.b

Againſt deſeruing by *vvorkes*.144.a.b

Wee deſerue not by our *vvorkes* that God ſhould fauour vs, or hold vs in his grace, and why.114.b

Life commeth by promiſe, and not by *vvorkes* 114.b

An obiection of *vvorkes*, ſaide to haue the power of ſauing with an anſwere thereunto.129.a

Good and comfortable doctrine concerning good *vvorkes*.129.a

Againſt righteouſneſſe of *vvorkes*, that they deſerue not life before God.167.b

Of *vvorkes* both good and bad, and the ſpring from whence they iſſue.171.a

Why the *vvorkes* of the righteous are compared vnto fruite.197.a

Of good *vvorkes*, and that they are neceſſarie.201.a

That wee ſhall receiue according to our *vvorkes*.451.a.b

Our *vvorkes*, good or bad, compared vnto ſeede, and why.451.a

Againſt the doctrine of good *vvorkes*, as the Papiſts maintaine them.247.b

That our perfecteſt *vvorkes* are not ſuch as they ought to be, &c.639.a.

VVorld.

That al the *vvorld* almoſt goeth to damnation, and why.342.b

The *vvorld* deſireth things that are glorious. 125.b

Wee are paſſengers and Pilgrims in this *vvorld*, and what wee ought to doe.125.b.

Againſt the *vvorld*, and the vanities of the ſame.155.a

The *vvorlde* deceiueth them that put their truſt in it: this is proued.155.a

With what vices the *vvorld* is repleniſhed. 163.a

The blindneſſe of the *vvorlde* in iudging of things amiſſe.201.b.202.a

That we muſt dwel with them which are of the *vvorld*, and how.224.b

In what things fleſhly men of the *vvorld* doe delight moſt.416.b.

VVrath.

VVrath allowed in kinges, and in what re-

ſpects.333.a
The *vvrath* of kings compared vnto meſſengers of death.333.a.b
That a ſoft anſwere putteth away *vvrath*, and what this ſoft anſwere is. 289.b.290.a.
The meaning of theſe wordes, A wiſe man turneth away *vvrath*. 585.a
What wiſdome that is which we muſt vſe to pacifie the *vvrath* of kings, &c.333.b
Of ſlowneſſe to *vvrath*, and that there reſteth great wiſdome in the ſame.281.a.b
Of *vvrath*, and that they knowe not GOD, which doe vſe it.280.b.281.a
The iſſues or fruites of *vvrath* ſet foorth by two fine compariſons.623.b.624.a
That *vvrath* in a magiſtrate is lawfull, and how.215.a
The *vvrath* of a foole compared to a heauie ſtone, and to ſand.534.a.b.

VVrong.

Againſt doing of *vvrong*, and why wee ought to abhorre the ſame.9.a
Of *vvrong* diuerſly and ſundrie wayes done. 49.a.b.50.a.b
Why Solomō ſetteth mercy againſt *vvrong*, and what we haue to learne thereby.284.a.
Of double *vvrong* done to the poore and needie.284.a
Of *vvrong* done to our neighbours, and how God eſteemeth of the ſame.283.b
Wherein *vvrong* conſiſteth, and when it is committed.283.b
That *vvrong* is moſt commonly done vnto the poore, and why 283.b
That the *vvrong* done to the poore, turneth to Gods diſhonour.283.b
That the number of them which doe *vvrong* to the needie, is very great.284.a.

Y.

Young.

That *young* people muſt bee diligently ſeene vnto, and why.99.b.

Youth.

The charge of ſuch as haue the gouernemēt of *youth*.311.b
Youths that make no account of inſtruction, reproued.56.a
A leſſon for the *youth* of theſe dayes, by the example of Solomon. 55.b
The opinion of the greateſt part of *youth* hauing rich parents.346.a.b.347.a
What behauiour is required of *youth* towards their elders.343.b
A leſſon for *youth* to learne for the auoyding of whoredome.99.b
The danger enſuing libertie and looſeneſſe in *youth*.414.a
What gouernement wee muſt vſe to rule *youth* withal.414.b.

FINIS.

Gathered by Abraham Fleming.

A familiar expoſition of Michael Cope vpon the Prouerbes of Solomon.

1 *THe parables of Solomon the Sonne of Dauid king of Iſrael.*

2 *To know wiſedome & inſtruction, to vnderſtande the wordes of knowledge.*

3 *To receiue inſtruction to doe wiſely by iuſtice and iudgement and equitie.*

THe parables &c. *1.King.3.5* The Lorde appeared in Gibeon to Solomon in a dreame by night: and God ſayde, aſke what I ſhall giue thee. And Solomon ſayd, giue therefore vnto thy ſeruant an vnderſtanding harte to iudge thy people, that I may diſcerne betweeene good and bad. And GOD ſayd vnto him, bycauſe thou haſt aſked this thing, &c. Beholde I haue done according to thy woorde: loe I haue giuen thee a wiſe and an vnderſtanding heart, ſo that there hath beene none lyke thee, before thee, neither after thee ſhal ariſe the lyke vnto thee. Through this wiſedome and vnderſtanding he iudged the people of Iſrael of whome hee was feared. By this ſelfe ſame wiſedome hee ſpake three thouſand parables: as it is written. *1.King.4.32* This was whyles hee was king ouer Iſrael, that hee vſed ſuch wiſdome in doings and ſayinges: euen whyles hee was a peaceable king, according to the promiſes of GOD. *1.Chro.22.9* Beholde, a ſonne is borne vnto thee, which ſhal bee a man of reſt, for I will giue him reſt from all his enimies rounde about; therefore his name is Solomon: and I will ſende peace and quietneſſe vppon Iſrael in his dayes. All kings, Princes and Magiſtrates, ſhoulde here learne whereto they ought to apply their vnderſtanding, and what they ſhould flee and hate.

To knowe, &c. Albeeit wee are not kings, neither wordly princes, nor haue publike charge, yet ought we to ſollow the wiſdome of good Kings and Princes, as they are giuen vs of God for an example. And foraſmuch as we haue not at al tymes wiſe ſuperiours, as experience teacheth, yet haue we need at al tymes to be wiſe, vnleſſe we wil periſh with the fooliſh. For neither the folly of the great or ſmal ſhal excuſe vs to bee culpable of damnation, if we followe it and delite therein. And therefore Solomon was not onely content to be as a mirrour of wiſedome to thoſe of his time, but woulde alſo profit al ages, ſo long as the world ſhoulde laſt: and to this ende hath he written theſe notable prouerbes and excellent ſentences, profitable to teach one to gouerne himſelf wiſely in al holineſſe and honeſtie, in al righteouſnes and innocency, in al modeſtie and ſobrietie, in the faith and feare of God, as it ſhal be knowne in hearing and reading them. But to make vs more attentiue and diligent to reade and heare them, and to print them in our memory, to delite alſo in ſpeaking of them, chiefly to the inſtruction of the ignorant: hee at the beginning ſheweth vs wheretoo and to whome theſe ſentences doe ſerue. If wee were not very dul & blockiſh, wee woulde greatly deſire to bee adorned with theſe vertues. Wherefore wee muſt neither be deafe nor negligent, but ready and diligent to heare the Prouerbes of king Solomon, whereby hee promiſeth to teach vs firſt *wiſdome:* not the wiſdome of this world, neither of the princes of this world, which periſh. Such wiſdom is fooliſhneſſe before God, who gaue Solomō this wiſdom which he teacheth by theſe Prouerbes. If then we learne them truly, and delite in that which they teach, wee ſhal bee indued with heauenly wiſedome. The which as it is and hath beene euer one, ſo let vs not thinke that Solomon doeth teach any newe thing: for it is ſayde, Yee ſhal put nothing vnto the woorde which I commaunde you, neither ſhal yee take ought therefrom &c. The wiſedome then that hee teacheth vs, is to cleaue faſte to the worde of God, in walking after his commandementes. It is that wiſdome, which Moſes taught the children of Iſrael in the ſame place ſaying: beholde, I haue taught you ordinances and lawes, as the Lorde my God commanded mee, &c. But heere it might bee ſayde that Solomon needed not to haue written, ſeing Moſes had before already written, and that hee teacheth no other wiſedome, but that which Moſes taught. It may bee aunſwered, that that which Moſes hath briefly and obſcurely taught for the capacitie of the people, Solomon dilateth

1.Cor.2.6.

Deut.4.2.

Deut.4.

ſeth and amplifieth, and therein hee ſerueth as an interpreter to Moſes. But it may bee ſayde againe, if Solomon doe teache no other wiſedome, than that which Moſes taught, that hee teacheth not Ieſus Chriſt, who of God is made vnto vs wiſedome and righteouſnes: and therefore his doctrine appertaineth nothing vnto vs, which ſhould regarde to knowe nothing but Ieſus Chriſt, and him crucified: I aunſwere, that Moſes hath ſpoken of Ieſus Chriſt. If you had beleeued Moſes, you woulde alſo haue beleeued mee. The lawe was our ſchoolemaiſter to bring vs to Chriſt, &c. But Solomon teacheth not onely the lawe, but alſo fayth: and ſetteth foorth vnto vs diuers promiſes of GOD, and conſequently hee teacheth vs Ieſus Chriſt, of whome alſo hee was a figure: for all the promiſes of God are yea, and Amen in Ieſus Chriſt. Wherefore when wee heare the Prouerbes of Solomon, let vs not thinke that he will leade vs only to doe the workes of the lawe outwardly: but that chiefly he tendeth to frame our manners to the feare and reuerence of God, the which is not done without fayth. *1.Cor.1.10. Iohn.5.46. Gal.3.24. 2.Cor.1.20.*

Secondly, hee promiſeth vs *Inſtruction*. Whereby wee ſhoulde knowe what to doe and what to eſchue, for to liue in this preſent worlde ſoberly, righteouſly, and religiouſly: the which inſtruction is not onely in woordes, but alſo in temptations and afflictions. Wherevppon it followeth that Solomon beeing on earth, ſpake not earthly, but heauenly: for wee can haue no inſtruction, vnleſſe God ſpeake to vs from Heauen, as Moſes doeth ſhewe it very well. Out of Heauen hee made thee heare his voyce to inſtruct thee, &c. Wherfore, if we be giuen to earthly and worldly things, and perſeuere therein, wee cannot receiue inſtruction. It is then needful for vs to withdrawe our ſelues from the deſire of worldly thinges, and that by the meanes of Gods grace. For S. Paul ſaith, For the grace of God that bringeth ſaluation vnto al men, hath appeared, and teacheth vs that wee ſhould deny vngodlineſſe and worldly luſtes, and that wee ſhoulde liue ſoberly and righteouſly and godly in this preſent world. *Deut.8.1. Deut.4.46. Tit.2.11.*

Thirdly, he promiſeth that we ſhall haue *knowledge and vnderſtanding* in the lawe and woorde of God: the which onely is our knoweledge and vnderſtanding. It is ſayde alſo in Iohn, And heereby wee are ſure that wee knowe him, if wee keepe his commaundementes. This knowledge ought to bee greatly eſteemed of vs, as Ieremie admoni- *Deut.4.8. 1.Iohn.2.3.*

Ier.9.23. ſheth vs theretoo. Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſedome, &c. But let him that glorieth, glorie in this, that hee vnderſtandeth and knoweth mee. Thorowe this knowledge we differ from brute beaſtes. Pſal.32.9. Wee ought then to giue good heede to theſe ſayinges of the wyſe man: Fourthly, hee promiſeth vs *Inſtruction to doe wiſely*, that is to ſay, that by his ſayings we ſhall learne to bee wel ruled and gouerned, and alſo that willingly wee ſhall heare thoſe which ſhewe vs our faultes: and chiefly thoſe which are expert and wiſe, which knowe howe to reprooue, and vſe it in tyme and place: that by their correction wee may amende our life and become wyſe. And by theſe ſentences hee laboureth to withdrawe vs from death, whertoo the obſtinate and ſtubborne are bent. Rom.2.4. Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his bountifulneſſe and patience, and long ſufferance, not knowing that the bountifulneſſe of God leadeth thee to repentance? &c. Finally, they ſerue ſo to frame our harts, that we ſhould delite to giue to our neighbours that which is theirs, to ſuffer no man to doe them wrong, and to gouerne vs in ſuch wyſe that no man finde in vs any thing worthy of reproofe or blame. Wee learne then by theſe woordes to doe wel to all men, to hurt no man, and to bee a good example to our neighbours and not offenſiue vnto them. And heerein wee begin a bleſſed lyfe, and to poſſeſſe the kingdome of heauen, wherein is our abyding: but thoſe which doe the contrary, begin euen now their hel. As farre as wee can hitherto ſee, theſe ſayings learne vs to feare and ſerue God, and to agree with our neighbours, and accompliſh our ſaluation.

4 *To giue vnto the ſimple ſharpnes of witte, and to the childe knowledge and diſcretion.*

After that he hath ſhewed whereto theſe ſentences ſerue, he nowe declareth to whom they are profitable: & continueth furthermore in ſhewing what profite commeth of them. By the *ſimple* hee vnderſtandeth thoſe, which neither haue wit nor wiſedome to gouerne themſelues, nor yet can diſcerne good from euill, to doe the one, and flye the other: and ſo are eaſily to be deceiued, and may ſooner be perſuaded to folowe wickedneſſe than righteouſneſſe, to chooſe rather that which is hurtfull vnto them, than their profite. We are all of this nature, if we Gen.3. be left vnto our ſelues. Adam hath wel ſhewed it vnto vs, and not only ſhewed, but alſo from him, as frõ a ſpring hath this ſimplicitie flowed

into all mankind. But although it bee natural and come by ſucceſſion,
yet if we perſeuere therein, we ſhall not be excuſable: but as by it wee
ſhall haue folowed wickedneſſe and choſen our hurt, euen ſo by it ſhal
we miſerably periſhe with the wicked. For ſith that God doeth teach
vs by his word, to take heed from being ſeduced, in giuing vs warning
of the craftie inuentions and enterpriſes of Satan, of the deceitfulnes
of the worlde, & the alluring of our owne concupiſcences, and offring
vs his helpe, fauour, and grace: there is no falt then but in our ſelues,
that this hurtfull ſimplicitie is not taken from vs, and that wee haue
not this ſharpneſſe of wit, knowledge and diſcretion, which the wiſe
man promiſeth vnto the ſimple, which applie and ſtudie his ſayinges
with all their heart. When he maketh ſuch promiſe, wee muſt vnderſtand
that it is not good to be ſimple, as are thoſe, which S. Paule ſpeaketh *Rom.16.18.*
of, that ſuffer themſelues to be deceiued with falſe teachers. Yet
he meaneth not that wee ſhoulde forſake ſimplicitie, but ſo farre as it
proceedeth of our naughtie and corrupt nature, and that through this
corruption it is accompanied either with malice or ignorance, or elſe
with them both. Such ſimplicitie as is ioyned with wiſdom and knowledge,
whereby a man fleeth all euill with all his might, is much commendable. *Ephe.4.18.*
Herewithall it behoueth vs to be beautified, as S. Paule exhorteth
vs. But yet I would haue you wiſe, vnto that which is good;
and ſimple concerning euill. And, Bee not children in vnderſtanding, *Rom.16.19*
but as concerning maliciouſneſſe bee children, but in vnderſtanding,
be of a rype age. *And the childe.* Foraſmuch as the yonger ſort are *1.Cor.14.20*
commonly ſimple, Solomon ioyneth them togeather, and promiſeth
that if they giue good eare to his Prouerbes, they ſhall obtaine knowledge
and diſcretion. He ſetteth *knowledge* firſt: for without it children
become ſtifnecked, folowing their fanſies, affections and luſtes, not
regarding what ſhall happen therof, neither cōmonly are conſtant: but
are nowe of one opinion, and by and by of an other: nowe will they
one thing, and immediately after the contray. But when Solomon
ſpake of children, promiſing them knowledge and aduertiſment, he had
not reſpect only to the age, but to the vnderſtanding. So, of what age
ſoeuer wee be, if we be voide of all knowledge and diſcretion, it is very
needeful for vs to heare the ſentences of the wiſe man, and all ſuch
like doctrine: and chiefly to bee attentiue vnto the doctrine of the Apoſtles, & *Ephe.4.*

5 *A wiſe man ſhall heare and encreaſe in learning: and a man of vnderſtanding ſhal attaine vnto wiſe counſels.*

6 *To vnderſtand a parable, and the interpretation, the wordes of the wiſe, and their darke ſayings.*

As the prouerbes of Solomon are neceſſarie and profitable to the ſimple and to children for their well framing of their heartes, and right directing of their waies: ſo are they to the wiſe, for the encreaſing of their wiſedome and further knowledge. Wherby it appeareth that not the ſimple children ought to be the ſchollers & diſciples of Solomō, but alſo the wiſe. Thoſe then which count themſelues ſo wiſe that they thinke they haue no neede to learne, & therefore contemne both preaching and reading of the holy ſcriptures: not onely are voide of wiſedome, but alſo as much as in them is, they make the holy Ghoſt a lyar, which hath ſpoken by the mouth of Solomon. And that we be not of the number of ſuch people, let vs be continuall ſchollers of our God, and doe after the counſell of S. Iames. If any of you lacke wiſedome, let him aſke of God, which giueth to all men liberally, and reprocheth no man, and it ſhall be giuen him. So doing we ſhall increaſe in wiſedome and learning: for to him that hath, it ſhalbe giuen, and hee ſhal abound, & from him that hath not, euen that hee hath, ſhalbe taken away. *And a man of vnderſtanding.* To the end that we ſhould be more diligent vpon doctrine and neuer to waxe weary of learning to vnderſtand more perfectly the trueth, Solomon ſheweth vs what profite commeth thereof, beſides that which hee hath declared already in ſaying, *And a man of vnderſtanding ſhall attaine vnto wiſe counſels.* As Solomon hath not aſked worldly riches, neither the pleaſures and deſires of the fleſh: but hath aſked wiſedome and prudence, to gouerne both him and his people: ſo alſo he promiſeth not to the man of vnderſtanding that he ſhal haue temporall goodes, and that hee ſhall liue at eaſe in this worlde, but he promiſeth him wiſe counſels: the which he expreſſeth by a worde that ſignifieth diligence and ſharpnes of wit to gouerne. Therewith ſhall thoſe be endued, which being wiſe and learned do alwaies purſue more and more to profite in the knowledge of the trueth: for they ſhal knowe howe to moderate and rule both themſelues and their owne affections, and to keepe them vnder that they doe not raigne: and alſo ſhal bee fitte and meete to ſhewe *Iam.1.5.*

others the way to doe the like. Heere we are taught what the gouerners both of the Church and Commonweale ought to bee: to wit, that ſuch ſhould bee ordeined, which both loue the trueth, and are exerciſed therein. Wee learne alſo that after wee haue hearde and knowen, wee muſt not bee idle, but bring foorth fruites. Moreouer, that without hearing the word of God, no man can bee wiſe, neither profite himſelfe nor any other, and that they which doe not gouerne themſelues after the worde of God, muſt needes be ignorant & blind, and fal into many vices: that they are not onely vnprofitable, but alſo hurtful to themſelues and to their neighbours.

Mat. 7.24.

Iames.1.22.

6 *To vnderſtand.* Solomon hath already counted vnto vs many fruits, which they receiue that apply their wittes to his ſentences: but yet there he ſetteth foorth vnto vs, foure. The firſt is, that wee ſhal vnderſtand the notable and excellent ſentences of thoſe which haue ſpoken by figures and ſimilitudes, to make them of more authoritie and eſtimation, and that men ſhoulde bee more diligent to ſearch out the meaning of them, and that they might bee hid from them which are blinde of vnderſtanding, and that ſeeing, they ſhoulde not ſee &c. The ſeconde commoditie which they receiue, is to interprete and to expound theſe notable and excellent ſentences to the edifiyng of the Church: that the rude and ignorant might knowe ſo much as is expedient for their ſaluation. The third is, to iudge and diſcerne the wordes of the wiſe, from thoſe of the fooliſh, the which oftentymes haue a fayre ſhewe of wiſedome and holineſſe, and ſeeme at the firſt ſight to pleaſe God: albeit they be abhominable to him. The ſayings of the wiſe, as of Moſes, of the Patriarches, and Prophetes, and other holie men be not of any great outwarde ſhew, and yet for all that be not leſſe pleaſing vnto GOD: for though they bee vttered by the mouthes of men, yet are they neuertheleſſe the wordes of God: the which thoſe may iudge that giue good eare to the Prouerbes of Solomon, and ſuch lyke doctrine. Many are deceiued through the fayre ſhewe of mens wordes, and therefore wee muſt knowe the woorde of God, and not to beholde only with other mens eyes: that in no wiſe wee bee deceiued with the fayre ſhewe which properly belongeth to falſe Prophetes and teachers, of whome Ieſus Chriſt commaundeth vs to beware. The fourth is, to vnderſtande that which the wiſe haue ſpoken darkly, as when they haue ſpoken of Gods prouidence, of pre-

Math.7.15.

deſtination and election of Saintes, of reprobation and reiection of the wicked, and ſuch like matters, which are al obſcure and darke vnto the wicked, who iudge all thinges to come to paſſe by chaunce, albeit they are gouerned by the counſel and prouidence of God. But let vs marke, that when Solomon doeth attribute , all theſe fruites to his notable Prouerbes, hee meaneth not that all they which become attentiue to *1.Cor.13.20* them, are perfectly partakers of all theſe fruites. For it is written. Wee know in parte, & we prophecie in parte : But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in parte, ſhal be aboliſhed. Again, Now wee ſee through a glaſſe darkely : but then ſhal we ſee face to face. *1.Cor.12.8.* *Ephe.4.11.* Euen ſo theſe fruites are the giftes of God, who doth diſtribute them as ſeemeth him good.

7 *The feare of the Lorde is the beginning of knowledge : but fooles haue deſpiſed wiſedome and inſtruction.*

Becauſe that in the beginning of the tenth Chapter there is written, *The Prouerbes of Solomon*, as if it were the title of the booke: ſome iudge that that which is written from this place thither, is the preface of the booke, the argument whereof is gone before, to ſhewe vs wheretoo theſe doe ſerue, and to what perſons they are profitable. In this preface hee vſeth generall exhortations, hee promiſeth, and hee threateneth and commaundeth, and maketh as it were an expoſition of the ten commandementes, commending vnto vs the true wiſedome, the feare and ſeruice of God, the obedience towardes parents, the labour of the handes, the eſchuing of exceſſe, & worthineſſe of marriage.

7 *The feare of the Lorde.* In the beginning of this preface, hee teacheth vs the way to attaine vnto true knowledge. For as the true *Ier.9.24.* knowledge wherein wee muſt glory, is to knowe God, when being inſtructed in his lawe, we delight to follow it: euen ſo wee muſt vnderſtand that the feare of the Lord wherof Solomon doth ſpeak, is an humilitie and reuerence, whereby we may tremble at the word of God: not that wee ſhoulde miſtruſt his goodneſſe, but diligently to beware from diſpleaſing him, & to endeuour our ſelues to doe ſuch thinges as pleaſe him. This is the feare which the angel doth attribute vnto Abraham. *Gen.22.12.* This is the feare that God requireth of his people. *Deu.10.12.* This feare is of Moſes called, wiſdome &, vnderſtanding. *Deu.4.10.* Solomō then hath drawne

this from Moſes, when he ſaide, *The feare of the Lorde, &c.* It might alſo bee ſaide, that the feare of the Lorde is the chiefe parte of knowledge: for if in all our doinges wee haue not this feare, we know nothing, we are voide of wiſdome and vnderſtanding, we are like vnto ignorant, rude, foliſh and blinde beaſtes. Moſes doeth ſhew it vs, when he reproueth the people of Iſrael which were without feare, ſaying vnto them, They haue corrupted themſelues, &c. The worde alſo which Solomon vſeth, doth ſignifie beginning, and principall part. This feare is ioined both with the loue of God, and of his worde, as Moſes doeth teach vs in that place which we alledged euen now: likewiſe in the 29. and in the 6. the holy Scripture doth often allure vs to this feare, to the ende that learning to beholde our frailtie and weakneſſe, we might diſtruſt our ſelues, and leane more ſtrongly to the onely mercy of God, alwayes ſubmitting our ſelues vnto him, with humilitie and earneſt deſire wholy to obey him. Such maner of feare leadeth vs to repentance, and doth ſo aſtoniſh vs, that we feele howe God is angry with vs for our ſinnes: and albeit this feare doeth beate vs downe in our ſelues, yet doeth it make vs certaine and aſſured that God is mercifull vnto vs. This is the feare which Solomon doeth heere teach vs, as we may vnderſtand by the word *knowledge*: for we haue no true knowledge, vnleſſe we knowe God: and wee knowe him not, vnleſſe we doe loue him, and be aſſured of his goodneſſe towardes vs. This is not then that feare whereof S. Iohn ſpeaketh, There is no feare in loue, but perfecte loue caſteth out feare. &c. Wherefore the Papiſts haue here no foundation of their doctrine, or rather of their falſe opinion, whereby they labor to cauſe vs to be ſtil in doubt, whether God doth loue vs or not. &c. For if we feare God, we know him: if we know him, we loue him: & if we loue him, we are ſure he loueth vs: for we can not loue him firſt. Herein is loue, not that we loued God, but that he loued vs. &c. If we know God truly to be ſuch, though there were no hel, we would feare more to offend him, than to ſuffer any kinde of death. *But fooles haue deſpiſed wiſdom.* He maketh here an Antitheſis, cōparing fooliſhnes with knowledge: & the diſdaine of wiſdom & inſtructiō, with the feare of the Lorde, of whome we receiue all wiſedome and inſtruction: wherein he teacheth vs who are thoſe fooles of whome he ſpeaketh: that is to ſay, thoſe that are naked & voide of the feare of God, wherein they are holden by wiſedome and inſtruction, without the which feare they are corrupted and giuen vp to all wickedneſſe, in

Deut.32.5.

Deut.10.12. & 29.& 6.

Pſal.51.19.
Eſai.66.2.

1.Ioh.4.18.

1.Ioh.4.10.

Pſ.14.1.

Eſa.3.2 & 29.14.

Ro.2.4.

forſakyng GOD whoſe wiſedome and inſtruction they deſpiſe. As it is ſayde of the children of Iſrael: They haue corrupted them ſelues towardes him, by their vice, &c. And as Dauid ſaieth, The foole hath ſaide in his heart, there is no God, they haue corrupted and done an abhominable worke. Here we heare that the wiſeſt of the worlde are reproued of fooliſhneſſe, and that rightly: for they truſting and boſting in their wittes and vnderſtanding, in their reaſon and fancie, not eſteeming heauenly wiſdome, neither holy inſtructions, whereby they ſhould know God, and be kept in his feare, do giue them ſelues to humaine ſciences, ſome to occupations, other ſome to marchandize, and ſome to pollitike gouernment: the which thinges albeit they are good, becauſe they proceede from God, yet thorowe the folly and malice of men which regarde not to knowe God, but onely their owne glorie or profit, are ſo polluted and corrupted, that they are filthy and abhominable before God. And therefore he threatneth by his Prophets to deſtroy the workes of ſuch thinges. Furthermore, Solomon doth ſhew vs that theſe fooles well deſerue grieuous puniſhment, ſeeing they are accuſtomed to this contempt, and giuen vp thereto, the which he ſigfieth when he vſeth the Pretertẽce of a verbe, ſaying: *they haue deſpiſed*. Alſo we may learne that God is long ſuffering, when he puniſheth not the fooles immediately: but if they do not returne vnto him by repentaunce, his long tarrying will be ſurely recompenced. Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his bountifulneſſe, and patience, and long ſufferaunce. &c.

8. *My Sonne, heare thy Fathers inſtruction, and forſake not thy Mothers teaching.*

9 *For they ſhalbe a comely ornament vnto thine head, and as chaynes for thy necke.*

Albeit we haue neuer ſo good doctrine taught vs, and that we be aduertiſed of the vices that are dayly committed in the contempt thereof, yet are we not once moued to folow good doctrine, neyther do we mind ſo much as once to withdraw vs from ſuch vices, though they direct the word of God to our perſon, and that by admonitions, & exhortations, by promiſes, forbiddings & threatnings they allure vs to do wel, & labour to withdraw vs from euil. Therfore Solomon deſiring to moue vs to goodnes, & to turne vs from euil, after the doctrine and aduertiſemẽt of the deſpiſing of fooles, directeth to vs his words, exhorting, promiſing, forbidding & threatening. The exhortation is, *My ſonne, heare. &c.* In this exhortation, to the ende hee would bee heard with more reuerence and feare, he ſpeaketh as the father to his childe. Heere we may ſay that Solomon ſpeaketh in the perſon of God, who is the onely father of al; or in the perſon of the Paſtor & teacher of the Church, who calleth thoſe his children which hee inſtructeth & teacheth, becauſe he begetteth thẽ to God, & to his Church through the worde. Dauid vſeth this maner of ſpeaking: likewiſe doeth S. Paule and S. Iohn. Therein they attribute nothing to themſelues, neither by any meanes doe derogate from the fatherhoode of God: for it hath pleaſed God to make them partakers of this honour, when hee doeth vſe them as inſtruments to encreaſe his Church, and to beget him ſpirituall children. Wherefore, Solomon doth moue vs to obey God, who only is our father & inſtructer, as it hath bene alreadie treated of in the 2. verſe. And when he calleth vs to *heare*, he requireth alſo obedience, which we muſt yeelde, if we wil bee accepted of God for wiſe: otherwiſe we enter into deſtruction with the fooliſhe. For the worde which Solomon vſeth, doth not onely ſignifie to heare, but alſo to obey and follow. It behoueth vs then not only to giue our outward hearing to this inſtruction, but alſo our heartes, that we vnderſtanding howe healthfull it is for vs, may followe it with true and continuall repentance, deteſting euil, & louing good with all our deſire. *And forſake not.* When Solomon addeth this, he giueth vs well to vnderſtand that he doth not onely allure vs to heare, but to obey. And therewith immediately hee anſwereth to a queſtion which might bee made: to wit, How ſhall we heare God, ſeeing he is an inuiſible & incomprehenſible ſpirite? He giueth (I ſay) the ſolution, admoniſhing vs not to forſake the teaching of our mother. As if he did ſay, if you will heare God to inſtruct you, be obedient to the Church, wherein hee doeth beget you, and teach you by the miniſterie of his Apoſtles and Prophets, of his Euangeliſtes, Paſtours and Doctours. Furthermore, wee muſt vnderſtande, that God calleth al them his children, which hee exhorteth by his worde, and giueth them to his ſpouſe, which is the Church, to be taught: for the Church is the piller and ſtrength of trueth: not the popiſh Church, which doth reiect the word of God, and not acknowledge Ieſus Chriſt for head, but Antichriſt and the enimie of God. But foraſmuche as wee our ſelues cannot diſcerne the Church of the wic-

Mat. 23.

Mat. 7.

ked from that of the faithfull, we muſt aſke of our heauenly Father, the ſpirite of wiſedome and diſcretion, and vndoubtedly, he wil giue it vs.

Mat.7.9. *For they ſhal be.* After the exhortation, he putteth the promiſe, by a figure and ſimilitude: as if he did ſay, like as the worldlings delight to beholde a perſon decked and trimmed with gorgeous attires, and precious iewels hanged about the head and the necke, which are the parts moſt ſeene, becauſe they are moſt apparant; and the perſon ſo decked is not aſhamed to be ſeene, but deſireth to bee ſeene: euen ſo, my ſonne, if thou be truely decked with the feare of the Lorde, and with his knowledge, and doeſt willingly receiue his inſtruction, and that thou deſireſt gladly to be taught in the congregation of the faithful, thou ſhalt be acceptable and pleaſant before God, and his Angels, before his elected and faithfull, and thou ſhalt not need to doubt to preſent thy ſelfe before him and his, neither needeſt to feare to be refuſed of him, no more than the welbeloued, pleaſing and acceptable Wyfe is refuſed of her huſbande, but ſhalt be aſſured to obtaine of him ioye and proſperitie, and all felicities in the life euerlaſting: for he which promiſeth, is true. Wherein we haue firſt to note, that albeit Solomon doeth here vſe a ſimilitude taken of the manners of the worldlings, yet his meaning is not, that it is lawful for vs outwardly to deck ourſelues with ſumptuous and precious things, wherewith to pleaſe men: but contrarily we muſt folow the doctrine of the Apoſtles. For as our Sauiour compareth God vnto a wicked iudge, and yet it is not lawful to ſay nor think that God is wicked: euen ſo if Solomon compare the ſpirituall giftes vnto worldly ornaments; it is not to ſay, that it ſhould be lawful for vs to folow the cuſtom of the world in outward ornaments. True it is, that the wearing of golde and precious ſtones, and other ornaments is not altogether and vtterly forbidden, ſeeing that it is indifferent: but it is not forbidden, in ſo much as all they which deck them ſelues ſumptuouſly, are almoſt all ledde with too much deſire to bee ſeene: and are commonly giuen to ſuperfluitie & exceſſe, to vnſhamefaſtneſſe and immoderateneſſe, to ambition and pride. And foraſmuch as women are moſt ſpotted with this deſire to be ſeene in gorgeous apparel, S. Paul and S. Peter direct their wordes to them. Secondly, becauſe that God commaunding father and mother to be honoured, adding thereto a promiſe, thou ſhalt liue long vpon the earth: ſome, becauſe that this promiſe, *for they ſhalbe, &c.* is placed immediatly after the exhortatiō to heare inſtruction, would haue the ſaid exhortatiō taken

1.Tim.2.
1.Pet.3.
Luk.18.2.

ken more ſimply: to wit for the commaundement to obey vnto carnal fathers, vnto whoſe charge the gouernment of their children is committed, and that the children learne to be obedient to their parents, & ſhould not thinke that they are able to rule them ſelues. There are two reaſons that cauſe me to diſſent from this opinion. The firſt is, that in this ſame preface, the 6. chapter, he giueth commaundement to obey father and mother: the ſecond is, that after he hath admoniſhed and aduertiſed vs of the feare of the Lord, & of his knowledge, by this exhortation, he ſheweth to vs by what meanes we may attaine thereto, and be kept therein: to wit, by hearing and obeying.

10 *My Sonne, if ſinners do intice thee, conſent thou not.*
11 *If they ſay, Come with vs, we will lay waite for blood, and lye priuily for the innocent without a cauſe:*
12 *VVe wil ſwallow them vp aliue like a graue euen whole, as thoſe that go downe to the pit:*
13 *VVe ſhal finde all precious riches, and fil our houſes with ſpoyle:*
14 *Caſt in thy lot among vs: we will all haue one purſe.*
15 *My ſonne, walke not thou in the way with them: refraine thy foote from their path.*
16 *For their feete runne to euill, and make haſte to ſhedde blood.*
17 *Certainely as without cauſe the net is ſpread before the eyes of all that hath wyng:*
18 *So they lay wait for bloud & lie priuilie for their liues.*
19 *Such are the wayes of euery one that is greedy of gaine: he would take away the life of the owners thereof.*

After the promiſe, for our better aduice, and to ſhew vs how we ſhould not deſpiſe wiſdom and inſtruction, he giueth vs a prohibition, wherin he ſheweth a great fatherly care, ſaying: *My ſon, if ſinners &c.* Albeit that of our vitious and corrupted nature through the ſin of Adam, we al are ſinners: yet God of his grace & mercy doth not impute to his elected and faithfull (which are his children) their ſinnes: and therefore the ſcripture doeth not call them ſinners, but holy and righteous. Thoſe are ſinners of whome it is ſpoken, Such were they which periſhed by the floude, as may be ſeene in Geneſis, and ſo *Rom. 1. & 2.* *Ephe. 4.* *1. Pe. 4.*

Gene.13. were they of Sodome. Our Sauiour meaneth both the one and the other, ſaying, they did eate and drinke. &c. Solomon would not haue *Luke.17.27.* vs to conſent to the perſwaſions of ſuch kind of men, wherby they labour to drawe vs to do as they do, and to make vs their like and companions. It is not then without cauſe why he giueth vs ſuch a prohi- *2.Pet.2.* bition: as we ſhall ſee hereafter, and may alſo ſee the ſame.

11 *If they ſay.* He beginneth to diſcouer their perſwaſiõs together with their wicked and pernicious doing: and herein he ſheweth what theſe ſinners are, to whõ he would not haue vs to conſent. The beginning of their perſwaſiõs is, that is to ſay, *Come with vs*. As if they ſaid, we are the greater number, wherevpon it is to be thought that we are both the ſtrongeſt and the wiſeſt: if thou wilt then be well accompanied, forſake the other (which are but as an handfull in compariſion of vs) and ioyne with vs. This ſame is a great temptation, whereby the vnſtedfaſt are eaſily ſhaken. Wherfore we haue great neede to beware of ſuch temptation: for naturally wee deſire to followe the greateſt number, and thinke that if wee be on that ſide, we cannot periſh. But the holy Ghoſt teacheth vs the contrarie both by examples and admonitions. Noe was not drowned by the waters of the floud: Lot periſhed not in the ouerthrowe of Sodome: Ioſua and Caleb died not *Exod.23.2.* in the deſert. It is alſo written, Thou ſhalt not followe a multitude to *Mat.7.13.* euill. Againe, Enter in at the ſtraight gate: for it is the wide gate and broad way that leadeth to deſtruction: and many there be that go in thereat. The multitude is one of the arguments which the Papiſtes lay againſt vs, to ſhew that we are in the way of perdition: but if the multitude be the beſt, it followeth that the Turkes and Panims are honeſter than the Papiſts: for they are the greater number. Albeit then that the Papiſts be more than we in number, and that we are but a little handfull, let not that moue vs to follow them. For if we ſhould regard to rule our life after the multitude, we ſhould followe the Infidels and Idolaters. For as we are but a fewe in compariſon of the Papiſts, ſo they are nothing in compariſon of the Turkes and other Heathen. Nowe to go forth with the words of Solomon, we muſt note, (when he ſaith the ſinners do ſay) *VVe will lay waite &c.* Hee more expreſſeth the deliberation of their hearts and deſires, and likewiſe their wicked and peruerſe maner of doing, than their owne wordes: for there is none ſo wicked but thinketh, and counteth himſelfe to be an honeſt man. And none will boaſt him ſelfe to be a murderer and ſhed-

der of innocent blood, to get himſelfe companions, but rather woulde ſweare for himſelfe to be their protector and defender. But it may bee demanded, wherfore they ſay, We wil lay wayte. It is for that they are led with great deſire to be riche, to be chiefe and to beare rule: and to obteine the ſame, they doe outrage and violence to the innocent, that is to ſay, to thoſe which haue not deſerued of them to bee ſo euill intreated: and yet they woulde, and alſo be eſteemed to doe well, and that they purſue nothing but their right, or at the leaſt that they are not bounde to doe better: and alſo to hide their crueltie, they will lay falſe crimes vnto their charge, whom wrongfully and without cauſe they purſue. Nowe they which are familiarly conuerſant with them, and are giuen to their particular profite, are eaſily drawne to exerciſe ſuche inhumanitie and crueltie, the which is reputed before God for murder and mansſlaughter: becauſe it is no thank to them that they ſhed not innocent blood.

Solomon doth wel ſignifie the ſame, when he ſaith, in their perſons, *VVe will lay waite, &c.* This crueltie is exerciſed in euery eſtate, when they ſeeke to profite themſelues with the hurt of other men. And it is not onely vſed ouer our temporall goodes, and bodies: but more wickedly the belly gods buie and ſell mens ſoules and leade them to the ſlaughter. *Eſai.1.59.* *1.Iob.3.*

12 *VVe will ſwallowe them vp.* He continueth heere to expreſſe the vnſatiable greedineſſe & cruel deliberation of ſinners, wherby they purpoſe in no wiſe to ſpare the innocent, but vterly to deſtroy them, and roote out their memory from among the liuing: to the end that without let and reſiſtance they might accompliſhe their deſires. This ſame affection of the wicked was well deſcribed by Dauid. *Pſal.10.23.*

13 *VVe ſhall finde all precious riches.* Here Solomon ſetteth forth the great deſire of ſinners to be rich, to be aloft, and to liue in wealth and abundance, and to rule: for hauing great riches, they will be eſteemed, credited, and will oppreſſe all men: otherwiſe they would think they ſhould not long poſſeſſe their great ſubſtance and praye, nor continue in good reputation.

14 *Caſt in thy lot among vs.* They deſire to haue many to do as they do, & delight to haue many like vnto thẽſelues: iudging that thereby they ſhal not be rebuked nor reproued for their inhumanitie and crueltie, but that rather they ſhall be loued and honoured, and be had in good eſtimation: and that by ſuch diueliſh vnitie and conformitie

the goodes which they haue violently gotten, and poſeſſe vniuſtly, ſhall be ſafe, and that they quietly ſhall enioy them. Theſe deſires and iudgementes are expreſſed vnto vs by theſe words, *Caſt thy lotte &c.* It is not the common vſe of ſinners thus to ſpeak one to another: for their cuſtome is, to lay euery man for his owne profit, not paſſing for their fellowes: yea, they are of ſuch nature, that euery of them would haue all to himſelfe, and the other to haue nothing but at their gentlenes. The purſe then of ſinners is ſaid to be one: not that they be *Act. 2.44.* vnited in true loue, as are the faithfull, as it is ſpoken of in the Actes: But bicauſe they pretend all one wickedneſſe, and are all led of one euill ſpirite to do wrong and violence to thoſe who neuer deſerued it at their handes, ſo that their vnitie tendeth to no other end but to be more ſtrong.

15 *My Sonne walke not in the way with them.* The waies and pathes of ſinners are their euill thoughtes and cogitations, their inordinate affections and luſts, their wicked manners and peruerſe doings, their inhumanitie and crueltie: to be ſhort, al the meanes they do imagine and follow to do hurt. The wiſe man here warneth the children of God to caſt away from them al ſuch wickednes, & to flee them. And ſo, albeit the tares muſt be left among the wheate, notwithſtanding the wheate muſt not become tares. for although that the children of God be in this world mingled among the wicked, and cannot ſeperat them ſelues from them, vnleſſe they ſhould go forth of the world (as S Paule *1. Cor. 5.10.* ſaieth) yet muſt they not communicate with them in euil, leaſt they be alſo wrapped vp in their perdition.

16 *For their feete runne to euill.* He giueth vs a reaſon wherefore we muſt not conſent vnto ſinners, neyther walke in the way with them: for their way is a bloody way. They deſire nothing more than the deſtruction and perdition of the innocent, that they might gaine ſomething, whereof they are ſo deſirous and couetous, that they imploy thereto al their force and might, al their credit and authoritie, euen not letting to put their neighbours to death, if they thinke they cannot otherwiſe bring their purpoſe to paſſe: the execution whereof Solomon compareth to a ſpeedie courſe: for to ſhewe how ſinners thinke they ſhall neuer come timely enough to poſſeſſe that which they would haue. Solomon vſeth in his ſpeach ij. verbes, which ſignifie the time to come, although they be vſed both for the preſent time, and alſo to ſignifie what is accuſtomed to be done. And ſo he

ſignifieth that they are ſo giuen to wickedneſſe, that they liſt not to forbeare it. Albeit that at the firſt ſhew this reaſon ſeemeth to touche them which deſire to haue warre, not caring whether it be iuſt or vniuſt, but is enough for them that they enrich themſelues with the booties and ſpoiles taken from the dead in battel: this ſame neuertheleſſe ought not to be reſtrained to the corporal ſhedding of blood, but alſo to euery violence, wrong, and crueltie, which is exerciſed as well vpon the goodes and bodies, as vppon the ſoules of men. Whererfore therein wee will comprehende al robbers and theeues, vſurers and couetous perſons, ſellers of falſe wares, murtherers and perſecutors of innocentes, and chiefly of the faithful, Hypocrites, Idolaters and ſuperſtitious, falſe Prophetes and lying Doctours.

17 *Certainely as without cauſe.* Of the aforeſaide deliberations of ſinners, Solomon hath gathered a reaſon wherefore no man ought to conſent vnto them, neither walke with them, &c. for their feete runne. &c. And to the end he might the better turn away the children of God frō running after thē, he ſheweth howe the ſinners do great wrong, when he likeneth thoſe whom they perſecute, to birdes. As if he ſaide, for aſmuche as you are Gods children, who is iuſt and righteous, gentle and merciful: you ſhoulde wiſhe to doe wrong to no man, neither vſe your neighbours crueltie, and chiefly the innocent. Wherefore you ought not to walke with the ſinners which perſecute the innocent: for as the birdes haue not deſerued of the fouler too bee taken with nettes, and to be eaten: euen ſo the innocents haue not deſerued to bee pilled, tormented and murdered: yet are they a pray vnto the wicked and vngodly. By this ſimilitude Solomon declareth plainely enough, that he reproueth not Iudges and Magiſtrates which diligently ſearch out the wicked, and are carefull to puniſh them greeuouſly, that they might (as muche as in them lyeth) purge the worlde of them. For as they beare the ſwoorde to take vengeance on him that doeth euill: ſo the wicked reſemble not vnto birdes, but vnto wilde and cruell beaſtes, and therefore they deſerue to bee watched, to be taken, & to haue their blood ſhed. As touching the reſt, foraſmuche as God ſaith vnto Noe & to his children, Euery thing that moueth and liueth, ſhalbe meate for

Rom. 13. 4.

Gen. 9. 3.

you, &c. We ought to vnderſtande that it is lawful for vs to vſe birdes to take them, to kil them, and to make them ſerue to our vſe, although they haue not deſerued it. They are created for vs, as al other creatures are: therefore we may vſe them with thankes giuing, &c. Wee ſhall follow this doctrine, if in our meates we be ſober and temperate, and that wee vſe them for neceſſitie ſake, & not to fil our bellies like beaſtes, without acknowledging the Lord who giueth them. And yet we muſt thinke that if God hath giuen ouer birdes for a pray which haue not offended him, that wee which are rebels to him, doe much more deſerue to be giuen ouer to the will of the wicked, and vngodly. For albeit wee are innocent in reſpect of them, and that they doe wickedly in perſecuting vs, not hauing ſo deſerued of them: neuertheleſſe before the iudgement of God wee are not innocent. And therefore if he deliuer vs to the wil of ſinners, we haue no cauſe to complain of him, but muſt confeſſe that iuſtly he doth puniſhe vs, and that the wicked onely are his inſtrumentes to execute the ſame. 1. Tim. 1. 3.

19 *Such are the wayes.* The worlde doeth greatly allowe thoſe which can profite themſelues, & gather much goods. Contrarily, thoſe which are not cunning to gaine ſomething, are diſdained, & reputed Idiots, the which is a great temptation vnto the ſimple and vndiſcrete, to leade them to couetouſneſſe, that they might be reputed and eſteemed among men: not conſidering in the meane while, into what gulfe of wickedneſſe they doe fall, if greedily they follow gaine. From the which gulfe, Solomon being deſirous to withdrawe vs, and to make vs deteſt, and abhorre the great toyle of greedineſſe to followe gaine, declareth heere vnto vs, that the couetous haue the deliberations, affections, enterpriſes and executions before mentioned, and that when hee ſaith, *Such are the wayes, &c.* As if he did ſay Foraſmch as you woulde not lay wayte for innocent blood, and that the couetous haue ſuche waies, that they conſpire againſt the liues of them, and that rather than they woulde want of their enterpriſe, doe take away the life of innocents, and murder thoſe which poſſeſſe the goodes that they deſire: yee muſt flee couetouſneſſe, and chooſe rather to be poore, than to deſire abundance of riches, ſeeing you would not bee counted murderers before God

and his Angels. I ſay expreſly before God and his Angels: for the moſt couetous are not eſteemed before the worlde for murderers and manſleaers, but men of honeſty and good reputation. And alſo when Solomon ſaith howe they *woulde take away the life of the owners thereof*, he meaneth not that alwaies they kill thoſe which poſſeſſe the goodes that they woulde haue: but that by ſubtilties and guile, by wicked bargaining and vnlawful meanes, by force and extortion, they ſpoile their neighbours and vndo them: and no thanke to them that their neighbours die not, when they take away from them that wherewith their life ſhoulde be ſuſteined. For if they cannot come to execute the ende of their deſire, they make debates, ſtrifes and diſſentions, hatredes, priuie malice, and deſire of vengeance: and if they could or durſt, they would murder their neighbours in deede. And foraſmuch as God is a ſpirite, and that he hath made a lawe not only to gouerne the outwarde workes, but alſo the affections of the heart, as it is ſhewed in Deut. And now Iſrael, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to feare the Lorde thy God, and to walke in all his wayes, and to loue, and to ſerue the Lorde thy GOD with all thine hearte, and with all thy ſoule? Againe, verſe. 16. Circumciſe therefore the forskin of your heart, &c. Sith they haue an euil affection againſt their neighbours, it followeth that they ſinne againſt the commandement, Thou ſhalt not kil: as Ieſus Chriſt doth expound it himſelfe. And ſo before God they are murderers, although before the worlde they bee counted men of good reputation, becauſe they handle their matters handſomely: and alſo good ſtout men, becauſe they leeſe nothing that may bee gotten. *Deut.10.12.* *Mat.5.*

We learne alſo in this place, that it is a very dangerous thing, to couet the riches of this world: ſeeing that they which would be rich, are not much better than murderers: and we knowe that euery murderer hath not euerlaſting life abiding in him. To the end then that we be no murderers, but that we may obteine euerlaſting life, let vs rather choſe pouertie or meane eſtate, following that which is ſaide. Let your conuerſation bee without couetouſnes So doing we ſhal win much, as the Scripture witneſſeth. Make you friendes with the riches of iniquitie, But godlineſſe *1.Iohn.3.15.* *Heb.13.5.* *Luke.16.9.*

1.Tim.6.6. is great gaine, if a man be content with that he hath. The example
of Lazarus ſerueth alſo to the proofe heereof. Notwithſtanding
hee meaneth not that al rich men are murderers, either that they
Luke.16.17. ought to forſake their riches, if they will be ſaued. The Patriarkes
were riche, & are in the kingdom of heauen: they haue not
coueted to be rich, & hauing riches, they did not ſet their heart
vpon them, but did diſtribute thē where neede was, not putting
their truſt in them. After whoſe example they that are riche in
this worlde, muſt not be highminded, neither put their truſt in the
vncertaintie of riches, but in the liuing God, &c.

20 *VViſedome crieth without, ſhe vttereth her voyce in the ſtreetes.*

21 *She calleth in the high ſtreete among the preaſe in the entringes of the gates, and vttereth her wordes in the Citie, ſaying:*

22 *O yee fooliſhe, howe long will yee loue fooliſhneſſe? and the ſcornefnll take their pleaſure in ſcorning, and the fooles hate knowledge?*

To the ende that we ſhoulde heare inſtruction, and that therby wee might learn not to conſent vnto ſinners. &c. And that we ſhoulde not pretende cauſe of ignorance, if we walke with them in their waies, God from the beginning of the world hath taught vs, doeth teach vs, and wil teach vs, ſo long as the worlde ſhal endure. Solomon doeth ſignifie it by ſaying, *VViſedome crieth without &c.* For in his ſpeache he vſeth heere the Verbe, which is put not onely to ſignifie that which is doone preſently and in the future time, but alſo that which is cuſtomably vſed to be doone. For wiſedome was neuer idle: but as God hath thereby
cteated al thinges, euen ſo by it doeth hee gouerne, and ſhall
Pſalm.104. gouerne all thiuges. O Lorde howe manifolde are thy
workes? in wiſdome haſt thou made them al. The worde of
John.1. GOD is this wiſedome. Who inſtructed Abell to put his truſt
Heb.11.4. in God, and to offer vnto him Sacrifice? Who taught the Gene-
Gen.4.4. ration of Seth to call vppon the name of the Lorde their God:
but only the wiſedome of GOD? Likewiſe it muſt bee ſaide of

all

al the Patriarkes ,Iudges, Kinges and Prophets, that they them-
ſelues were taught, & alſo did teach others by this ſame wiſdom.
Alſo by it haue the Apoſtles and Diſciples bene inſtructed, and
haue byn taught. For I wil giue you a mouth & wiſdome, where *Luk.21.15.*
againſt all your aduerſaries ſhall not bee able to ſpeake nor reſiſte.
And that we ſhould alwayes be inſtructed by this wiſdome: He *Ephe.4.11.*
himſelfe hath made ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Euange-
liſts, ſome Paſtours and Doctours. Let vs note herevpon that the
Miniſters of Gods Church ought not to be like vnto the Pope,
neither to his horned biſhops, nor others of their ſects: of whom
it may be ſaid, al their watchmen are blinde, they know nothing, *Eſ.56.10.*
they are all dumbe dogges. &c. But as the Euangelicall worde is
committed vnto them, to be heard through all the worlde of all
creatures: euen ſo muſt they crye aloud to waken the ſluggards,
and to make ſuch as woulde be deafe, vnexcuſable: they muſt la-
bour alſo to profite many, as Solomon doeth well note it, ſaying,
they muſt crye *without in the ſtreates.&c.* Likewiſe our Lorde Mat.10.27.
doeth teache vs verie well, What I tell you in darkeneſſe, that
ſpeake ye in light: and what ye heare in the eare, that preache yee
on the houſe. In al eſtates alſo ought this wiſedome to crye, both
by wordes of edification, by good counſell, and by holie conuer-
ſation.&c.

22 *O ye fooliſh.* Wiſdom crieth after three kinds of people,
which occupie the world: to wit, the foliſh, the ſcornful & fooles.
The *fooliſh*, are ſuch as be vndiſcreete, and therefore eaſily to be
deceiued, and alſo to be taken with that which ſeemeth fayre to
the eyes, and to followe that which ſeemeth good to the vnder-
ſtanding of the fleſh. Looke what ſuch folkes loue, is but fooliſh-
neſſe, although the wiſeſt of the worlde praiſe it and eſteeme it.
Alſo God hath made the wiſedome of this world fooliſhnes. The 1.*Cor.1,20.*
ſcornefull, are ſuch as haue their heart ſo ſwelled with pride and
preſumption, their minde ſo malicious and wicked, that they can
not ſuffer to be taught any thing, neither to be rebuked nor repre-
hended for their fault: but ſcorne at all diſcipline and correction,
and in this ſcornefulneſſe take their pleaſure and delight: as Solo-
mon doeth ſignifie the ſame when he ſayeth, *The ſcornefull take*

Luk.16.
Eſai.28.
2.Pet.3.

their pleaſure in ſcorning, The Phariſies ſhewe themſelues to be ſuch. There are alſo ſuch nowe. The fooles are muche like vnto the fooliſhe: they are alſo of the manners and faſhions of the ſcorners: for they hate knowledge which is contrary to fooliſhneſſe and ſcorning: for hee that delighteth in the knowledge of God and his worde, which is the true knowledge, ſetteth nought by that which pleaſeth the fleſh, and ſuffereth to bee taught more and more, and receiueth with humblenes al diſcipline and correction, to mortifie thereby the fleſhe: which the fooles doe not, but hate that wherewith the fleſhe is not delighted, and doe perſecute thoſe both by word and deed, which labour to inſtruct them. Such was S.Paule before his conuerſion. Such are Idolaters, of whome the worlde is full: for among tenne millions, ſcarce may one bee founde which is not either fooliſh, either ſcorning, either a foole, or which hath them not altogether. The Miniſters then of the worde wil chalendge nothing to themſelues; but knowing it is God which worketh by his wiſedome, wil doe their Miniſterie in feare and trembling, without promiſing any thing of themſelues: and wil confeſſe the great & ineſtimable goodneſſe of God, which he hath vſed and doeth vſe towardes the world, when he diſdained not, neither yet doeth diſdaine to abaſe himſelfe ſo low, as to warne the fooliſh, ſcornful and fooles by his wiſedome: the which notwithſtanding is in ſuch wiſe outraged, that it is thought fooliſhneſſe. For, Saint Paule ſayeth, The preaching of the Croſſe is to them which doe periſhe, fooliſhneſſe.

1.Cor.1.8.

23 *Turne you at my correction: loe, I will poure out my mynde vnto you, and make you vnderſtande my wordes.*

When wiſedome crieth after the fooliſh, ſcorneful, and fooles, ſhee firſt accuſeth, reprooueth, and correcteth them, without condemning them, and making them diſpaire: for ſhee rather laboureth to cauſe them to amend by repentance and fayth. Shee ſaith not, becauſe ye loue fooliſhneſſe, ſcornefulneſſe and folly, you are vndone, ye are loſt for euer: but ſhee ſweetely entreateth them, ſaying: *Turne you,&c.* As if ſhee did ſay, when I reprooue and correcte you, when I ſhewe you your fooliſhneſſe, ſcornefulneſſe and hatred againſt the true knowledge, harden not your heartes at my correction, but ſuffer your ſelues to be taught of it, forſaking your wicked way, and your vnrighteous thoughtes, through which you haue bene turned from the Lord: and come againe to ſeeke the Lord, while he may bee founde: and call vppon him while he is nigh: the which you ſhal doe, if you hate that which you loue and would haue, and if you loue and deſire that which you hate. Nowe to the ende that your heart may thus returne at my correction, I wil poure out my ſpirit as it were a ſpring vpon you, which is the ſpirit of Wiſdome, &c. Who is the comforter, The Spirite of trueth, which inſtructeth al thinges, and leadeth into al truth. By it wil I make you vnderſtād, that that which I commaund, is righteous; that I chide not raſhly and without aduiſement; that I threaten not wrongfully: and by himſelfe wil I witneſſe to you of the certaintie and trueth of my promiſes. Now Solomon ſheweth wel here, that he is not onely a teacher of the lawe, but alſo of the Goſpel: for he is not contented to reprooue vices, to commaunde and to forbid, which is the office of the lawe: but (as our Lorde ſayeth) with repentaunce hath added fayth, Repent and beleeue the Goſpell: and hath commaunded his Apoſtles to doe the like. Euen ſo Solomon with repentaunce ioyneth fayth, when hee promiſeth the holie Ghoſt and the vnderſtanding of the wordes of God, which are the infallible trueth. For fayth is a certaine knowledge and aſſurance that God loueth vs, that he is our Father, and our Sauiour through Chriſte, as the holie Ghoſt witneſſeth vnto the faythful by the preaching of the Goſpel, which he printeth in their heartes, ſanctifiyng and regenerating them. As touching the reſt, when wee are corrected to conuert, there is nothing offered which pleaſeth the fleſhe, the ſenſuall man nor olde Adam, for it is high and proude, and can abide no correction. The whole worlde is naturally infected and corrupted with ſuche vices, as pride and impatience: and therfore it is no maruell though there be ſo many incorrigible people: vnto whom wee muſt not bee like. For neither the corrupted nature of our fleſhe and ſenſualitie, nor yet the multitude ſhall excuſe vs, and deliuer vs from perdition, if wee followyng them,

Eſai.11.2.
Ioh.14.16.

Mar.1.15.
Luk.24.47.

conuert not when we are corrected in the name of God, and by the doctrine of the holy ſcripture, the which is giuen by inſpiration of God, and is profitable to teach, to improoue, to correct. &c.

2.Tim.3.16. Furthermore (when calling vs to repentance, God promiſeth vs his holie ſpirite) wee muſt vnderſtande that repentaunce is not a worke of man, but of God, who regenerateth vs, and renueth vs by his holie ſpirite: as appeareth by the witneſſe of Ezechiel. A newe heart alſo wil I giue you, and a newe ſpirit wil I put within you. &c: *Eze.36.26.* and conſequẽtly, it is not of our free wil that we repent, but of the onely mercy of God, which wil not the death of a ſinner. *Eze.33.* The which alſo Ieremie confeſſeth, saying, O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himſelfe: *Ier.10.23.* and therefore he prayeth on this wiſe, Conuert thou me, and I ſhal bee conuerted. *Ier.31.18.* Moreouer we learne here that the wordes of God are hidden from vs, if the holy Ghoſt be not giuen vs to inſtruct & ſanctifie vs. *Pſal.51.12.* We muſt then pray with Dauid, Create in me a cleane heart, O God, and renue a right ſpirite within me. Finally ſith that in bidding vs repent, God promiſeth vs the knowledge of his wordes, wee may perceiue who are the true repentants, and who not: and likewiſe that they which make no accompt to repent, vnderſtand not the wordes of God, though they ſay what they liſt.

24 *Becauſe I haue called, & ye refuſed: I haue ſtretched out mine hand, and none would regard:*
25 *But ye haue deſpiſed all my counſel, and would none of my correction:*
26 *I wil alſo laugh at your deſtruction, and mocke, when your feare commeth.*
27 *VVhen your feare commeth lyke ſuddaine deſolation, and your deſtruction ſhal come like a whirlewind: when affliction and anguiſh ſhal come vpon you:*
28 *Then ſhall they call vppon mee, but I will not anſwere: they ſhall ſeeke mee early, but they ſhall not finde mee.*

After Wiſdom hath willed the fooliſh, the ſcorners & fooles to repent, & beholding the greateſt part, yea almoſt al vncorrigible & obſtinate,

obſtinate & hardned more & more, ſhee maketh cõplaint againſt thẽ & threateneth thẽ. Shee complaineth of that that by her ſeruantes the Patriarkes and Prophetes ſhee hath cryed and doeth cry vpon the fooliſh, to haue them returne to repentance, preſenting them her ſpirite, & through the vnderſtanding of her words: and that yet they refuſe to repent, to receiue the holy Ghoſt, and to apply their wittes to her wordes.

25. *But ye haue deſpiſed.* In continuing ſtil her cõplaint, ſhee ſheweth how farre the miniſters of the word ought to reach with their cry, & whereto their cry ſhould ſerue: that is, to counſel and correct, that the world being warned by good counſel and holy ſermons of the woorde of God, might amende. But the fooliſh wil in no wyſe taſt of his counſell, but ſomuch as they can, deſpiſe it and regarde it not, and wil not haue the hande of God and of his wiſedome to bee offred to them by correction and fatherly chaſtiſement: but as dul horſes winch againſt the ſpurre, ſo doe they deſpite and murmure againſt God and his miniſters, hating and perſecuting them to kil and deſtroy them, if it were poſſible for them. Now let vs heere firſt of all note, that *wiſedomes hand* is the hand of God, ſeeing that hee is neuer without this wiſedome, and that they both bee but one. This *hand* is taken in diuers ſorts: to wit, for the power, goodneſſe, helpe, fauour, work, acte, puniſhment, chaſtiſement, vengeance & correction of God. For in aſmuch as God is a ſpirit, wee muſt vnderſtande that hee hath neither armes nor hãds, that can be either touched or ſeene: but the holy Ghoſt to accommodate himſelfe to our rudeneſſe, doeth attribute vnto God thoſe things which properly and naturally appertaine vnto vs. This hand doeth ſtretch it ſelfe foorth after diuers manners: to wit, in ſuſtayning and keeping, in guiding and gouerning, in ouerthrowing and deſtroying, in correcting & chaſtening. But to exerciſe this hand, hee hath many inſtruments the which he ſetteth on woorke as ſeemeth good to him. Nowe when this hande is attributed heere to wiſedome, with the ſtretching out thereof, and that the miniſters of the woord ought aboue all other to vſe wiſedome, wee wil take the *ſtretched out hand*, chiefly for the correction and chaſtiſement which is done in the church by the woorde of God. Solomon alſo doth giue it wel

to vnderſtande, after he hath made his complaint, that none would regard this ſtretched out hand: he addeth, that they *would none of his correction*. When wiſedom maketh her cōplaint for that they haue deſpiſed her counſel, wee muſt vnderſtande, that the counſels of God, are as much as commandementes, and that it is very neceſſary for vs to obey them: if it were otherwiſe, wiſdom would not make ſuch complaint againſt the deſpiſers of her counſell. Wherfore, what though that commādement to loue our enimies were a counſell? yet ſhoulde the opinion of the Papiſts be falſe, whereby they holde that wee are nothing at all bound to obey it, and that it is made for them which bee in the ſtate of perfection. Wherein they fayle twoo manner of wayes. Firſt, in that they do not giue ſo much honour to GOD as they giue vnto an earthly Prince, of whome it is commonly ſaide that his prayer is as much as a commandement: Then, that they place the moſt wicked in the ſtate of perfection, the which can not bee in this worlde. But if wee wil not haue wiſedome to complaine of vs, wee muſt conſider the goodneſſe of God, which doth not puniſh our malice ſo ſoone, as wee deſerue it, but of his only mercy hee calleth vs by his worde both outwardly and inwardly, and doeth ſo continue, albeeit we regarde it not: he ſtretched out his hande to correct and to chaſten like a good father, for to withdrawe vs from the gallowes, from death and damnation, and yet we wil not knowe it. This beeing thus conſidered, we muſt aſke of God: that it may pleaſe him not to ceaſſe to counſel vs by his wiſedome, & that wee may drawe neere to profite by that counſell: and that when he correcteth vs, bee it by wordes or by affliction, that wee may receiue al at his hande willingly. And the better to doe the ſame, we muſt not be grieued to heare wiſedom cry, though it be yrkeſome to our fleſh.

Mat. 5. 44.

26 I wil alſo laugh, After that wiſedome hath complained of the hardneſſe of the fooliſh, ſcorners and fooles, and of their vnrepentant hartes, ſhee threatneth to laugh at them, & mocke them, when the deſtruction they feare, ſhal light on their heads. It may wel be thought that the wicked & obſtinate feare nothing, bicauſe they are ſeene to be moſt ſtronge & moſt in number, & that they very oftē bring their purpoſe about, & alſo that they liue at their caſe,poſſeſſing much temporal riches,for the which they are in reputation and eſteemed : notwithſtanding their euill conſciences doe often reproue them : whereby they feele themſelues gilty,and are afraide of the iudgement of God. They feare moſt of al eternal death,which is their laſt deſtruction. And therefore there can neuer ſo little trouble come vpon them in this worlde,but that they are greatly adread and afraide. It is the *deſtruction and feare*, whereat wiſdome will laugh and mocke. But for ſo much as deriſion and mockage are the deedes of diſſolute and riotous perſons,heere might be asked whether it be a fit and meete thing for the wiſedome of God to deride and mock,and whether it be lawful for to attribute vnto him any ſuch things. Anſwere, that wiſdome doth not laugh and mocke after the manner of men,neither is it lawful for vs to attribute vnto him ſuch deriſion and mockery : for it were to make him like vnto the moſt wicked ympes of the worlde : but the holy Scripture accommodating it ſelfe to our rudeneſſe,and willing to expreſſe what wiſdom ſhal be and ſeeme vnto the vnderſtanding and opinion of the hard hearted & obſtinate,doth attribute vnto her mockery and deriſion,

27 *When your feare.* The deriſion then and mockery of God and his wiſdom,is to feare & ſodainly to abaſh the wicked when they looke not for it,to ouerthrow and deſtroy them in her anger and wrath,without hauing any pitie of them, for all their weepings and cryings, and for all their diligence to ſeeke remedie. The like mockery is expreſſed in the 2. Pſal. Where the Prophete ſhewing howe God can confute the pride and vaine enterpriſes of men riſing vp againſt him and his Chriſt, ſaith: But hee that dwelleth in the Heauen ſhall laugh : the Lorde ſhal haue them in deriſion. And we muſt not thinke that the Pſalmiſt and the wiſe man onely threaten the wicked of their time which ſubmitted not themſelues vnder the yoke of God by repentance: But as the promiſes of ſaluation appertaine to al faithful,in what time ſoeuer they bee : euen ſo the threatenings are made for the wicked of all ages vnto the ende. Saint Paule doeth well ſhewe it ſaying. But thou after thine hardeneſſe,and heart that cannot repent,heapeſt vnto thy ſelfe wrath againſt the day of wrath, &c. Let vs then returne to repentance, that we be not ouertaken,

Rom.2.5.

and when wee ſhall ſay,peace and ſafety,then ſodaine death come 1.Theſ.5.3. vpon vs. If wee thus doe,God wil not deride nor mocke vs,in fearing and deſtroying vs: for feare and deſtruction appertaine not vnto vs,they properly belong vnto the fooles and mockers, to the obſtinate and hardened: as Solomon doeth ſhewe them,when hee ſaith to them, *your deſtruction,your feare*. And that there is no remedy left for the obſtinate and reprobate, which refuſe the wiſedome of God, who is the only remedy,Solomon ſheweth it, when he compareth their feare vnto *deſolation*,and their deſtruction vnto a *whirlewinde*. In deſolation all is waſted and deſtroyed, and the whirlewinde conſumeth and killeth that which it meeteth: but this deſolation and whirlewind doth not deſtroy & kill the obſtinate,ſo that afterwards they become ſtones & blocks, or like brute beaſtes,when they are killed. For being once ſmitten and beaten downe, they ſhal be afflicted for euer: ſo deſolatiō and ſtorme wil neuer forſake them,as Solomon doeth well ſignifie it, ſaying: *When affliction and anguiſh ſhal come vppon you: Then ſhal they cal vpon me*. If they bee not heard,they cannot bee de- Mark.9.44. liuered. This euerlaſting anguiſhe is ſhewed vs, when our Lorde ſayth,that in the hell fire their worme dieth not, and the fyre neuer goeth out. For we haue ſayd expreſly,that eternal death is the laſt deſtruction, to declare that the obſtinate people are not exempted from deſtruction in this preſent life,but whiles they be in it,they begin their hell and damnation, and that euen heere they Gen.4.1. are forſaken of God,as hee doeth make them to feele. Caine, Saul Sam.28. and Iudas haue witneſſed the ſame. Solomon doeth alſo wel ſhew Mat.27. it when he ſaith, That they ſhal cal,&c.

28 *By calling and earely ſeeking*. He ſheweth they are in great care and griefe,for the euil they feele and feare to come vpon them. By not to *anſwering,nor to be found*, hee declareth howe God regardeth them not,and hath caſt them vp for euer. It may bee ſayde,that if God doeth aunſwere the wicked after their de- Luke.19. ceaſſe,that by a far ſtronger reaſon hee wil aunſwere them in this Luke.16.25. life, God doeth aunſweare by Abraham, the riche man lying in Mat.25.41. hell. Our Lorde alſo doeth aunſwere the goates. Aunſwere, that after the minde of Solomon theſe heere haue not receyued aunſwere: for they haue an hard and ſharpe aunſwere, ſuch as a

man woulde make to his enimie, reſiſting him to the face, as it is
ſayde, and putting him beſides his intent and enterpriſe, euen ſuch
as the Iudge maketh to the theefe when hee pronounceth his
ſentence, ſending him to the gallowes. But Solomon ſpeaketh
heere of a ſofte and fauourable aunſwere: ſuch as a man doeth
make vnto his friend, graunting him that which hee aſketh. Hee
ſayth that God denieth ſuch aunſwere to the fooles and ſcorners
which are obſtinate and hardened, and hydeth himſelfe from thẽ,
and wil in no wiſe helpe them: the which Solomon doth ſignifie
by ſaying, *they ſhal not finde mee*. But it may bee ſayde agayne,
that Solomon ſeemeth not heere to ſpeake with the ſame ſpirite
that Dauid his father did, Call vppon mee in the time of trouble: *Pſal.50.15.*
ſo wil I deliuer thee, &c. Aunſwere, that Dauid doeth ſpeake of
thoſe ſinners, which are not hardened in their wickedneſſe, but
with al their hart doe truely turne, and ſeeke the Lorde. Such *Deut.4.29.*
perſons are promiſed to bee hearde. But Solomon ſpeaketh of them *Pſal.145.18*
which make no account to repent, and harden their heartes *Ezec.33.16.*
more and more againſt al holy admonitions and corrections.

Such perſons are not hearde, neither feele God to fauour them:
for they cal not vppon him, neither ſeeke him for the loue they
beare him, nor for the hatred and vnpleaſantneſſe that they haue
of their ſinne, but bycauſe they are afraide of Gods iudgement,
and that they feele their deſtruction. Heere wil bee aſked, how
ſuch fooles and ſcorners call and ſeeke God, ſeeing they neither
loue him, nor put their truſt in him. Aunſwere, howe Solomon
ſpeaketh heere, either after the eſtimation and opinion of the
fooles and ſcorners, or according as they woulde appeare to doe:
for to ſay the truthe, they neuer cal vpon God, neither ſeeke him,
nor cannot, bycauſe they haue refuſed al his counſel and
correction, they knowe him not. How ſhal they cal vpon him in whome
they haue not beleeued? Alſo, to cal wel vpon God & ſeeke him, *Rom.10.14.*
wee muſt not ceaſſe nor bee weary. Seeke the Lorde whyle hee *Luke.18.10*
may bee founde, call vppon him whyle hee is nye. For as wee are *1.Theſ.5.17*
alwayes in neceſſitie, ſo haue wee alwayes neede to pray *Eſa.55.6.*
vnto GOD, to helpe vs with his grace and mercy. For this
cauſe alſo our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath a perpetual Prieſthood. *Heb.7.21.*

The fooles and ſcorners, obſtinate and indurate feele not their neceſſitie, vnleſſe they be ſore preſſed with feare, and be in great affliction and anguiſh: they thinke they haue no need of God, but when they loke to periſh. And therfore til they thinke to bee deſtroyed, they neither cal vpon God, nor ſeeke him: as Solomon doth wel ſhew it, ſaying, *Then ſhal they cal vpon me, &c.* They would not cry, vnleſſe they were conſtrained by intollerable euils, & chiefly for feare of Gods ſharp iudgement, and of eternal death and damnation. If then we would haue God to aunſwere vs, let vs not tarry til we can no longer, but let vs turne vnto him with al our hart, and he wil receiue vs to mercy.

29 *Bycauſe they hated knowledge, and did not chooſe the feare of the Lorde.*

30 *They would none of my counſel, but deſpiſed all my correction.*

31 *Therfore ſhal they eate of the fruite of their own way, and be filled with their owne deuiſes.*

By the complaint that wiſedome hath heretofore made of the idiots, ſcorners and fooles, ſhe hath ſhewed that there was ſufficient cauſe to threaten them ſharply with the iudgement of God. Notwithſtanding as though they had not vnderſtand this complaint, and as though they alledge that wrongfully and without cauſe they are threatned, after this ſorte, wiſedome repeateth her complaint, ſhewing them that they haue well deſerued ſo to bee threatned, and alſo to be forſaken of God. She ſaith then, *Bycauſe they hated knowledge, &c.* It is the wont of Idiots, ſcorners, and fooles, ſo to deſpiſe the preaching made to them in the name of God, that they ſeeme not to vnderſtād them, as though they were not ſpoken vnto: and therfore when for their contempt they are threatned with the iudgement and vengeance of God, they magnify themſelues, ſaying they are honeſt men, although they bee ſtarke naught: and perſuade themſelues to bee threatned very wrongfully, and as though they had not heard wherein they haue failed & do faile, they aſke wherfore they are ſo threatned. Wherfore, to make them more vnexcuſable, their faults are told them againe, but as it is ſaide, they are therefore more vnexcuſable. For that they aſke the cauſe why they are threatened, is not for to endeuor for to amende their life: but rather that they may iuſtify themſelues, and giue to vnderſtande that they ſhoulde not be touched. Beſides this wee muſt note, that repetitions are vſed in the holy ſcripture, the which albeeit they are eſteemed ſuperfluous and vayne, and bee troubleſome, yet are they profitable, yea neceſſary, bycauſe of our rudeneſſe and ſlowneſſe, the better to inculcate and make that which hath already beene tolde vs to enter into our vnderſtandings, or that wee may not pretende cauſe of ignorance, if wee deſpiſe what hath bene taught vs. And among repetitions, thoſe are moſt profitable, which ſerue for expoſition of that which hath beene afore ſayde: as is this ſame, whereby wiſedome ſheweth whereto ſhe tendeth with her cry: to wit, that men ſhoulde not dwel in ignorance, neither bee without vnderſtanding, lyke brute beaſtes: but keepe knowledge and vnderſtanding in the law & doctrine of the Lorde, whereby they are kept in the ſeruice and obedience of God in all humbleneſſe and reuerence, following true religion. Wherein ſhe laboureth in vaine towardes the Idiots, ſcorners and fooles, which are obſtinate and indurate: forſomuch it wanteth that they wil profite thereby, that not only they refuſe the knowledge and feare of the Lord, but, which worſe is, they hate it, and perſecute it, as it is declared in this repetition. But if wee woulde not haue ſuch complaint repeated againſt vs, wee muſt by and by after wee are once ſhewed our faultes in the name of GOD, and by his worde, obey admonitions and warning, louing to be inſtructed, that wee might knowe howe to walke in the feare of the Lorde. As touching the reſt, ſermons are not onely made for them which heare very well, and are eaſie to bee taught, but alſo for the deafe, and them which would ſeeme not to vnderſtande what is tolde them. We muſt iudge that ſuch people haue great neede to haue one thing often told them, otherwyſe we might thinke that in the wrytings of Moſes, of Dauid, of the Prophetes, Apoſtles, and Euangeliſtes, there are many vaine and ſuperfluous things: for they doe greatly vſe repetitions, and ſay one thing in diuers woordes. And alſo, although we thinke we haue no need of repetitions, and that wee ought not to vſe them, yet if wee marke them when they are directed vnto the indurate and obſtinate, they wil greatly edifie vs. For, firſt of all wee vnderſtande, that if God hath ſuch care to reduce the obſtinate into the right way: by a more ſtrong reaſon hee wil not ſuffer thoſe which are eaſy to bee taught, to forſake the right path: but wil haue care to lighten them by his worde, that they continually might follow it, not declyning on the right hande, nor on the left. Secondly, wee ſhal not deſire to followe the indurate, ſeeing them ſo often reprooued, and bee threatened ſo ſharply: but ſhalbee moued to growe more and more in true knowledge, whereby wee may bee kept ſtil in the feare of the Lorde.

31 *Therefore ſhall they eate of the fruite of their owne way, &c.* As the heauenly wiſdom is not contented once to haue complained of the Idiots, ſcorners and fooles, but hath repeated her complaint: ſo nowe ſhe maketh againe the lyke threatening as before, but in other woordes. For that which ſhee hath called feare, ſhe calleth eating: and that which ſhe called deſtructiō, ſhee calleth to be *filled*. Wherein we may ſee ſhee ſpeaketh *Ironicè*, in mocking the ſcorners, as they deſerue ſo to be. And by ſo ſpeaking ſhe hath reſpect to their enterpriſes and counſels, which were opened vnto vs, when he ſaid (verſ. 12. and 13.) we wil ſwallow them vp. &c. Now mocking their enterpriſes, ſhe ſaith, *Therefore ſhal they eate of the fruite, &c.* As if ſhe did ſay, euen as al the labour of man is for his mouth: and that there is no profite to man, but that he eate & drinke, &c. ſith theſe perſons haue laboured both with body and ſpirit, it is not reaſon they ſhould loſe their paines, but be recompenſed for their trauaile, and receiue the reuenue: otherwiſe they ſhoulde ſuffer wrong. For it is ſaid, Who goeth on warfare any time at his own coſt? Wherfore, as they haue inuented miſchiefe for the innocent, and taken greate paines to deſtroy and kil them, not only in body, but alſo in ſoule, by offending thē for contemning of my counſel & correction, for hating of knowledge, and refuſing the feare of God: euen ſo to recompence them for their labour, I wil cauſe miſchief to light vpon them: that is to ſay, the frute of their thoughtes. To lay trappes for the innocent, they haue digged and graued pittes; but to drinke their fill, they

Eccleſ.6.7.
Eccleſ.2.24.
1.Cor.9.7.

ſhal fal into the ditch they haue made: and that they may haue more than they can deſire, and ſpewe vp againe, their wickedneſſe ſhal returne vpon their heads, and their wrong ſhal fal vpon their owne pate. In this ſort the going downe of their meate wil trouble and grieue them, and their filling intollerable to them: as Solomon doeth likewiſe declare it, ſaying:

32 *For eaſe ſlayeth the fooliſh, and the proſperity of fooles deſtroyeth them.*
33 *But he that obeyeth me, ſhal dwel ſafely, and be quiet from feare of euil.*

As when the gluttons and dronkardes abounde in worldly riches, they cannot vſe them ſoberly and meaſurably, to keepe them in health of body, that they may employ their bodies and wits to ſuch workes as bee profitable both for themſelues and for their neighbours: but doe vſe them exceſſiuely, eating and drinking without rule & meaſure: which is cauſe not only that they ſleepe out of time, vomit their meates, and ſpewe out their wine, and haue no care to do wel no more than brute beaſtes, who are ſuffiſed with eating, drinking and ſleeping, but is cauſe alſo why they are deceiued of their opinion: for they hauing aboundance of riches, and vſing them after their luſtes, doe iudge themſelues happy, and thinke they are at their eaſe, and take their pleaſure, and that no euil can happen them. Euen ſo the witolde and fooles, ſeing themſelues to be the greateſt heape, and perceyuing themſelues the ſtrongeſt (none reſiſting which can hurt them, and that by this meanes oftentimes come to atchieue their counſels & enterpriſes) doe iudge to bee at their eaſe and to haue ſounde and ſure proſperity: therein they become ſo dronken and abuſed that they thinke no euil can euer fal vpon them, and in this arrogancy they are giuen to inuent the deſtruction of their neighbours, and al the exhortations that can be made them by the word of God, they deſpiſe and reiect: but contrary to their opinion, they are enuironed & compaſſed with miſeries & calamities, through feare wherof they become almoſt dead. And for that that in ſuch miſery, though they cry & lamẽt, they ſeeke not thoſe remedies which

they ought, they are deſtroied: in this ſort their eaſe killeth them,
& their proſperity deſtroyeth them. The Sodomites & Gomor-
Gen. 13. rhians haue experimented ſuch eaſe & felicity. Firſt of al let vs then
note that the way of the witoldes & fooles is nothing but ſinne,
Rom. 6. 23. wherof the rewarde is death. And S. Iames ſaith, Then when luſt
Iam. 1. 15. hath conceiued, it bringeth forth ſinne: and ſinne, when it is fini-
ſhed, doeth bring foorth death. It is not for nought that wee are
warned not to conſent to them, and to walke with them in their
way. And as their way is not good, and cannot bring foorth but
euil fruite: ſo their counſels are wicked and vngodly, as wee haue
ſeene: for they tende to no other ende but to vndoe their neigh-
bours, and to contemne al diſcipline. Wherupon it followeth they
eate nothing that is ought woorth: and againe, albeeit the bodily
meate which they take in this world doth pleaſe them, yet it doth
but poyſon them: for ſpending the goods which are none of
theirs, they deſerue death which wil not ſpare them. If wee then
woulde haue our bodies wel refreſhed, let vs followe the coun-
ſels of wiſedome, Vnto the pure are al things pure: but vnto them
Tit. 1. 15. that are defiled, and vnbeleuing, is nothing pure. Secondly, as the
ſottes and fooles ſhal eate of the fruite of their way, &c. as they
deſerue: ſo wil God graunt this grace to thoſe which apply them-
ſelues to wiſdom and prudence, that he wil ſatiſfie them with the
fruites of their good way and of their holy counſels. Eſay ſaieth,
Eſa. 3. 10. Say yee, ſurely it ſhal be wel with the iuſt: for they ſhall eate the
fruite of their woorkes. The ſottes and fooles, which forſake the
Eſa. 65. 13. Lorde, ſhal bee depriued of ſuch meate: as it is ſaid, Beholde, my
ſeruantes ſhal eate, and yee ſhal be hungry: behold, my ſeruantes
Mat. 5. ſhal drinke, and ye ſhal be thirſty. and, Bleſſed are they which hun-
ger and thirſt for righteouſnes: for they ſhal be filled. And as eaſe
deſtroyeth the wicked, for beeing fatted, either they forget God,
or elſe ſpurne againſt him: euen ſo when the wiſe haue beene af-
flicted, they ſhal be quickned, and not deſtroyed. Wee haue many
promiſes and examples in the ſcriptures, but bicauſe of breuitie,
we wil omit them.

33 *But he that obeyeth me.* That the faithful, (which feele thẽſelues to run often aſtray, according as their corrupt nature is inclined to euil) ſhoulde not diſpaire, being feared with the threatnings

nings that are made againſt the fooliſh, and that they ſhoulde not thinke they are appointed to deſtruction, without ſcaping, wiſedom maketh them a promiſe of great comfort: wherin ſhe ſheweth the remedie and meanes whereby feare may be eſchewed, and deſtruction put away. This promiſe ought greatly to comfort vs: and for to receiue it, there is no more asked of vs, but that we obey the wiſedome of God, when it ſpeaketh vnto vs by his Scriptures, and by the mouth of his Miniſters. But the Pope and his, demaund cleane contrarie, and burne the bookes of the olde and newe Teſtament, which containe the holie Scripture: they perſecute and put to death, ſo much as they can, the Miniſters of the word, and they that gladly heare them. And in this ſort it ſtandeth not in them that the wiſedome of God is not dumbe, and we not deafe. And ſo doing no thank to them that we be not in continual feare, and deſtroied. For ſith the remedie and meanes to be deliuered of feare, and eſcape deſtruction, is to obey wiſedome, and they wil not ſuffer it: it foloweth, that they ſeeke nothing but our ruine and deſtruction. Wherfore that may be ſaide to them which Chriſte did reproche the Scribes and Phariſies with all, Woe therefore be vnto you Scribes and Phariſies, Hypocrites, becauſe ye ſhut vpp the kingdome of Heauen before men: for yee your ſelues goe not in, neither ſuffer yee them that woulde enter, to come in. *Mat.23.13.* When as much as in them is, they take away the word, which is the onely keye of the kingdome of Heauen, they hinder men as much as can be from entring in. For by the word, the Heauens are opened vnto them which receiue it: & by the ſame they are ſhutte from them which reiect it. Sainte Peter hauing the promiſe of the keyes, hath receiued nothing but the charge to preache the Goſpel, which whoſoeuer beleeueth, ſhall be ſaued: and ſo the dores ſhal be opened for him: and hee that beleeueth not, ſhall bee condemned: and ſo the doore ſhall bee ſhut againſt him. If the worldlinges delight to ſing and heare pleaſant ſonges to the fleſhe, and are not greeued thereat, but if they bee able, giue wages to thoſe which can ſing and playe vpon muſical inſtrumentes, that they may paſſe their time from day to day: by a more ſtrōg reaſon the childrē of God ought daily to apply their wittes and mindes to obeye this ſweete voice of wiſdome, yea, to forſake al that we haue in the world, be they parēts or friends; be they temporal goods, reputations and honour, rather than to be depriued of this voice ſo gratious & deſirable. This voice bringeth vs the law of the Lord, which is perfect, conuerting the ſoule. &c, *Pſal.19.7.* This doing we ſhal truely obey wiſdome, and by this meanes we ſhal be ſafe: and when affliction ſhal aſſault vs, we ſhal not be afraide. As it is plainly ſhewed vs by the parable, of the wiſe man *Mat.7.24.* that buildeth his houſe vpon a rocke. By this ſame we may vnderſtand, that what ſafetie or reſt God doeth promiſe vs, ſeruing and obeying him, that we muſt not thinke wee bee exempted in this world from miſeries and afflictions, from feare and dread. S. Paule hath well prooued it, as he ſhewed it in the ſeconde to the Corin- *Cor.1.7.* thians. Likewiſe doe all they prooue it which will liue godlie in Chriſt Ieſus, as it hath bene afore told them. The ſafetie then of the faithful conſiſteth not, in not ſuffering any affliction in this world, nor in not being aſtoniſhed; but heerein, that whatſoeuer happen vs, we ſhal not be ouercome with feare, neither ſhall the afflictions come vpon vs like a whirlewinde, which ſhould conſume and deſtroy vs. The deliuerance from all euils ſhal be when Chriſt hath gathered vs to himſelfe, ſhal wipe away all teares from our eyes, and ſhal giue vs reſt, ioy, and eternall felicitie.

1 *MY ſonne, if thou wilt receiue my words, and hide my commandements within thee,*

2 *And cauſe thine eares to hearken vnto wiſedome, and encline thine heart to vnderſtanding.*

3 *For if thou calleſt after knowledge, and crieſt for vnderſtanding:*

4 *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſiluer, and ſearcheſt for her, as for treaſures:*

5 *Then ſhalt thou vnderſtand the feare of the Lorde, and finde the knowledge of God.*

6 *For the Lorde giueth wiſedome, out of his mouth commeth knowledge and vnderſtanding.*

TO the intent that we ſhould not deceiue our ſelues, thinking to be ſufficiẽt, ſimply & onely to heare the wiſdome of God, he ſheweth heere that we ſhoulde not be like vnto the ſeede which fell by the high way ſide, but to the good grounde, which receiueth the ſeede into it: and that by ſo doeing we ſhal obteine the former promiſe. And to ſhewe vs this, he declareth more at large, in that, which before he had briefly ſaide, and that for our better inſtruction: becauſe wee doe not eaſily at the firſt vnderſtande what is ſpoken of God, At the beginning of this declaration, God openeth himſelfe to be our Father, when he calleth euery one of vs (which hearken to his wiſedome) his ſonne: and this is for that we ſhould the more willingly followe his deſires, as alſo we are bound therevnto; and that we might perceiue he demandeth nothing of vs, but that a louing and gentle Father ought and may demaunde of his children. That which he deſireth of vs, is, that when we heare his wordes, which are the ſeede of life, wee ſhoulde receiue them in ſuch wiſe, that wee ſhoulde not ſuffer the foules of the aire to

Math.13.4.

come and pecke vp this ſeed. When he deſireth vs to *receiue and hide*, he teacheth vs that we doe not his commandements, by doing onely the outwarde workes, but the better to obey them truly, wee muſt print them in our heartes, and ſhoulde let the external workes proceede from the inwarde deſire of the ſame, chiefly of the glory of God. Albeit that God alſo requireth vs *to hide within vs his commandements*: yet is it not to ſay, that it is lawful for vs to become falſe *Nicodemites*, making our ſelues beleeue that our heartes be right before God, thogh they be diſſembling and couered before men: and not only ſo, but alſo that wee cannot lawfully ſeeme to conſent vnto ſuperſtition, and idolatrie. The wiſe man doth not teach vs that: for as the Iewes were bound to declare themſelues to be the people of God, by the outward obſeruation of the law, of the feaſtes, and of the ſacrifices, and other ceremonies: euen ſo muſt we make profeſſion of our Chriſtian religion, by bringing foorth fruites worthie of repentance.

Mat.5.16.

2 *And cauſe thine eares to hearken, &c.* Solomon ſheweth vnto vs in this place, how wiſdome deſireth vs to receiue her wordes, by outward profeſſion, & that we wold become her obedient children: for therein ſhe requireth that we ſhoulde bee hearers of Gods word, in often reſorting vnto the holy congregatiō, amongſt whom the name of the Lord is called vpon, & we taught in this holy word by the miniſterie of men. He ſheweth alſo how ſhe woulde not haue vs to be hypocrites, but that our harts ſhold be truely & wholy giuen to knowe God, for to render vnto him true obedience: when he ſaith, *And encline thine heart vnto vnderſtanding*. When Solomon deſireth vs to bow downe our eares vnto wiſdome, he meaneth that the miniſters of the word, ſhould not be dumbe, & that it ſhould not greeue them to preach wiſedome, not the wiſdome of this world: for it is fooliſhneſſe before God, from whom commeth al wiſdome: but that they ſhould declare the myſteries that God hath hidden frō the wiſe & prudent, men of this worlde, and opened the ſame to babes. And becauſe the world is bare of ſuch miniſters, and that the ſheepe are ſcattered, as hauing no ſhepheardes: and that they which moſt bragge themſelues to be ſhepheards, are rauening wolues, we muſt therefore pray vnto god, that it may pleſe him to accōpliſh his promiſe,

Mat.11.25.

which he maketh in *Iere.* And I will giue you paſtours according vnto my heart, which ſhal feed you with knowledge & vnderſtanding. And as the Miniſters ought to ſpeake theſe things, ſo ought the ſheepe to be alſo attētiue vnto his voice, the which though it be heard frō the mouth of mē, yet is it truly the voice of the great ſhepheard. Other ſheep I haue alſo which are not of this fold, thē alſo muſt I bring, & they ſhal heare my voice, &c, Therefore let vs heare and encline our harts to this vnderſtāding, with faith, that our Lord do not reproch vs, as he ſaith in Iohn, but you beleeue not: for ye are not of my ſheep. Let vs then cauſe our eares to herken vnto wiſdome, & by faith let vs giue him our harts: frō the abūdāce wherof let our mouthes be opē to praiers, & thākſgiuing according vnto Wiſdomes deſire, as ſhee declareth ſaying: *Ier.3.15.* *Iohn.10.16.*

3 *For if thou calleſt after knowledge.* Herein we may learn, that it is a very neceſſarie thing to ſhew our ſelues the children of God by outward profeſſion, & alſo to ſhew with how much our hearts ſhould be feruent, when they ought ſo to mooue and ſtirre vp not only our eares to vnderſtād Wiſdom, but alſo our mouthes to praiers: therby to declare that wee haue great need, that God ſhould giue vs knowledge, and endue vs with learning to giue him praiſe and thanks, and to ſhew how we acknowledge, and that all ought to acknowledge and confeſſe, that it proceedeth of gift and fauour, that wee are endued with knowledge and vnderſtanding. Likewiſe when Solomon is not content to ſay, if thou calleſt after knowledge; but repeateth ſaying, *and cryeſt for vnderſtanding:* He teacheth vs that we ſhould carefully and diligently ſeeke wiſdom, as if we perceiued it would depart from vs, and would forſake vs, as alſo in deed we are neuer indued therewith ſo perfitly, but that yet wee want much therein. This diligence is yet better expreſſed, when he addeth:

4 *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſiluer.* As the couetous doe not ſleepe, for feare they ſhould waxe poore, & alſo labour and ſuffer much hardneſſe, for to get riches: and if they ſuſpect any place whereas is ſiluer or treaſure hidde, they ceaſe not, but with greate care and ſore diligence doe ſeeke and digge it vp, that they may poſſeſſe; & forſake it not willingly til they haue gottē it: ſo ſhould the children of GOD applie their ſenſes vnto wiſedome, and to haue al their delight therein, as in their only treaſures. Let vs

then firſt of al note, that albeit wiſedome would haue her children
like vnto the couetous, yet notwithſtanding ſhee alloweth
not couetouſneſſe, alſo our Sauiour Ieſus doth very muche
Mat. 6.14. forbid it vs. But yet ſhee woulde haue that the children of
light ſhould be as wiſe and prudent in their generation, as are the
children of this worlde in theirs. Nowe the wiſedome of the
worldlinges is to be very careful to prouide for the time to come,
that they may not want. Experience doeth ſhewe it, and the
Luke.16.1. Steward which is accuſed, may be an example therof vnto vs. We
haue not ſuch a deſire after the heauẽly riches, as we may wel perceiue,
if we be of ſounde iudgement: neither can we denie it, vnleſſe
Luke.16.8 we will falſifie our Lorde, who ſaith, The children of this
worlde are in their generation wiſer then the children of light.
Thus we agree not to wiſedomes wil, the which notwithſtanding
is needeful for vs to folowe, if in time to come we wil not want.
Being like vnto the couetous in care and diligence, let vs flye couetouſnes,
and with an earneſt affection folowe the heauenly riches.
Secondarily, let vs note that we ſhould be aſhamed to ſee that the
Mat.6. couetous muſt be our teachers and maiſters: And that their diligence
Luk.16. about theſe worldly things, muſt be a leſſon for vs to folow
the heauenly treaſure. Furthermore, wee muſt confeſſe the great
gentlenes of God, which doeth offer vs his ineſtimable riches: and
to attaine thereto, requireth of vs no greater care nor diligence
then the worldlings haue to hunt after earthly riches, which ſodainly
vaniſh away from vs, and periſheth.

5 *Then ſhalt thou vnderſtande, &c.* He promiſeth vs, that
if wee yeelde vnto theſe conditions, anſwering vnto the deſires &
pleaſures of wiſedome, that we ſhal vnderſtand *the feare of the
Lord, &c.* This promis at the firſt ſight ſeemeth not to be of any
greate importance, neither doeth it ſeeme that wee may receiue
any profit thereby: and therefore the fooles and mockers (which
deſire not to mortifie their fleſhe, but to giue it libertie) ſo
much as they can, doe deſpiſe and reiect this promis, neither
doe they alſo make any accoumpt of the former conditions. But
the children of God, which through the holy Ghoſt do fight againſt
the luſtes of their fleſh to tame it, doe ſet much by this promis,
as alſo it bringeth vs great treaſures & exceeding riches. For as
1.Cor. 2.9. it is ſaid by S. Paul in the *Cor*. Thinges which eye hath not ſeene,

and eare hath not heard, neither haue entred into mans mind or heart, which thinges God hath prepared for them that loue him. It bringeth vnto vs (I ſay) a ſure habitation: for whoſoeuer truely knoweth, how to ſerue GOD, with al humblnes & reuerence, with al holyneſſe and honeſtie, with al innocencie and obedience, and doth delight therein, is aſſured that deſtruction ſhal not come vpon him as a whirlewinde. It bringeth vs reſt alſo, deliuering vs frõ the feare of euil: for whoſoeuer hath true knowledge of God, the ſame knoweth, that he is his almightie Father, and moſt merciful Sauiour: And therfore in very knowledge he ſaith, if God be on our ſide, who ſhal bee againſt vs to doe vs hurt? In this peace, feare ſhal not come vpon him like deſolation, but walking in the feare and knowledge of God, he holdeth the way, whereby in the end he ſhal attaine vnto the poſſeſſion and fruition of euerlaſting life, where he ſhal quite be deliuered from al feare and danger for euer. And as they eſteeme this promiſe, ſo doe they alſo delight to follow the conditions which are made, through the obſeruing of the which, they attaine to this promiſe: not that by the obſeruing of theſe conditions, they can merite the fulfilling of this promiſe: but bicauſe God (which lyeth not) hath ſo promiſed, & ſo pleaſeth him to doe. The which well appeareth by that which followeth.

For the Lorde giueth &c: By this reaſon hee cloſeth vp the mouthes of the proude hypocrites, which make thẽſelues beleeue that God is their detter: for ſith that by wiſdome, knowledge and vnderſtanding, we walke the way of euerlaſting life, the which we haue not, but of Gods gifts: then muſt theſe proude perſons bee dumb, vnleſſe they wil make Solomon a lyar. He ſheweth vs alſo, that we cannot keepe the former cõditions, vnleſſe it be giuen vs of God: and conſequently that we haue not the vſe of this promiſe, but of meere grace and liberalitie: for if the cauſe be not in our power, no more is the effect. Furthermore, whẽ Solomõ ſheweth that in the obſeruation of the former conditions, we haue not to do with mortall men, but with the Almightie & eternal God: & that it is he which ſpeaketh vnto vs, whẽ we open our eares to hearken vnto wiſedome: he teacheth vs, with what feare & reuerence, and with what care & diligence, we ſhoulde reade the holy Scriptures, & heare the preaching of the Goſpel: for therein doth

God opẽ his mouth to giue vs wiſdom. And we muſt not imagine any carnal thing of God, ſeeing he is a ſpirite. Heereby wee may learne that we ought not to reſort to the preaching of the worde, and to the publik praiers ſlackely, or for cuſtomes ſake, as doe the Hypocrites, the Superſtitious and Idolaters: but to the ende that we may receiue and learne wiſdome of God through his grace & goodneſſe, whereby we knowing him, may walk in his feare. And ſith it is the gift of God, we ſhould remember to pray continually vnto him for the ſame. And what wiſdome ſoeuer we haue, wee wil praiſe our ſelues neuer the more for it, as if we were ſomething more then others which are voide therof: but without abuſing our ſelues, we wil confeſſe with Saint Iames, that euery good gift and euery perfect gift is from aboue, and commeth downe frõ the Father of lightes. Otherwiſe we ſhould wel deſerue to heare, What haſt thou, that thou haſt not receiued? Moreouer there is none amongſt vs, which wold not only think himſelf to be out of his wit, (if he ſhould refuſe a thing which he could not want) but alſo would iudge himſelf moſt vnthankful, if he did not receiue it with hartie thankſgiuing, when it were freely offered him. Nowe that this promiſe with the reaſon ioined therto, doth bring vs ſo much goodnes as hath bin ſaide, Solomõ ſheweth when he ſaith:

Iam.1.17.

1.Cor.4.7.

7 *He preſerueth the ſtate of the righteous: he is a ſheelde to them that walke vprightly.*

8 *That they may keep the wayes of iudgement: & he preſerueth the way of his ſaints.*

Heere Solomon maketh God like vnto thẽ, which through pitie do receiue and hide the poore afflicted in their houſes, from the wrath of their perſecutors. The which we may knowe by two wordes that Solomon vſeth in his ſpeach. The firſt, which we haue tranſlated, to *preſerue*, ſignifieth alſo to hide, and to keepe cloſe: The ſeconde, which we haue enterpreted *ſtate*, doth come of a Verbe which ſignifieth to be: and ſo it may be tranſlated *being*, as if he did ſay, The Lord ſo hideth the righteous, that he preſerueth thẽ in their being, to the end that deſtructiõ ſhold not ouercome thẽ, but might eſcape, and ſo alwaies remain in their being. He meaneth not according as the world ſpeaketh, when he ſaith, That they ſhal remaine in ther being: for heerein hee ſpeaketh of that life which he knoweth to be but corporal and temporall, the which oftentimes, the righteous haue taken from them through the crueltie and tyrannie of the wicked: but when the righteous knowe that al the heares of their head are numbred before God, they care not for their being in this world, neither doe they feare them which onely can kill the body. So long as God woulde haue vs to liue, we ſhalbe preſerued: for they can do nothing againſt vs, but ſo farre as he doeth ſuffer them. And if our corporal and temporall ſtate be to him ſo precious, by a more ſtrong reaſon our ſpiritual and eternal being ſhalbe had in greater price with him, & he wil by his grace and goodneſſe ſo couer it, through the blood of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, wherein lyeth the aſſurance of all the faithful, that neither the worlde, ſinne or death, nor al the power of Hel can any thing preuaile to deſtroy it, although they ſpurne at it, and doe whatſoeuer they can againſt it. After this ſort, the righteous, that is to ſay, they that feare the Lorde, are in a ſure dwelling, and may truely ſay, the Lorde is our protectour and defender, we wil not feare what man can do to vs. For they haue no ſuch power in their corporal eſtate, that they can let vs from riſing again, and that we ſhould not take our bodies againe to liue eternally in them. Loe how we ſhalbe preſerued in perpetual being in the poſſeſſion of euerlaſting health. The which Solomon doth notifie vnto vs, when hee vſeth the Verbe which ſignifieth not onely that which is doone preſently, but alſo what ſhalbe doone hereafter: ioyning this therewith, that God is ſo faithful & conſtant, that what he hath once begunne, he leaueth it not, but doth bring it to perfection. It is not Solomon alone that teacheth vs to haue ſuch confidence in God. Al the holy ſcripture is repleniſhed with examples and promiſes which ſhould induce vs to ſuch hope and aſſurance. How great is thy goodnes, which thou haſt laide vp for thẽ, that feare thee: & doone to them that truſt in thee, euen before the ſonnes of mẽ? And albeit that by walking rightly in the feare of the Lorde, we obteine this ſtate: yet it is not to ſay, that it commeth for our righteouſneſſe ſake: for of it ſelfe it is neuer without many imperfections, and ſo can not pleaſe GOD,

Pſal. 118. 6.

Pſal. 138. 8.

Pſalm. 31. 20

except of his onely goodneſſe he allowe it. Seeing then that God of his onely mercy doth hide and preſerue vs, it behoueth that being merciful as he is, we ſhold be ſo much as we can, the ſheeld and defence of the poore afflicted, as Eſay doth ſay, To hide them that are chaced out: not to bewray him that is fled. And in the 58. of Eſay, Deale thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poore that wander, vnto thy houſe. It might alſo be ſaide, that when Solomon ſaith, *how God preſerueth the ſtate of the righteous*, that he doth like vnto good Fathers which waſt not their goods, but doe preſerue them for their children and heires. Neuertheleſſe, the firſt ſenſe is the moſt meeteſt: as we may vnderſtande it, when Solomon addeth that God is a ſheelde to them that walke vprightly. Heere God is compared to a *ſheelde*, or to a man which ſetteth him ſelfe againſt him, which woulde doe violence to his neighbour, and putteth himſelf betweene both, for to defend him that is like to be oppreſſed: and that very fitly. For as an experte man of warre, very nimble and ſtrong in his members, can with his ſheeld defend all dartes and arrowes, and al ſtrokes: euen ſo is God the defence and deliuerance of thoſe, which hauing founde the true knowledge of God, doe forſake al diſſembling, feigning, and hypocriſie, and walke truely in ſingleneſſe of conſcience. And ſith that God is our ſheeld, and that we haue no neede of ſheeld, and target, but in warre and combate: it followeth wee are in a battell the which we cannot of our ſelues ouercome: and therefore S. Paule doth exhort vs to be ſtrong in the Lorde, and in the power of his might, Thus being armed, & God being our ſheeld, wee neede not to be afraide for any deſolation, but to remaine ſtedfaſt, looking for helpe and aſſiſtance of the Almightie. There commeth then no ſmal profite, when wee vnderſtand the feare of the Lorde, and haue founde the knowledge of GOD: then wee walke vprightly and ſincerely, whereby God preſerueth our ſtate, & deliuereth vs from al euil, that we may remaine quietly in euerlaſting being.

Eſay.16.3.
Eſay.58.7.
Ephe.6.10.

Prou.1.26.

8 *That they may keepe the wayes of iudgement, &c.* The Lorde, as we haue ſeene heere aboue, doth deride and laugh at the fooliſhe, ſcornful, & fooles: but cōtrarily he giueth to his children (which receiue his words, & hide within thē his cōmādements)

ſafetie & reſt. And this he doeth for to keepe all the ſorts & waies of good & right iudgement: that is to ſay, to ſhew him ſelf a righteous Iudge, as he is, by making voide, and diſappointing the wicked of their purpoſes, by ouerthrowing their deuiſes and enterpriſes, and by puniſhing them for their contempt and wickednes: (which apply them ſelues thereunto, and the ſame to attaine, doe with great care and ſore diligence encline their heartes therafter) and by defending and preſeruing them from all euils. It is the ſame that Solomon meaneth, when he ſayeth, *That they may keepe the waies of right iudgement*. If we would then, that God ſhould not puniſh vs, but be our defender and preſeruer, let vs encline our hearts wholy vnto wiſedome. But to the intent (that if God doe giue vs this grace to vnderſtande his feare, and to finde his knowledge) we ſhould not attribute theſe vertues and giftes vnto our care and diligence, neither ſhoulde thinke that wee haue wel deſerued that God ſhould keepe ſuch iudgement for vs: Solomon is not contented to haue ſaide in the 6. verſe, that the Lord giueth Wiſedome, but hee addeth, that the *Lorde preſerueth the way of his Saintes:* that is to ſay, that hee keepeth thoſe which through his feare and knowledge, and by ruling and gouerning them with his holy Spirit, that they are kept back from euil, and doe not conſent vnto ſinners, neither fall into diſdaine and contempt of his Worde, nor doe reiect all diſcipline and correction. Otherwiſe, without the ſame they ſhould be ſpoiled of al righteouſnes, iudgement, and equitie, and ſhould not know howe to holde the good and right pathe, but verie ſoone would decline either to the right or to the left hande, and would be of the compact and conſpiracie of ſinners. But when the Lorde preſerueth their way, they know how to gouerne themſelues, and do not wander out of the way: as Solomon doeth declare vnto vs ſaying,

9 *Then ſhalt thou vnderſtande righteouſnes, and iudgement, and euery good pathe.* If then we walke rightly, delighting to giue vnto our neighbours that which is theirs, wee muſt confeſſe with all humilitie and thankes giuing, that knowledge and vnderſtanding and the preſeruation of our way onely proceedeth from the free gift of God. And when wee are thus truely inſtructed, we wil not delight to walke the brode way, which leadeth to deſtruction: but by the ſtraight way, which leadeth vnto life. And Mat.7.14.

that we may be preſerued therin, we will pray with Dauid, Direct
Pſal.119.35. me in the pathe of thy cõmandements: for therin is my delight.

10 VVhen VViſedome entreth into thine heart, & knowledge delighteth thy ſoule,

11 Then ſhal counſel preſerue thee, and vnderſtanding ſhal keepe thee,

12 And deliuer thee from the euill way, and from the man that ſpeaketh froward things:

13 And from them that leaue the wayes of righteouſnes to walke in the wayes of darkeneſſe:

14 VVhich reioyce in doing euil, and delight in the frowardneſſe of the wicked,

15 VVhoſe wayes are crooked, and they are leude in their pathes.

Nowe Solomon willing to declare vnto vs from what euils we ſhal be preſerued by this gift, doth ſet before vs a cõdition, wherby he warneth vs not to be negligent to accept this gift, but with all diligence to prepare our heartes to receiue Wiſedome, when through the grace of the Lorde, it entreth to dwell within vs: and alſo that wee ſhould not bee vnthankfull, nor eſteeming this free gift, that we haue not, nor can in any wiſe deſerue: but that wee ſhould acknowledge it, abhorring ignorance, & ſetting our whole delight in that, that it pleaſeth God to giue vs knowledge & learning. Pſa.119.10. Folowing this admonition our, heartes ſhould be ſet on the lawe of the Lorde, and to meditate therein day and night; & that we our ſelues might truely ſay, what Dauid ſaid, With my whole heart haue I ſought thee: let me not wander from thy commaundementes. 14 Againe, I haue had as great delight in the way of thy teſtimonies, as in al riches. If we thus doe, we ſhalbe in great ſafetie and reſt, as Solomon declareth ſaying,

11 *Then ſhal counſel preſerue thee, &c.* When a wiſe man keepeth watch for a Citie, the dwellers therof may ſleepe without feare of being taken by their enemies. Likewiſe when a man of vnderſtanding hath the gouernance of another, the ſame neede not to feare to be euil guided, or that he ſhould fall in danger: but bee aſſured that he wil ſo guide him, that he wil atchieue and accompliſh to deliuer him ſafe and ſound. Euen ſo ought wee to vnder-

ſtand how Solomon doeth not heere promiſe vs any ſmal matter, of litle importance, but that he promiſeth vnto vs ſafetie and reſt, which al the world can not giue vs, though it ſtood armed rounde about vs on euerie ſide to defend vs. And becauſe wee are more giuen to truſt in outwarde and worldly things, and that we ſeeke rather in them our ſafetie and reſt, then in the Wiſedome of God, the which we miſtruſt, we ſhoulde, continually pray vnto God to turne away our eyes from vanitie, and to helpe our vnbeliefe. Elſe we can not enioy this promiſe, the which doeth not leade vs vnto a worldly and corporal hope and truſt: but is giuen vs to this end, that we ſhould be aſſured of the reſt & preſeruatiō of our ſoules: as we may perceiue it when Solomon addeth, wherunto God tendeth by this watch and preſeruation, ſaying,

12 *And deliuer thee, &c.* Whē God preſerueth vs, through the good counſell that he doth geue vs, and when he doth keepe vs through good vnderſtanding that he putteth in vs, it is to the ende that we ſhall not walke in the way with ſinners, which goe to deſtruction for their wicked manners and doinges and that labour to drawe others after them: but ſhould be kept backe therefrom, and directed in the way of ſaluation and life. Nowe as this euill way is broade and wide, and that many frequent and walke therein, by whom it cannot be amended but impayred: ſo is it full of diuers perils, from the which God deliuereth thoſe ouer whom he watcheth. He doth deliuer them from thoſe that ſpeake froward things: not that he doth take them away from amongſt them: but he ſuffereth them not to beleeue them, leſt through their peruerſe & froward wordes they ſhould be turned away vnto errors, to falſe doctrines, & vaine hopes, & that their good maners ſhould not be corrupted. Now the meanes whereby they are deliuered, is that he printeth in them his word, wherunto they ſurely truſting, cannot be remoued nor ſeduced.

1.Cor.15.33.

13 *And from them.* He continueth ſtil, ſhewing frō what perſons & from what dangers God doth deliuer the childrē of wiſedom. And whē he ſetteth here the right pathes, againſt the waies of darknes, it is to make vs to vnderſtād that the *waies of righteouſnes*, are righteouſnes, innocēcy, modeſty, ſobernes honeſty, tēperance, and ſuch like vertues. For the wayes of darknes are vn-

Rom.13.12. righteouſnes, malice, exceſſe, vncleanneſſe, and ſuch vices, as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of. Let vs therefore caſt away the deedes of darkneſſe, and let vs put on the armour of light. And againe, So that
Ephe.5.3. fornication and all vncleanneſſe, or couetouſnes, bee not once named amongſt you, as it becommeth Saintes. Nowe theſe vertues are called, *the wayes of righteouſnes*, for whoſoeuer foloweth them, hee may be aſſured, not to goe aſtray, but that without let or ſtop he may attaine vnto eternal reſt. For hee foloweth Ieſus Chriſt who is the light of the world, the Way, the Trueth & the Life. Contrarily, the vices are called the wayes of darkneſſe: for they that walke in them are vncertaine, what ſhal become of thẽ: as they which walke in darkeneſſe knowe not whether they goe. It is then verie profitable and healthful to be giuen vnto Wiſdom, and very dangerous to contemne the ſame. For by this contempt ſome goe into darkneſſe for euer, where ſhalbe weeping and gnaſhing of teethe: as they doe wel deſerue, when ſo doing they forſake al vertues to folowe vices, which is the way that leadeth vnto this darkeneſſe. But as there be many wayes of darkeneſſe, ſo doe they walke diuerſly in them: and therefore wee haue great neede that God ſhould giue vs counſel and vnderſtanding, to deliuer vs, not onely from one danger and one kinde of people, which labour to drawe vs vnto perdition with them: but it is neceſſarie for vs to flye the felowſhip of many, that wee may bee deliuered from many dangers: as in deede God doeth keepe vs for to deliuer vs therefrom: and beſides the reſt, he keepeth watche to preſerue and deliuer vs.

14 *VVhich reioyce in doing euil, &c.* That is to ſay, that we ſhoulde not be like to them which of ſet purpoſe are giuen to hurt their neighbours, and alſo are glad when they can turne others to doe as euil as them ſelues, making their boaſt & triumph thereof, as if they had done wel, or as they had obteined ſome great praye. Nowe it is needful for vs, that God ſhould deliuer vs from ſuch people, and that in no wiſe he ſuffer vs ſo to reioyce & boaſt: contrarily we ought to looke that God ſhoulde reioyce to giue vs according vnto our workes, and take vengeance of our iniquities. Not that God doeth delight to puniſh vs: but the wicked ſhal feele him ſuch towards them, as they haue bin towards their neighbours,

neighbors, whē they receiue the reward that they haue deſerued.

VVhoſe wayes are crooked. If we were like vnto ſuch people, we might look but for an horrible vengeance of God: as the world deſtroied by the flud, & the Sodomites with the Gomorrhiās by a more ſharpe puniſhment: ſeeing that God hauing geuen vs his ſonne, doth dayly offer vs his Euangelicall word which is the meſſage of the euerlaſting couenant: the contēners of which meſſage ſhalbe puniſhed more greeuouſly then they of Sodome and Gomorrhe. God then ſheweth vs great fauour, when he preſerueth vs from being like to ſuch corruptors and Apoſtataes. *Matt.10.15.*

16 *And it ſhall deliuer thee from the ſtrange woman, euen frō the ſtranger, which flattereth with her words.*

17 *VVhich forſaketh the guide of her youth, & forgeteth the couenant of her God.*

18 *Surely her houſe tendeth to death, and her pathes vnto the dead.*

19 *Al they that goe vnto her, returne not againe; neither take they hold of the waies of life.*

When a path or way is much troden and beaten, there is no count made of any danger: & whē a thing is often done, although it is wicked, yet doe they make themſelues beleeue that in it there is no euill: as they doe which raſhly ſweare, which doe geue themſelues to laſciuious and diſſolute talke, vnto couetouſneſſe, vſurie, & wicked bargaining, to slouth and idleneſſe. Likewiſe becauſe that diuers forſworne & vnfaithfull doe breake promiſe of holy marriage, & haue no cōſcience to become adulterers, & that the worlde is full of mockers and contemners of the inſtitution of holy marriage which God hath ordayned from the beginning of the world, and had rather committe whoredome then by marriage to take vnto them an honeſt companion or wife, the which is honorable among all men: it ſeemeth to moſte men that there is no danger to folow the way of adulterers & whoremongers, & that they cōmit no euill in being defiled & polluted with whoredome & fornication. But when the holy Ghoſt by the mouth of Solomō doth declare vnto vs: that God doth giue vs counſel & vnderſtanding, that we may be deliuered frō *the ſtrāge woman*: he ſheweth vs wel that it is not ſo as the world iudgeth, for if there were no dā- *Heb.13.4.*

ger, we ſhould not need, that God ſhould giue vs counſel & vnderſtanding, to deliuer vs from her. Let vs not then folow the opiniõ of the adulterers & whoremongers: but let vs beleeue that there is great danger to go vnto an harlot, & to talk with her, which Solomon here calleth a ſtranger and a forenner, becauſe, that if ſhee be maried, ſhe belongeth not vnto him that haunteth her, but vnto her husband, from whõ ſhe departeth & alienateth her ſelf in playing the harlot: and ſo ſhe is alſo a ſtranger towards her husbande. And if ſhe be vnmaried, ſhe apperteineth to none, but ought to abſtaine, by tarying til God ſend her a yoke felowe to be honeſtly ioyned by mariage: ſo ſhe is alſo a ſtranger and forenner, if ſhee play the harlot, ſeeing ſhe belongeth to no man. Our Lorde doeth warne vs thereof, & doeth daily make vs to vnderſtand it by the preaching of his word, the which he doth not cõmunicat ſo purely vnto al natiõs: but yet neuertheles adultery & whordõ ceaſe not to raigne. They abſtaine not from vnſhamefaſt lookes & countenances, they refraine not their tongues from ſpeaking foule & filthy words, & to ſing diſhoneſt & wanton ſongs. By ſuch wordes and ſongs, do the whormongers & harlots plainly vtter thẽſelues: and albeit to excuſe themſelues, they alledge that they thinke vpon

Ma.12.34. no euil, they are not to be receiued for al that, but as wicked liers, which falſly belie the vnfallible Trueth, which pronounceth that from the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh. Let vs not then deſpiſe the counſel that God giueth vs, when hee telleth vs, that mariage is to be had in honour among al men, & the bed vn-

Heb.13.4. defiled: for whorekeepers & adulterers God wil iudge. Now that there is danger onely to talke with whoremongers & harlots, Solomon doeth ſhewe, ſaying, *That the ſtraunge woman flattereth with her words*. It is not needefull to declare what flatteries the harlots & whorekeepers vſe: for they which deſire to liue chaſtly, need not to vnderſtand them. It ought to bee enough for them to know, that it is not lawful for man & womã to dwel together, except they be knit together by mariage. It is not alſo needfull to declare them to ſuch as are giuen to whordom: for they are but too much learned therin already. True it is, notwithſtanding to admoniſh the vndiſcreete, that they may not pretend cauſe of ignorãce, we may diſcouer & vnfold the ſweet words & flattring ſpeech of

Pro.7.5. the harlots & whorkeepers, with their ſtrange attires: as Solomon doth declare them hereafter, in the 7. Chapter. After the flatteries, Solomon diſcouereth the vnthankfulnes of the adulterers,ſaying,

17 *VVhich forſaketh,&c.* Solomon ſheweth that there is much euil in adultery,though a mā be accuſtomed therto: for vnfaithfulnes is no ſmal euil,but great wickednes: therfore the more one is accuſtomed therto, ſomuch the more doeth he cōmit euil, & is the more worthy of great puniſhment: for cuſtom abſolueth not a gilty perſō,but maketh him more gilty. Loke what we iudge of murther and theft,we ought alſo to iudge of euery tranſgreſſiō of the law,in what point ſo euer it is: for he that hath ſaide,Thou ſhalt not kil,hath ſaid alſo,Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie. Whē then God giueth vs vnderſtanding to defend vs from adultery, he preſerueth & deliuereth vs from great wickednes. The vnfaithfulnes of the adulterous woman cōſiſteth in this, that ſhe leaueth & forſaketh her husband: not that ſhe forſaketh him vtterly,leauing him for euer,without returning to him any more: for vnfaithfulnes ſtandeth not only in that, but chiefly in this,that ſhe ioyneth hir ſelf to an other,ſeparating her ſelf frô her husbād,& making of one fleſh two: and yet ſhe wil not leaue returning to her husbād, to couer her vnfaithfulnes. Euē ſo likewiſe is it with an adulterer and vnfaithful man to his wife. And to ſhewe that the adulterous woman is not only vnfaithful,but alſo diſobedient,rebellious, & vnthankful,Solomō calleth her husband Prince, Teacher, & guide of the youth of his wife: wherin he ſheweth that he is the head & the gouerner, hauing prerogatiue aboue her: & therfore, that ſhe ought to feare & reuerence him, & with faithfulnes to giue him obedience. That which Solomō doth here ſhewe vs,in one word, the Apoſtles S. Peter & S. Paule doe declare more at large. Likewiſe the adulterous man is not only vnfaithful to his wife,but cruel: for he doth not gouern the youth,the weaknes,& frailtie of his wife,in enterteining & tenderly louing her,as Solomō doth teach him,calling him the guide of the youth of his wife. And to ſhewe vs that by adulterie they offende not only againſt men,but alſo againſt the ordināce which God hath made betweene mā & wife: Solomō ſaith, the adultereſſe *forgetteth the couenāt of her God.* For who ſo committeth adultery, doeth ſeparate that which God hath ioyned. What we haue ſaid of the vnfaithfulnes of the adulterous woman (by the courſe of the text) it may wel appeare that he ſpeaketh but of the maried whore: neuertheles, wee haue applied it vnto the ſingle harlot, and that without wreſting of the

Ier.2.11.

Ephe.5.1.

2.Pet.3.1.

Gen.2.23.

Mat.19.5.

text. For we ought to vnderſtand that if God giue vs counſel and vnderſtanding to preſerue & deliuer vs from one kinde of whoredome, that hee woulde alſo we ſhould abhorre the other kindes. Likewiſe it is very true that who ſo is geuen to adulterie, will not abſtaine from ſingle fornication.

18 *Surely her houſe tẽdeth, &c.* Moreouer for to ſhew that there is danger in adulterie, & that they doe euil by defiling themſelues with ſuche vncleanneſſe, Solomon geueth a reaſon whereby hee threatneth the adulterers with a thing which wonderfully feareth them that walke in an euil conſcience. And it is to admoniſhe and warne vs to take good heed, not to frequent & haunt the company of whores & whoremongers, leaſt we defile our ſelues, & conſẽt vnto their filthines & abhomination. For if we would not willingly come neere a ruinous & rottẽ houſe, leaſt in falling, it ſhould bruiſe our bodies, & kil vs bodily: by a ſtrõger reaſõ, we muſt not come neere vnto an adultereſſe, whõ to haunt, not onelie bruiſeth the bones, but alſo eternally killeth the ſoules. The houſe of the adultereſſe, is her ſelfe, her acquaintãce & cuſtomers that goe together vnto eternal dãnatiõ: which is a danger, wherwith whẽ one is attaint, he cã neuer be raiſed vp againe. Now we ought wel to vnderſtand that this is of eternall death & ſtate of the damned that Solomon ſpeaketh, when he ſaith that the houſe of the harlot tendeth to death: for albeit that the Eccleſiaſtes (ſpeaking of the common ſtate of men) ſaith, One generation paſſeth, & another generation ſucceedeth. Agayne, How dieth the wiſe man, as doth the foole? Againe, I conſidered in mine heart the ſtate of the children of men that God had purged thẽ: yet to ſee to, they are in themſelues as beaſtes. It were not a ſufficient reaſon to ſhew vs the dãger that is in haunting the company of harlots, nor to preſerue vs from familiar communication with whores & whoremongers, if there were none other death ſpokẽ of here, but corporal death, the which is common to al men. A man might ſay, as doe the mockers, let vs play the whoremõgers without any feare: for nothing ſhall happẽ vs which happeneth not vnto the moſt chaſt. Let vs thẽ vnderſtand that Solomõ threatneth the adulterers & whoremõgers with eternal death: as alſo hee ſheweth the ſame, ſaying, that *her pathes tend vnto death.* For none but the damned are dead: as it

Eccle. 1. 4.
Eccle. 2. 16.
& 3. 18.

Luke. 20. 27.

may be knowne when it is ſayd, that the Lord is the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and of Iacob. There is then great dāger, and alſo much wickednes in adulterie: or els God which is not only righteous, but alſo merciful, wold not puniſh it with ſo ſharp a death. Now that the adulterers goe vnto eternal death, Solomon doeth giue it vs to vnderſtande, when hee addeth:

19 *All they that goe vnto her, &c.* Heere he compareth them which are giuen to adulterie, vnto ſouldiours that goe into the warre, and there place and thruſt themſelues ſo far forwardes that there they are ſlaine. Wherein wee haue a proofe that in adulterie is greate perill, and alſo much euil: ſeeing in it there is no remedie nor meanes to eſcape the puniſhment of eternal death: as alſo Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, *Neither take they holde of the wayes of lyfe.* When Solomon doth ſo threaten the adulterers and the whoremongers, hee ſpeaketh of them which are hardened and cannot repent and bee ſory for their ſinne, and forſake their wicked life. We might heere reproue ſuch, as doe breake marriages lawefully made, as they knowe wel enough: and giue licence to the parties to marrie againe in ſome other place: which they cannot doe, without tranſgreſſing of the Lawe of God by adulterie and whoredome. I ſay therefore vnto you, that whoſoeuer ſhall put away his wife, except it be for whoredome, and marry another, cōmitteth adulterie. And thus ſo much as in them lyeth, they bring men to contempt of Gods law: wherevpon followeth eternal death, not onely for them which are ſeparated, if they keepe not themſelues chaſt: but alſo for thoſe that ſeparate them: for they are in a great fault, when they hinder the ordinance of God to haue his courſe. For no thanke to them that the couenant of God is not forgotten, and al honeſtie ouerthrowne: the which is ſuche an offence that it were better for them by whome it commeth, to haue a milſtone hanged about their neckes, and that they were drowned in the depth of the Sea. *Mat. 19. 9.* *Mat. 18. 6.*

The wayes and ſteps, the pathes and trades, for the which to avoid, God doth giue vs wiſdome and vnderſtanding are the ſame of the wicked, and vnrighteous, whereby they go vnto perdition: and therefore forſaking them, wee muſt walke a contrary way to them, wherein we may be preſerued: & the ſame to do, Solomon doth admoniſhe vs ſaying:

20 *Therefore walke thou in the way of good men, & keepe the waies of the righteous.*

21 *For the iuſt ſhall dwell in the land, & the vpright men ſhall remaine in it.*

22 *But the wicked ſhalbe cut of from the earth, and the tranſgreſſours ſhalbe rooted out of it.*

Mat.19.17. *Pſal.14.11.* *Rom.3.9.* Whẽ our Lord ſaith, That there is none good but one, & that is, God: And alſo, that there is none that doeth good: for wee haue already proued, that al, both Iewes and Gentiles are vnder ſinne: It may be demanded where a man ſhoulde finde out the way of good men, and the pathes of the righteous. I anſwere, Although that after the poſteritie of Adam we be corrupted, and that in vs there is no goodnes nor righteouſnes, but that malice aboũdeth: notwithſtãding inſomuch as we are regenerate by the holy ghoſt, and made newe creatures, not ſuffering ſin to raigne in our mortall bodies, but delighting in the lawe of God after the inwarde man, and giuing our ſelues to worke righteouſneſſe, and to exerciſe the workes of charitie: wee are both good and righteous, for that it pleaſeth God to accept vs for ſuch, for Ieſus Chriſtes ſake, who is our righteouſneſſe, and in him are righteouſneſſe of God. The way then of good men, and the pathes of the righteous may be founde out in true faith working by loue, and by true repentance, whereby all wickedneſſe is abhorred. If we thus do, we ſhal walke in the way of good men. And albeit that during this mortall life, we haue many imperfections, and that ſinne dwelleth in vs: yet wil not God impute them vnto vs for our deſtruction: our houſe ſhal not be inclined to death, but ſhall attaine the waies of the liuing, and ſhal in them be preſerued: as Solomon doth affirme the ſame vnto vs, ſaying,

For the iuſt ſhall dwell, &c. For to encourage vs to walke in the way of good mẽ, he maketh vs a promiſe of a thing that naturally we deſire, that is to ſay, to liue long vpõ earth. And immediately after, hee giueth the reaſon wherefore hee allureth vs to walke in the way of good men: in the which reaſon he ſheweth who are the good men and righteous, that is to ſay, the *iuſt and vpright*. And ſo he teacheth vs, that wee are not righteous and good, except we walke vprightly and ſincerely. But it may be ſaid that this promiſe cãnot giue vs courage to walk in this way: for it belongeth nothing at al vnto vs which are heathen: but onely to the ſeede of Abraham, I anſwere, albeit that after the doctrine of Moſes, Solomon heere ſpeaketh expreſly of the lande of Canaan, appertaining to the children of Iſraell: neuertheleſſe nowe ſith the worde of God is directed vnto vs, and that thereby we know howe the earth is the Lordes, we muſt take this word *Land* more generally. For in what countrey ſo euer wee dwel, ſith the lande is his, he giueth vs our dwelling and abiding therein. And in this ſort if we be good and righteous, iuſt & vpright, the promiſe belongeth vnto vs, & ought to encourage vs to walke in the way of good men. It may bee ſaide againe, that the promiſe to dwell in the land, is not beneficial vnto the iuſt and vpright, becauſe that moſt commonly they are oppreſſed, violated, and threatened to bee rooted out of the earth. Anſwere, that the earthly life how wretched ſoeuer it bee, and what aduerſitie ſoeuer they ſuffer therein, yet it cannot bee but profitable to the iuſt and vpright. For this earthly life is to them a bleſſing of God, & if it were, but forſomuch as God doth witneſſe his fatherly loue towards them, maintaining them in this life. But it wil be ſaid, that this bleſſing laſteth not long, and ſo that they haue no great benefite by dwelling in the lande. I Anſwere, Albeit that ſometimes it happeneth that the Lorde doeth ſeeme to withdrawe the iuſt and vpright (whome he moſt loueth) out of this worlde, yet hee leaueth not his worde vnaccompliſhed, whereby he promiſeth them that they ſhall dwell in the lande, and remaine in it, as we muſt vnderſtande it. For what earthly riches ſoeuer GOD doth promiſe, we muſt take thẽ with condition, ſo far as it is expedient for our ſpiritual health. But it wil be ſaid againe, Though it were ſo that the iuſt ſhould remaine long on the earth, yet the promiſe, could not ſerue enough to prouoke thẽ to walke in the way of good men:

Gen. 12.17.

Pſal.24.1.

For we ſee the vngodly and froward, the wicked and hypocrites,
to liue long, and proſperouſly in this world: wherewith the faith-
Pſalm.37.2. ful may be tempted: and therefore they are admoniſhed in the 37.
Pſalme, not to bee vexed though they ſee them proſper and re-
ioyce: ſeeing that their deſtruction is at hande, from the which
they ſhall neuer be raiſed vp againe. I anſwere, that they which
are not iuſt and vpright, vſe not their owne in this life: but they
vſurpe other mens goodes, as theeues and robbers: though they
haue them by ſucceſſion, by gift or getting: for they holde them
without Gods promiſe, which onely maketh the faithful, iuſtly to
profeſſe that which they haue in this worlde. It might be further
replied, that for all the promiſe which the iuſt and vpright men
haue to dwel in the lande, that yet they haue nothing more than
the wicked, and that in deede, they enioy not the land ſo largely,
nor ſo much at their eaſe, as do the wicked: and therefore, that
this promiſe cannot induce them to walke in the way of good
mē. I anſwere again, That this is the ſame promiſe that God made
vnto Abraham in Geneſis: And the ſelfe ſame which is often re-
Gen. 12.7. peated in the lawe by Moſes, and in the Prophetes, and as ex-
pounders of the lawe: Wherefore the Lawe was our ſcholemai-
Gal.3.24. ſter to bring vs to Chriſt. Again, for al the promiſes of God in him
are, yea, and are in him Amen, vnto the glory of God through vs.
1.Cor.1.20. Nowe Ieſus Chriſt came not into this worlde to beare temporall
rule, and to poſſeſſe great earthly riches, as he hath declared both
by worde and deede: nor to place his at their eaſe, and to make
them great Princes of this worlde. Therefore we muſt vnder-
ſtand that in the promiſe of the lande is encloſed the ſame of the
heauēly heritage, & that there are none but them to whom the
promiſe of the lande is made, and which apprehend the ſame by
faith, who are made heires of euerlaſting life. As the promiſe
of the lande is not giuen to the frowarde and wicked, ſo haue
they no hope in the kingdome of GOD. It is then no ſmal mat-
ter to haue this promiſe to dwell and remaine in the land: as the
auncient Fathers did wel vnderſtande it: for hauing the promiſe,
they reſted not in the lande, but aſpired for higher things, & that
by faith, which hath no ſtay, but on the promiſes onely. For
if we

If wee beleeue and hope for that which is not promiſed vs, wee ſhalbe fruſtrate of that we looke for as fooles and arrogant. That the auncient fathers haue aſpired and looked for more excellent things, by the promis of the lande, the Apoſtle is witneſſe therof. By faith Abraham abode in the lande of promis, as in a ſtraunge countrie, as one that dwelt in tentes with Iſaac and Iacob, heires with him of the ſame promis: for hee looked for a Citie hauing a foundation, whoſe builder and maker is God. If we ſhould alledge this promis to the wicked which endeuour by violence to roote vs out of the world, they would ſcorne and mocke vs for our labour: for they thinke they haue the power to deſtroy vs at their pleaſure, and that they be maiſters and Lords of the lande & that no man ſhould gaineſay them. But the holy Ghoſt by Solomon pronounceth the contrarie: for he ſaith, *But the wicked ſhalbee cut of, &c.* The 37. Pſalme doeth ſet foorth this more at large. Albeit then that the wicked floriſhe and proſper in this worlde, yet ſhal they not continue long, but ſhal within a litle ſpace after their proſperitie periſhe eternally. For if God doeth not count them worthy to poſſeſſe the lande by promis, much leſſe will hee iudge them worthy of the heauenly kingdome, out of the which there is nothing but damnation. As then the euerlaſting life followeth the promis of the earthly life: ſo likewiſe doth damnation and euerlaſting death followe the threatening of rooting out of this world. Thus whoſoeuer enioyeth the land by the promis of God, the which hee layeth holde on by faith, may bee aſſured of euerlaſting life: and whoſoeuer layeth not hold on it through the promis, and is threatened to be cut off, and rooted out, may looke for nothing, but perpetual miſerie. As touching the reſt, God wil not pleaſe his children, wherewith hee ſatiſfieth ſtrangers, but will enriche them with his benefites which ſhal neuer periſh. Theſe promiſes thus conſidered, if we conferre them with the threatninges made to the wicked, we ſhal not enuie their proſperitie. For although to the ſight and iudgement of men, they are planted and faſt rooted, and that they ſpring, floriſh and bring forth frute, yet ſhal they quickly periſh. Contrarily, the good & righteous which ſeeme to be of litle value in this world, if they be taken away, it is not to the ende that they ſhould periſh: but after what ſorte ſoe-

Heb. 11. 9.

Pſal. 37.

Pſal. 37.

uer God doeth withdrawe them thence out of this worlde, it is for to plante them in his heauenly kingdome, in the which they ſhal floriſh eternally. When the wicked growe as the graſſe, and al the workers of wickedneſſe doe floriſh, then ſhal they bee deſtroyed for euer: contrarily in the 12. verſe of the ſame Pſalme, it is ſayde, The righteous ſhal floriſh like a Palme tree, and growe like a Cedre in Lebanon. But albeeit the wicked doe wel deſerue to bee ſo handled, yet is it not to ſay that the righteous and good deſerue and merite that which is ſpoken of, on the contrary part. But al commeth only becauſe of the promis. Let vs thē take good heede leaſt wee ſwel and waxe proude by thinking on our deſerts: but let vs walke on in feare and humbleneſſe, knowing that if GOD ſhoulde vſe and ſhewe himſelfe ſo ſharpe as wee deſerue, hee might cut vs of, and roote vs out of the lande, as wicked and vnfaithful that wee are of our ſelues, and of our owne corrupt nature, after the which wee are al corrupted: and doe abhominable woorkes: And if wee bee not woorthy of this earthly habitation, much leſſe can we boaſt our ſelues to be woorthy of the heauenly inheritance. Wee haue nothing then to triumphe ouer them which periſh, as if wee did better then they: but if wee deſire to bee counted woorthy to remaine in the lande, wee muſt pray that it woulde pleaſe God to change vs, and make vs newe creatures by his holy ſpirite. Wherefore alſo, though we be admoniſhed to walke in the way of good men, with promiſe to dwel in the lande: and that the wicked are threatened to bee rooted out thereof: yet ought wee not to folowe the opinion of the Papiſtes, which to defende their free wil, alledge the exhortations and threateninges of the ſcripture: ſaying, that it ſhould bee in vaine for any to exhort vs with promiſe, and that in vaine it ſhoulde bee alſo to threaten vs, if wee had not power by our free wil to doe whatſoeuer we are admoniſhed, and to eſchue whatſoeuer is threatened vs: If we did folowe them, wee ſhoulde bee much deceiued. For the exhortations are not made, neither the promiſes giuen for to ſhewe vs what wee can doe, but what wee ſhould and ought to do. We are much like to vnthrifty huſbands that growe in dette, and haue nothing wherewith to paye, &c.

Pſal. 92.7.

Likewiſe if God doe not holde vs vp and giue vs grace, wee ſhal neither doe that which we are admoniſhed to doe, nor yet auoide that which is threatened to fal vppon vs: but muſt needes goe to deſtruction and perdition.

The thirde Chapter.

1 My ſonne, forget not thou my lawe, but let thine heart keepe my commandements.

2 For they ſhall increaſe the length of thy dayes, and the yeeres of life and thy proſperitie.

Foraſmuch as Solomon hath admoniſhed vs to walke in the way of good men, & hath promiſed vs, that if we bee iuſt & vpright, wee ſhal dwel and remaine in the land: contrarily, that the wicked ſhalbee cut off, and rooted out of it: with whome leſt we ſhould be included and ouerthrowne, hee ſheweth vs what we haue to doe for to walke in that ſame way, and to bee allowed before God as iuſt and vpright: that is, that we deſpiſe not the law of God, leſt we become like the grounde by the hye way ſide, whoſe ſeede was made a pray for the birdes: but that wee ſhoulde bee like to the good grounde. This lawe is the way of good men, The commandements are the pathes of the righteous. Nowe the manner howe wee ſhoulde not forget the lawe, is giuen vs: wee muſt then continually meditate and exerciſe our ſelues in the woorde of GOD. And becauſe wee are rather giuen to vanitie, then to followe the lawe of God, let vs pray to God that hee woulde giue vs the vnderſtanding of his lawe, and make vs walke in the path of his commandementes: as wee are taught throughout the 119. Pſalme. If wee doe this with an vnfeined harte, wee

Mat.13.4.
Luke.8.8.
Pſalm.1.
Pſalm.119.
Eſay.2.3.
Deut.6.6.& 11.18.
Pſalm.119.

ſhalbe the true children of God: and though there be in vs many imperfections, yet our good God and father, wil not ceaſe to lengthen our dayes: as Solomon doeth ſhewe vs, ſaying:

For they ſhal increaſe,&c. Heere Solomon promiſeth vs nothing which is not often repeated in the law and in the Prophets. Therefore ſeing we haue ſo great a number of witneſſes, let vs in no wiſe doubt of this promis. Nowe though wee were altogether compaſſed about with euils,& that we ſhoulde walke in the mids of the ſhaddowe of death, yet ought it not in any caſe to be feared, but that God (who is alwaies preſent with vs) wil accompliſh his promis: and chiefly for our ſpiritual health, and eternal proſperitie whereto wee muſt aſpire, and not ſtay our ſelues in the dayes and yeeres and peace of this temporal life, that is to ſay, in the earthly proſperitie. *Deut.30.20.* And although the Lorde is our life and the length of our dayes, yet doeth Solomon attribute it vnto the lawe and to the commandementes, becauſe that God cōmunicateth both him and his riches to thoſe which forget not his lawe, but keepe his commandements. For what nation is ſo great, vnto whome the gods come ſo neere vnto them, as the Lord our God is neere vnto vs, in al that wee call vppon him for? *Deu.4.8.* Heereof wee may iudge (ſeeing the contempt of Gods lawe) that the greateſt parte of thoſe which ſay there is nothing to that to remaine and liue long, know not what they ſay: for they followe the ſteps which leade vnto death. They thinke there is no better thing to make them liue long, then to be merie and put away ſorrowe, and to accompliſh this, to let ſlip the bridle vnto concupiſcences and luſtes of their fleſh, the which wil not bee made obedient to the lawe of God, and turne to him through true repentance. If they were wiſe, they would loue wel the ſorrowe which proceedeth of the obedience to the cōmandemēts: for it bringeth no hurte, but great profit: & therefore S. Paule repenteth him not, that he had made the *Corinthians* ſory. *2.Cor.7.8.* Likewiſe our Sauiour promiſeth comfort to them which mourne. *Mat.5.4.* It ſeemeth to them alſo, that to obteine reſt, & not to be hindred frō liuing in felicitie & proſperitie, there wanteth nothing but the friendſhip of the world: the which cannot be obteined by ſhewing to be the true & faithfull ſeruant and childe of God by obedience to his woorde. But therein they are deceiued: for S.Iames ſaith, Knowe yee not that the amitie of the worlde is the enimitie of God? Likewiſe our ſauiour warneth his diſciples, not to bee diſmaide for the hatred of the worlde.

Iam.4.4.
Iohn.15.18.

3 *Let not mercy & truth forſake thee: binde them on thy neck, & write them vpon the table of thine hart.*

4 *So ſhalt thou finde fauour & good vnderſtanding in the ſight of God and man.*

After that Solomon hath generally warned vs not to forget the lawe, to the ende that we might know howe to follow his admonition, hee deuideth the lawe and commandements of God into twoo partes, that is to ſay into mercie and trueth. As alſo, this is then his commandement, that wee beleeue in the name of his Sonne Ieſus Chriſt, and loue one another, as hee gaue commandement. Vnder *truth* he comprehendeth al the honour and ſeruice that wee owe vnto God, as is conteined in the firſt table: and vnder mercie hee comprehendeth what we owe to our neighbours, as is commanded vs in the ſeconde table. Heerein wee ſee the ſummary of the lawe, whereunto agreeth that which our ſauiour ſayde to a Doctour. For albeeit Solomon maketh not expreſſe mention of the loue of God, yet doeth hee not altogether keepe it ſecrete when hee ſpeaketh of trueth and mercie. For as wee cannot bee aſſured of Goods goodneſſe towardes vs, vnleſſe wee loue him: ſo can wee not alſo bee truly mercifull vnto our neighbours, except wee deſire to obey God for that wee loue him. For God requireth of vs ſuch obedience to his lawe, as proceedeth of loue. Solomon in this ſummary woulde haue vs ſo attentiue to the lawe of God, that wee ſhoulde neuer ſuffer mercy and trueth to forſake vs: *But binde them on our necke*. Wherein hee vſeth three ſimilitudes. Firſt of al, for to ſhewe vs that wee muſt goe forwarde in truth & mercy, hee likeneth them vnto a yoake felowe with whome a man muſt be coupled, chiefly being in a dangerous way, and may not ſuffer him to come dragging behinde, or to goe too farre afore. For if wee bee forſaken of this fellowſhip, the ſpirituall theeues and robbers

1.Iohn.3.23
Mat.22.37.
Deut.6.5.10 12.

wil quickly aſſault vs, and of our ſelues wee cannot ſaue vs from
their handes, but muſt miſerably periſh. Secondarily, for to teache
vs, howe wee ſhoulde worke that this felowſhip may not forſake
vs, hee vſeth another ſimilitude, making this felowſhip like vnto
a yoake that is put on the necke of Oxen, and faſt bounde that it
vnlooſe not: and that is, when he admoniſheth vs to binde mercy
and truth about our necke, Wherein he woulde that with a willing
minde we ſhoulde ſubmit our ſelues vnto the lawe of God:
for he ſaith not, let vs ſuffer to be bound vnto this yoake: but that
we our ſelues ſhould bind them on our neckes. And as the Oxen
do neuer caſt of the yoake from them, whereto they are bounde,
but are compelled to remaine vnder the ſame: euen ſo muſt wee
force our ſelues to beare the yoake of our Lord, and continue vnder
the ſame, els wee ſhould bee conſtrained to carry the yoake of
ſinne, and ſo to be in the deuils bondage: as our Lord doeth well
Mat.11.28 ſignifie it in Mathew, Come vnto me al ye that are weary & laden,
& I wil eaſe you, &c. Thirdly, he likeneth our harts vnto the
Arke of the couenãt, in the which were the tables of ſtone, wherein
Exo.25.21. the law was written, as God had commanded Moſes. Euen ſo
leaſt we forget the lawe, our harts muſt be the arke of mercie and
trueth, and neuer from thence to let them paſſe. But as the lawe
was incloſed within the arke, and yet Moſes and the Prieſtes ceaſed
not to open the ſame vnto the people by preaching and holy
liuing: euen ſo wee alſo muſt not haue the lawe of GOD in our
harts onely (as alſo it is vnpoſſible) but both in worke and mouth,
Solomon doeth wel ſhewe it, when hee gathereth the lawe into
Deut.11.20. mercie and trueth: for they cannot bee in vs, but they will bee
ſeene when occaſion is offred, and when wee haue opportunitie,
the which wee muſt ſeeke: as Solomon doeth wel ſhewe it,
when hee ſayeth, *bynde them on thy necke, &c.* Beſides the
former expoſition it may bee ſayde, howe Solomon doeth admoniſh
vs to bee merciful and faithful vnto our neighbours: whereunto
Ephe.4.25. alſo Saint Paule exhorteth vs, Wherefore caſt of lying, and
ſpeake euery man trueth vnto his neighbour. And that wee may
goe forwarde, hee admoniſheth vs to binde the lawe and the commandements
on our necks. For by them wee ſhalbe guyded vnto
mercy and trueth: and without them there cannot but bee in vs,

al vnmercifulneſſe and crueltie, alſo al lying and vnfaithfulneſſe. Furthermore, if we aſcribe mercie and trueth vnto God, wee may ſay howe Solomon doeth warne vs, that if wee woulde haue God to continue his mercy towards vs, and not make his promiſes voide vnto vs, we muſt binde his lawe and commandementes vppon our neckes. Nowe albeeit that theſe twoo laſt expoſitions conteine trueth, yet are they not ſo fit for the lyne of Solomons texte, as the firſt: the which may bee ſeene by that which is gone before, when he counſeled that the lawe ſhould not bee forgotten, and alſo by that which foloweth when hee commandeth, ſaying,

Pſal. 117.2.

So ſhalt thou find fauour & good vnderſtanding in the ſight of God & man. By faith we find fauour before God, & alſo pleaſe him, as it is ſaid of Enoch. And after this ſort wee obteine vnderſtanding which is very profitable to guide vs to good learning. Through gentlenes we pleaſe men, & chiefly thoſe whome we are gentle vnto, exerciſing the workes of charitie. Through this commandement heere, which is like vnto a promis, wee ought to bee much ſtirred continually to thinke on the lawe of the Lorde, and to goe forewarde in keeping of theſe commandements, aſſuring our ſelues of his goodnes, and helping one another by charitie: ſeing that in ſo doing we are promiſed fauour & vnderſtanding, the which aboue al things are to be deſired, & nothing to be eſteemed more. Nowe firſt of al, when fauour is promiſed vs, for binding mercy and trueth vpon our neckes, we muſt vnderſtande that what obedience ſoeuer we giue vnto the law of God, yet hee cannot be our bondman: for albeeit wee may deſerue of men that they ſhould be pleaſed with vs, and that they ſtand bound by our mercy ſhewed towards them: yet we can neuer be ſo faithful vnto God, truſting in his goodnes, but there wil be ſome doutfulneſſe, diſtruſt & incredulitie mixed therwith, for the which we wel deſerue to be forſaken of God. And indeed, we ſhould be forſaken, except he made vs finde fauour in his ſight. Likewiſe, though it were ſo that wee were perfite in fayth, yet coulde wee not boaſt our ſelues to deſerue, ſeeing al the ſtrength we haue or may haue, is the gift of God. Secondarily, the vnderſtanding that wee haue by the word of God, which we kepe by faith & obediẽce, is called

Heb. 11.5.

good, becauſe it bringeth foorth good frutes to the honour and glorie of God, & to the profit of our ſelues and neighbours. Contrarily, the vnderſtanding that is gotten by mans wit and naturall reaſon, by doctrines & traditions of men, cannot haue this title of goodnes. For though it be highly eſteemed in the world, yet ſith it is reproued of God, & by him coũted fooliſhnes: we ought to *1.Cor.1.3.19 20.& 3.19. Rom.8.6.* reiect it as vaine and vnprofitable, yea as hurtful: for it comes of the fleſhe, the deſire whereof is death. Therefore if wee wil auoyde death, let vs not folowe the wiſe worldlinges, but let vs rather chooſe to bee deſpiſed of them as fooles, ſo ſhall wee bee wiſe in Gods ſight. Thirdly, when wee are commanded that through trueth and mercy wee ſhoulde finde fauour and vnderſtanding in the ſight of God and man, it is firſt ſhewed vs that the keeping of Gods commandements doeth not ſtande onely in outwarde woorkes, as hypocrites doe falſely beleeue: but euen as God ſeeth the harte and iudgeth the ſecret thoughts of men, herewith that *Heb.4.12.* our words and outward workes are no whit hid from him: ſo alſo, al our affections, purpoſes, counſels, thoughts & minds are before him. It foloweth, that if we wil pleaſe & be wiſe before God, we muſt haue al our affections ſo ordered, that hee bee in no wiſe offended by thē, ſo that with al our inward parts we ſhould be giuen to meditate his law, & keepe his commandements. Further it is ſhewed vs, that as God hath not created the inwarde parte of mā only, but the viſible & earthly body alſo: ſo he would not haue it vnprofitable, but would that we ſhould beſtow it about his ſeruice: not that he hath need therof, but loke what we do through our bodies to the edifying & profit of our neighbours, according to his woorde, he counteth it done vnto himſelf. And this is the *Rom.12.17.* cauſe why Solomon would haue vs finde fauour & good vnderſtanding before men, and that S. Paule counſeleth vs to procure things honeſt, not only before God, but alſo before mē. The which ſeemeth to bee very harde: for there is no people ſo deteſtable before men, as they that are giuen to goodnes. Notwithſtāding they find fauour & vnderſtanding, in the ſight of men, as Solomon cōmandeth them, ſo much as they can, according to this holy word. For euen the vngodly which often do them hurt & wrong, are ouercome in their conſciences that they be iuſt, & confeſſe no les:

as Pharao towards Moſes & the people of Iſrael: Saul towardes Dauid. Fourthly, albeit wee muſt ſeeke the fauour both of God & men, yet is it not to ſay, that it is lawful for vs to labour to pleaſe men, or ſeeke to bee praiſed of them. Finally, ſith that through mercie and truth wee obteine fauour in Gods ſight, it followeth that if we be infidels and vnmerciful, we deſerue to bee abhorred & counted fooles both before God and men, though by our carnal vnderſtanding, by our ſubtilties and enterpriſes wee obteine the fauour of the worlde. *Gal.1.10.* *Mat.6.1.*

5 *Truſt in the Lord with al thine hart, & leane not vnto thine owne wiſedome.*

6 *In al thy wayes acknowledge him, and he ſhal direct thy wayes.*

To the ende that wee may the better knowe howe to guide our ſelues, Solomon doeth expounde the lawe vnto vs by partes, giuing vnto vs diuers commandements. And firſt of all, to the intent we ſhoulde not bee forſaken of truth, but thereby might find fauour before god: he would haue vs to truſt in the Lord wherby we ſhould be aſſured he loueth vs as a good father doth his children: & therefore that he deſireth nothing but our proſperitie & ſaluation, and wil not ſuffer vs to periſhe. This aſſurance is giuen vs by the worde: the which doeth ſet foorth the good wil of God towardes vs. Solomon ſaying thus, *Truſt in the Lorde*, woulde haue vs to lay holde by faith vpon the promiſes of God, beeing certaine that God wil not, nor cannot goe againſt them: for hee is the vnfallible truthe: likewiſe that no power can let him to keepe promis: for he is the almightie, whoſe counſel ſhal ſtand for euer, and his whole wil ſhalbe fulfilled. Nowe hee ſheweth vs that it is not ynough to heare and talke, but he requireth the hart. And hee teacheth vs that it is not lawful to apply our harts to the luſtes of our fleſh and worldly pleaſures: for hee requireth the whole hart, ſaying, *Truſt in the Lorde with al thyne hart*. In this hee teacheth vs that which Moſes teacheth in the twoo firſt commandements, Thus our hartes muſt not bee parted to giue one portion vnto God, and the other parte ſome where els: that were to giue *Eſa.46.10.* *Ex.20.2.3.4* a companion vnto God, the which hee cannot abide. And becauſe that diuers not eſteeming the woorde of God, (the which ought to bee the wiſedome and vnderſtanding of his children & ſeruantes) doe dreame and forge in their braines diuine ſeruices, whereby they thinke to honour God, labouring much there abouts: Solomon to withdrawe vs from this abuſe and fooliſhe preſumption, doeth warne vs that to truſt in God with all our harts, we muſt not leane to our owne wiſedome: as Moſes warneth the children of Iſrael. *Deu. 12. 8.* By this wee may iudge that there are but a fewe which truſt in the Lord as they ought: for the greateſt part of the world doe ſet their hartes on other thinges then on God, and many alſo wil ſerue him after their owne fanſie. And this is through ignorance and contempt of the woorde, that they fal into ſuch beaſtly blockiſhnes, as S. Paul ſaith, *Rom. 1. 21.* For God alſo puniſheth their vnthankefulnes, in blinding and giuing them vp vnto a reprobate minde. Moreouer, conſidering wee cannot truſt a man, except we loue him, Solomon exhorting vs to truſt in God, would haue vs to loue him, as Moſes ſaith. *Deu. 6. 5.* Nowe if wee doe thus loue God, we wil worſhip him in ſpirit and trueth, and wil cal vpon him, chiefly in our ſpiritual neceſſities, knowing that it is hee onely which wil and can prouide for al our neceſſities. If wee doe truly knowe that hee is ſuch a one, wee wil feare to offende him, and wil rather ſuffer al miſeries, yea death it ſelfe, then to doe any thing which might diſpleaſe him. The truſt then that Solomon requireth of vs, importeth a true knowledge of the goodneſſe and power of God towarde vs, whereby we are led to loue him and feare him, to woorſhip and cal vpon him. And when, all the hart is required theretoo, (for it is the ruler of the woordes and woorkes, euen of al the body, the which is vnmoueable & dead without the hart,) it foloweth thereof that wee doe not truſt in the Lorde, except wee apply al our woordes and woorkes, yea our whole body to his ſeruice. *Rom. 6. 13. & 12. 1.* Likewiſe when Solomon maketh an Antitheſis, ſetting our wiſedome againſt truſt in God, wee muſt vnderſtande that the wiſe of this worlde haue no truſt in GOD: wherevppon it followeth that they giue him no obedience that pleaſeth him.

6 *In al thy wayes acknowledge him.* For the ſeconde

commauudemente, Solomon woulde that wee ſhoulde acknowledge GOD, not in one point onely, but in all our waies. For to vnderſtande the ſame commandement well, let vs knowe that our *VVayes*, are our thoughtes, and affections, deſires, willes, purpoſes, counſels, enterpriſes, wordes and workes, and whatſoeuer wee doe and ſuffer. Wee muſt in al theſe things acknowledge the Lorde: that is to ſay, wee ſhoulde not thinke, purpoſe nor take any thing in hand, except wee bee ſure that God guideth al by his ſpirite. *1.Pet.4.11.* If wee ſpeake that it ſhoulde bee as the wordes of God: if wee doe any workes, that they ſhoulde bee as by the power which God giueth vs, that he may be glorified in all thinges. To bee ſhort, let God bee our ruler and guide, working in vs both the wil & the deede, according to his good pleaſure: *Phi.2.12.* & by his direction let vs imploy our ſelues about our ſaluation with feare and trembling. Likewiſe if wee ſuffer any afflictions, after what ſorte ſoeuer they bee, let vs knowe that wee haue well deſerued them for the offences that wee continually commit againſt the Maieſtie of our good GOD, by whoſe hand we are chaſtened, and not by other: and therefore wee muſt receiue his chaſtiſementes paciently, with thankes giuing, in following Iob and the Prophetes, *Iob.1.21.* *Iam.5.10.* Thus dooing wee ſhall acknowledge the Lorde in all our wayes. But if we doe ſlacke the bridle vnto our affections and luſtes, wee doe not acknowledge the Lorde, but deny him, and blaſpheme his holy name, and prophane it, ſo muche as lieth in vs. And foraſmuche as there is none ſo righteous whiche can boaſte that hee acknowledgeth thus the Lorde, therefore it is neceſſary for vs all, to lay our mouthes to the ground, & not to take the boldneſſe to lift vp our face on high: but that with al feare and humbleneſſe truely to confeſſe innumerable faultes, and to pray vnto GOD that he would not enter into iudgement with vs, but bee mercifull vnto vs poore ſinners, graunting vs grace, that wee may acknowledge him in all our wayes. If wee call vppon him thus, in trueth and in feare, hee will not ſuffer vs to goe out of the way, and to wander in the broade way of damnation: but as hee promiſeth vs by Solomon he will direct our pathes to bring vs to life.

This cōmandement ought to bee greatly eſteemed of vs,conſide-
ring the promiſe which is added therevnto. For there is none
that delighteth to goe aſtray out of his way,except hee be out of
his wittes: but rather will take a guide to leade him, and to carry
him the right way, and ſpare not to giue him money to bee led
the right way. Therefore we muſt bee very careful to acknow-
ledge the Lorde in our wayes, and wee ſhall not wander out of
them,for wee ſhal haue a truſtie Guide,who offereth himſelfe vn-
to vs freely, as Solomon doth ſhewe vs ſaying: *And he ſhal di-*
rect thy wayes. Solomon is not witneſſe alone of this promiſe,
Pſal.25. 8. but alſo his Father Dauid before him. Gracious and righteous is
the Lorde: therefore will he teache ſinners in the way. And be-
Deu.28. fore this,Moſes was a witneſſe thereof, When hee promiſeth the
bleſſing of God in al thinges vnto them which obey him. And
then becauſe of this promiſe added, wee ought to haue the com-
mandement in great price, we muſt alſo be diligent to pray,Shewe
Pſalm.25.4. mee thy wayes O Lorde,and teache me thy pathes. For albeit
the chiefe direction of our pathes is,to acknowledge the Lord in
all his waies, yet the promiſe doth teach vs that it cōmeth not of
our owne power,nor by free will,that we acknowledge the Lord
in al our wayes,to walk in the right way,& in ſafetie,but it com-
meth of the onely grace of God. If it remained in vs, it ſhoulde
not bee needeful for God to make vs any ſuche promiſe, but it
ſhould bee ſuperfluous: the which wee ought not to ſay nor
to thinke. Wee muſt therefore humble our ſelues, and ſay with
Ier.10.23. Ieremie, O Lorde,I knowe, that the way of man, is not of him-
ſelfe: neither is it in man to walke and to direct his ſteps.If in thus
Pſalm.5.8. acknowledging,we pray continually with Dauid, Leade mee, O
Lord, in thy righteouſneſſe, becauſe of mine enimies: Make
Pſal.27. 11. thy waye plaine before my face: And againe,Teach mee thy way
O Lorde,and leade mee in a right path, becauſe of mine enimies.
And albeit wee haue many imperfections, yet wil God accept our
acknowledging for perfect. Therefore let vs acknowledge all
thinges to depende vpon God,and take nothing in hande without
Iam.4.13. his will: Let vs not be like vnto them which ſay, Let vs goe to
day and to morrowe vnto ſuche a Towne, and dwell there a
yeere,&c.

7 *Be not wiſe in thine owne eies: but feare the Lord, and depart from euill.*

8 *So health ſhalbe vnto thy nauell, & marrowe vnto thy bones.*

In this third commandement Solomon doeth expounde vnto vs, how wee ſhoulde acknowledge the Lorde in al our wayes: & for to do it, hee giueth vs three inſtructions. The firſt is, *Bee not wiſe in thine owne eies.* Whereby he would that we ſhoulde renounce our wiſdome, and that we ſhould not thinke to bee able for to gouerne and guide our ſelues in our wayes. The ſecond is, *Feare the Lorde.* Whereby hee woulde not haue vs to followe the affections of our fleſhe, the which doth cauſe vs to deſpiſe God, and to ſtande vp againſt him: and that renouncing our wil, we ſhoulde giue obedience vnto the Lord, and with all feare and reuerence wholy to ſubmit our ſelues vnto his wil. The third is, *and depart from euil:* whereby he would that we ſhoulde caſt of and forſake al vices and ſinnes: that we ſhould be cleane from al filthines both fleſh and Spirite. Wee doe not acknowledge the Lorde in our wayes, except wee folowe theſe three inſtructions, the which depende the one of the other. For if we thinke that we be able to gouerne our ſelues, we make no account to obey God, and to reuerence him: wherevpon foloweth, that wee giue our ſelues vnto al euil. But, contrarily, if wee feele our vnablenes in deede, wee become humble, and doe feare to offend God. Therefore to acknowledge the Lorde in our wayes, wee muſt take heed that we walke not after the affection of our fleſhe: for it is God his enemie, it is not ſubiect vnto his lawe, neither can be: wherevpon foloweth, that it can not be giuen but to doe euil, from the which we muſt depart through the feare of God, but not otherwiſe. And in this holie feare ſtandeth the true acknowledging of the Lord, and not in the feare to be dampned, the which holdeth vs captiue vnder mens traditions. Now firſt of al hee ſayth not ſimply, *bee not wiſe*, for hee ſhoulde gaineſay him ſelfe, ſeeing Rom. 8.6.

that in the beginning of this booke hee affirmeth that it is made for to knowe Wiſedome, &c. the which he commendeth greatly. And alſo in forbidding ſimply to bee wiſe, hee ſhoulde gainſt ſaye Moſes, from whome hee hath drawne this doctrine, in diuers places. And hee ſharpely reproueth the people of their follie, ſaying, *Deut. 4. 6.* *Deut. 32. 6.* Doe yee ſo rewarde the Lord, O fooliſhe people and vnwiſe? &c. Againe, in the 28. verſe, For they are a nation voide of counſell, neyther is there any vnderſtanding in them, &c. So he doth not forbid vs to bee wiſe: but hee ſheweth vs that there is a certaine kinde of Wiſedome which we muſt eſchue and deteſt, which is not properly Wiſedome; but arrogancie, pride, and preſumption. The declaration is, when hee ſayeth, *in thine owne eyes*: Wherein hee teacheth vs that it ought to ſuffice vs, that God alloweth vs as wiſe, *1. Cor. 3. 18.* and that wee ſhoulde not thinke our ſelues to bee wiſe, but to become fooles, that wee may bee made wiſe before God. Wee muſt bee wiſe therefore, folowing that which wee knowe to bee good by the worde of God: But wee muſt not haue this opinion of our ſelues, that wee are wiſe: for ſuche an opinion woulde make vs diſobedient and rebels againſt God, and woulde engender in vs a great contempt of our neighbours. In this wee ſhoulde not acknowledge the Lorde, neither woulde hee direct our pathes, but woulde let vs wander aſtraye. Secondly, for to ſhewe vs howe wee ſhoulde not bee wiſe in our owne ſight, hee exhorteth vs vnto feare, and not ſimplie vnto feare: for the ſeruantes and children of God haue a promiſe (heere aboue in the 1. and 33. verſe) that they ſhal dwel *Prou. 1. 33.* in ſafetie, and ſhall reſt without aſtoniſhment of euil. So they ſhal not neede to feare any thing which may happen to them in this worlde: and alſo they ſhal not neede to feare damnation. Wee muſt thus vnderſtande it: for Solomon ſetteth this promiſe agaynſt the former threatening: but hee mooueth vs vnto the *feare of the Lorde*, *Pro. 1. 7.* which is the beginning of knowledge, as heere aboue where hath beene ſhewed what this feare is, and wherein it ſtandeth. Thirdly, after hee hath mooued vs to feare the Lorde, hee biddeth vs to departe from euil. Wherein he giueth vs to vnderſtande, that when men liue without the feare of God, then there raigneth nothing but euil: and alſo that where there raigneth nothing but euil, in that place there is no feare of God.

8 *So health ſhalbe vnto thy Nauel.* As it is not enough for a wayfaring man to bee wel directed, leaſt hee goe out of the right way: but alſo for to walke, is required that hee bee whole, and haue his health and ſtrength, and that hee haue wherewithall to bee refreſhed: otherwiſe he can not perfourme his voiage, but ſhoulde bee conſtrained to ſtay and tarrie: So Solomon thinketh it not enough to promiſe, that if wee acknowledge the Lord in our wayes, that hee will direct our pathes: but hee appointeth vs an ordinaunce verie healthfull, commaunding vs to folow it in our wayes: to witte, Be not wiſe, &c. The ſame being giuen, hee promiſeth vs that wee ſhalbe in good health to walke in our pathes, when hee ſayeth, *health ſhalbe, &c.* Through this promiſe wee ſhoulde bee earneſtly mooued to folowe his ordinaunce. For there is none of vs but if hee were aſſured that the potion or receipt of the Phiſition ſhoulde bee healthfull, but that hee woulde folowe it, though it were troubleſome and hard. For wee are wonte to ſay, There is nothing but I wil doe it, ſo that I may recouer health: By a more ſtronger reaſon, when the ſpirituall Phiſition doeth bring vs the heauenly Commaundement, and that hee promiſeth vs health and ſpirituall ſtrength, whereby we ſhal liue, not a ſhort tyme, but for euer: we ſhould bee readie to receiue and to ſollowe this commaundement, euen with greater diligence and loue, then wee doe the earthly commaundementes: by ſo much as the heauenly and ſpiritual thinges are more excellent then the earthlye and corporal, and as wee ought to preferre our ſoules before our bodies.

And albeeit that Solomon in this promiſe doeth not expreſſe but the *nauill and bones*, which are onely corporall partes: yet wee muſt not thinke it ſtraunge or amiſſe, if wee ſaye, that hee promiſeth vs health and ſtrength to our ſoules : for as Abraham and the good olde Fathers had the promiſe of the land, & by this promiſe did aſſure themſelues of the heauenly kingdome : euen ſo when God by his word doth promiſe vs health of bodie, we ſhoulde be aſſured of the ſame for our ſoules, and not to care for our bodies, but in as muche as ſo farre as we may, applie them to the ſeruice of God. For as Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, dwelt in the lande of Canaan but as ſtrangers, and yet God deceiued them not, but fulfilled his promiſe, by preparing them a Citie, and receiuing them into it : euen ſo, although he ſend often vnto the faithful, diſeaſes & afflictiós, yet he ceaſſeth not to accompliſhe towardes them this promiſe of bodily health and ſtrength, in taking care of their ſoules. For healing and fortifiyng their ſoules, hee forſaketh not their bodies, but giueth them health and ſtrength, ſo much as hee knoweth to be expedient. Thus contenting our ſelues with ſuche health as it pleaſeth God to ſende vs, howe ſhorte ſo euer it bee, let vs knowe that God is true in his promiſes, and let vs not enuie the healthe and ſtrength of the wicked : for as they haue no promiſe of bodily health, ſo haue they not of the ſpirituall health, from the which they are wholy depriued, though they enioy the corporal. Now thé ſith that by promiſe we haue health & ſtrégth, we ſhuld bee ready to giue thankes to GOD therefore, and to acknowledge what his gift and benefit is, and not that wee can deſerue it through our good rule and gouernement : albeeit that it is neceſſarie to gouerne our ſelues wel, if wee will reteyne health. For if by going forwarde in exceſſe, wee thinke to keepe health and ſtrength, this were but to tempt GOD, who commandeth vs ſobrietie and temperance. And our Lorde Ieſus ſayth, Take heede to your ſelues, leſt at any tyme your hartes be oppreſſed with ſurfeting and drunkenneſſe, and cares of this life, and leaſt that day come on you vnawares.

Luke.21.34.

Moreouer let vs knowe that GOD doeth beſtowe his bleſsings howe, to whome, and when it pleaſeth him, and can take them from whome hee wil: neither is it laweful for any man to ſay, Why doeſt thou ſo? Therefore, if wee be afflicted with ſickeneſſe, with feebleneſſe and weakeneſſe, let vs take good heede that wee murmure not, neither to ſpite our ſelues, nor lament through impatience: for it were to accuſe GOD of vnrighteouſneſſe and crueltie. But euen as God doeth promiſe vs health and ſtrength, if wee bee not wiſe in our owne opinion: ſo when wee bee ſicke and weake, wee ought to knowe that wee well deſerue to be ſo afflicted, becauſe wee haue prouoked the wrath of God againſt vs, by offending in pride, rebellion, and vnrighteouſneſſe. Therefore let vs impute our ſickeneſſes vnto our ſinnes, by folowing the good old Fathers, who in their ſickneſſes felt that God was angrie with them for their offences: as it appeareth by Dauid, and alſo by King Ezechias. And albeit that God doeth iuſtly afflict vs with diſeaſes, and that it is not lawfull for vs to complayne of him, yet ſith hee doeth promiſe vs health, hee woulde haue vs to aske it of him, and will graunt it vs: as wee may knowe by the witneſſes afore alledged: and alſo our Lorde Ieſus doeth teach vs it, commaunding vs to aske our dailie breade, whereof health is a parte. *Pſal.6.* *Pſal.38.* *Eſai.38.* *Mat.6.11.*

9 *Honour the Lorde with thy riches, and with the firſt fruites of all thine increaſe.*

10 *So ſhal thy barnes be filled with abundaunce, and thy preſſes ſhal burſt with newe VVine.*

The fourth Commaundement hath reſpect vnto that which God hath ordained in his lawe, *Exo. 23.19. & 25.2.*

The firſt of the firſt fruites of thy lande thou ſhall bring into the houſe of the Lorde thy God.

And againe, Speake vnto the children of Iſrael, that they receiue an offring for mee: of euery man, whoſe heart giueth it freely, ye ſhal take the offring for mee. And in the 1, and 2. Chapters of Leuiticus. And therefore at the firſt ſight it may appeare that this Commaundement doeth nothing apperteyne vnto vs, but onely to the Iewes, till the tyme that Ieſus Chriſte came and appeared in the fleſhe. For, if they wil receiue Ieſus Chriſte, they haue the trueth of the figures and auncient ſhadowes, But Ie-

ſus Chriſte, who is the true Expoſitour of the lawe, and the fulfiller
thereof (and not the deſtroyer) doeth ſhewe vs well, that
Mat.25,40. this Commaundement ought alwayes to bee obſerued of vs: for
hee ſayeth, And the King ſhal anſweare and ſay vnto them, Verely,
I ſay vnto you, in as muche as yee haue done it vnto one of the
leaſt of theſe my brethren, yee haue done it to mee. And to
Phi.4.18. this purpoſe Saint Paule doeth ſtirre them vp, ſaying: I was filled,
after that I had receiued of Epaphroditus that which came
from you, with an odour that ſmelleth ſweete, a ſacrifice acceptable
and pleaſaunt to God. This is the cuſtome which is acceptable
Deut.26.11. vnto God.

Mat.12.7. Then for to obeye this Commaundement, wee muſt bee
Heb.13.16. mercifull, in helping the needie with that which is ours, as Solomon
expreſly teacheth vs heere, ſaying, *VVith thy riches.* We
muſt not giue almes at the coſt of another, nor of our neighbors
goods, as doe men and mayde ſeruauntes, and hyrelinges: as do
the couetous, Vſurers, and theeues, which to the hurt of their
neighbours labour to bee riche, and of the ſpoyle doe giue almes,
whereby they doe no honour to the Lorde. For as in olde
Eſa.1.11. time the Lorde refuſed the Sacrifices of ſuche people, euen ſo the
almes giuen of robberie, doe not pleaſe him. In which number are
to bee compriſed the ſame of Prieſtes, Monkes, and Nunnes, who
vnder colour of long prayers, and of their goodly ſeruice, ſaide
ſo deuoutly, doe deuoure and ſwallow vp the houſes of ſimple
ones, which are eaſily to bee deceiued. What ſo euer ſuche
folkes doe, is abhominable before God: for hee can not loue that
which commeth from iniquitie. And that which is gotten otherwayes
then God commaundeth, is robberie and thefe, yea and
murther. And therefore, let vs not applie our ſelues to nothing
more then to obey the word of God: for it alone ſhal giue enough
Pſal.24.1.& in to our handes to beſtowe, But when wee heare that it is ſayde,
50.8. The earth is the Lordes, and all that therein is: and againe,
Heare my people, I wil not reprooue thee, for thy ſacrifices, &c:
heere may a queſtion bee mooued, whether it bee lawfull to
counte and call that ours which wee poſſeſſe. Aunſweare,
That wee neyther haue nor can deſerue that any thing ſhould
bee ours: otherwiſe our Lorde ſhall not neede to teache vs

to aske of God that hee woulde giue vs our daily breade : but all the creatures are ours, and may vſe them as ours, with thanks giuing, though they bee not due to vs, and this comes to vs by the goodneſſe of God, which giueth vs all thinges aboundantly for to vſe : *1.Tim.6.17.* and thus he doeth make them ours : vſing towards vs a wonderful fatherly goodneſſe, that we acknowledging therin his great liberalitie, ſhoulde not bee grieued to honour the Lorde with them, by diſtributing them gladly and liberally vnto our needie brethren and neyghbours. For it is ſayde, God loueth a chearefull giuer. *2.Cor.9.7.* Thus doyng, ſo muche it ſhall want that wee ſhoulde neede, that God wil make vs to abounde in all thinges : as Saint Paul doeth ſhew vs conſequently, ſaying, God is alſo of power to make you abounde in al giftes. Wee muſt alſo ſpende our ſubſtaunce reaſonably, as ſtewardes, ſparing nothing where neceſſitie requireth. After this ſorte wee ſhal honour God with our ſubſtance, the which though it bee parted in many partes, and that it bee eaten and conſumed, yet ſhall wee haue alwayes with ſufficiencie great abundance, as Solomon doeth promiſe vs, ſaying,

10 *So ſhall thy barnes be filled.* This is that which Moſes promiſeth, *Deu.28.5.* Bleſſed ſhal thy basket and thy ſtore bee. Againe, The Lorde ſhal commaunde the bleſſing to bee with thee in thy ſtore houſes, and in all that thou ſetteſt thine hande vnto, &c. *& 8.*

Notwithſtanding wee muſt not iudge that Ieſus Chriſte doeth forbid vs, to gather into our barnes, *Mat.26.25.* when hee ſayeth, Bee not carefull for your life, what yee ſhal eate, or what yee ſhal drinke, &c: but onely the ouer great deſire, and thought, full of diſtruſt. Moreouer, when by the promiſe of God, wee doe abounde in wealth, wee muſt vnderſtande that the abundance is good and profitable: there remaines nothing but to vſe them well. For to doe the ſame, we muſt not be like the rich man which ſayd, Soule, thou haſt muche goods laide vp for many yeares, &c. *Luk.12.19.* Neither to the riche glutton which was clothed in purple, &c: *& 16.19.* But wee muſt folowe the counſel of Saint Paule, who ſayeth, *1.Tim.6.7.* Charge them that are riche in this worlde, that they be not high minded, &c.

If wee vſe them otherwayes, wee doe not honour the Lorde with our ſubſtance, and deſerue that God ſhoulde make vs begge our bread with great ſhame, and that wee ſhoulde ſuffer many neceſſities and calamities. Furthermore, though they which honour the Lorde with their ſubſtaunce, doe often ſuffer muche pouertie, it is not therefore to bee ſayde, that God doeth not truely fulfill his promiſe, ſo muche as is expedient for them: for it ought to content vs, that hee knoweth better what is profitable and neceſſarie for vs, then we our ſelues.

11 *My ſonne, refuſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, neyther be grieued with his correction.*

12 *For the Lorde correcteth him, whom he loueth, euen as the father doeth the childe in whome he delighteth.*

Suche as are weake amongſt the children of God, when they ſee thinges to bee as it were confounded, in ſuche wiſe that they which walke vprightly are afflicted, and the vnruly to proſper: they are tempted with impatience, euen almoſt to be ledde to folowe the wicked, that they might bee partakers of their proſperitie, as it appeareth in the 73. Pſalm. Solomon reſiſteth ſuch temptation, when he ſaith, *My ſonne, refuſe not, &c.* In this fifth commandemẽt he aduertiſeth the childrẽ of God, that if in this world they ſuffer pouerties and afflictions, that they ſhould receiue them from the hand of God, who doth nothing but iuſtly and neceſſarily: & therfore that they ſhould receiue the ſame with al patience knowing, that thereby God doeth correct and rebuke them, as they haue deſerued, to the ende they ſhould acknowledge their faultes, and to endeuour more and more to amende and goe forwarde from good to better. But albeit it is profitable for vs to bee afflicted, as the holy Ghoſt doeth teach vs by Solomon, who commaundeth that wee ſhoulde not refuſe correction: yet our fleſh, which is impacient, and deſireth nothing but his pleaſures and eaſe, doth tempt vs to reiect the yoke of the Lord, diſcouraging & making vs diſpaire, as though God perſecuted vs, to deſtroy vs, &

Pſal. 73. 2.

2. Theſ. 1. 5.

as though he hated vs like an enimie and aduerſarie. The Diuell alſo laboureth to put the like into our heades: & of our ſelues, we are eaſie to beleeue him, and of the otherſide we ſee in the Scripture, the thretnings that god ſetteth out againſt the wicked, & the affliction that he hath ſent to deſtroy them. So, when wee are afflicted, we are temped to iudge that God hateth vs. They which are vnpacient, and care nothing but for their belly, doe thus blaſpheme againſt God. Nowe to the ende that wee may bee turned away from ſuch thoughts, Solomon at the beginning vſeth a gentle and louing appellation, ſaying: *My ſonne*, warning vs thereby, that albeit the puniſhments & corrections of God are vntollerable to our fleſhe, yet we ſhoulde vnderſtande he handeleth vs as a good father doth his children: and therefore, that wee muſt not bee greeued to be chaſtened of his hande. And not content heerewith, for better to withſtand the foreſaide temptations, he giueth the reaſon wherefore we muſt not refuſe the correction of the Lorde, ſaying,

12 *For the Lorde correcteth.* If wee receiue this reaſon as true, as it is in deede, we ſhal vnderſtand that the chaſtenings, corrections, calamities and afflictions that God doth ſende vs, are witneſſes that he loueth vs, & that we pleaſe & like him wel, and that it is but for our ſaluation he chaſteneth vs. We muſt not then iugde nor ſay, that God doeth hate vs, when we are afflicted: but rather the contrary. A man might ſay that the reaſon of Solomon is not ſufficient enough to lead vs, not to be greeued in our afflictions: for we ſee that without difference God puniſheth aſwell the reprobate as the elect, and by his puniſhments hee declareth more often his anger than his loue. *Ecclеſ.9.1.* Alſo the Scripture ſpeaketh ſo, and experience doth confirme it. I anſwere, when the faithfull are threatened with any puniſhment, and alſo ſuffer the ſame: they receiue it from the hande of God, and knowe that it is their Father which chaſteneth them for their wealth, and therein he ſheweth his fatherly loue. Contrarily, foraſmuch as the reprobate doe not knowe that they are gouerned by Gods hande when they are afflicted, they more oftē iudge that it commeth by chaunce, and being ſtrangers from God, and his familie, they vnderſtand not that the hande of God can touche them. Let vs

then remember and thinke that when wee are chaſtened, we cannot feele the taſt of the loue towardes vs, except wee certainly holde that the afflictions which wee ſuffer, are fatherly corrections, whereby hee correcteth our ſinnes. The reprobate can neuer thinke ſo: for their thoughtes ſtray and flie hyther and thither. Alſo, Saint Peter ſaith, For the time is come, that iudgement beginneth at the houſe of GOD. *1.Pet.5.17* Wherefore albeit, that indifferently God ſtriketh ſtrangers ſo well as them of his houſeholde, yet hee reacheth his hande towards his, in ſuche wiſe as hee ſheweth to haue a ſpeciall care of them. Notwithſtanding, the true ſolution of the former obiection, is, That whoſoeuer knoweth, and is certaine that GOD doeth chaſten him, hee ought immediately thus to thinke, that the correction is ſente vnto him, becauſe GOD loueth him. For when the faithfull perceiue that GOD intermedleth in their afflictions, they haue a certaine earneſt of his good will: For if hee did not loue them, hee woulde not bee carefull of their ſaluation. And therfore the Apoſtle hauing alledged this exhortation, with the reaſon, for to ſhewe that it is profitable for vs to bee chaſtened, concludeth, If wee endure chaſtening, GOD offereth him ſelfe vnto you as vnto ſonnes. *Heb.12.7.* But it might be aſked whether it is neceſſary that all they whome GOD loueth, ſhoulde bee corrected, rebuked, and chaſtened: and whether hee doe hate all thoſe which hee correcteth not. Anſwere, His corrections and chaſteninges are after diuerſe ſortes: for hee correcteth, and rebuketh vs both inwardly and outwardly. His inwarde corrections and reprehenſions are, When God ſetteth before vs the hainouſneſſe of our ſinnes, and for them hee doeth aſtoniſhe and feare vs with his ſharpe iudgement, the whiche wee coulde not auoide, if GOD ſhoulde deale with vs according as wee haue deſerued: And alſo of our ſelues wee cannot hope to bee exempted from that vntollerable iudgement, when we knowe wee haue offended the goodneſſe of our deare and precious GOD, and haue prouoked his wrath and anger, his (I ſay) who is a conſuming fire. Hauing this knowledge, wee weepe and lament in our heartes, wee are greeued and diſpleaſed to haue offended ſo great a fatherly goodneſſe, ſo high a diuine Maieſtie: and in ſuch griefe wee runne vnto his mercy. Neuertheleſſe, let vs note that ſuch corections are neceſſary for all Gods children: and whoſoeuer is exempted from them, cannot bee certaine that God loueth him.

The outwarde corrections are diſeaſes, pouertie, hunger, colde, perſecutions, and other miſeries, and afflictions, as commeth from without, the which are cōmon both to the childrē of God, and to the wicked. And it is neceſſary, that when they happen to the faithfull, they ſhoulde knowe, it is GOD which doeth chaſten them, becauſe he loueth them, and will ſaue them: and for this cauſe they ought not to refuſe them, nor bee vexed at them: but to beare them with ioy and patience. Likewiſe when God ceaſſeth to examine them without, and giueth them a refreſhing, as hee hath doone the old Fathers, they ought not to thinke that God hateth them: but being in peace and reſt, ought to thanke God, and bee alwaies readie, looking to receiue of his hand what it pleaſeth him to ſende: beſeeching him, that in proſperitie hee woulde not ſuffer them to fall away by ſlacking the bridle to the luſtes of their fleſh, to liue in eaſe and pleaſures of this worlde: and in aduerſitie to giue them ſtrength and conſtancie to obey and beare them: not dooing as the wicked, which knowe not that all thinges come from the hande of GOD. Suche praying is verie neceſſary for all the faithfull: For if God leaue vs too our ſelues in proſperitie, wee ſhall quickly forget him and giue our ſelues to the deſires of the fleſhe: and in aduerſitie wee ſhall diſpaire in him, murmure and ſet nought by him, yea and ſhall vtterly renounce and forſake him. Wee haue many and ſundry examples thereof in the Scripture, as in Caine, Saule, and others.

13 *Bleſſed is the man that findeth wiſedome, & the man that getteth vnderſtanding.*

14 *For the merchandize thereof, is better than the merchandize of ſiluer, and the gaine thereof is better than gold.*

15 *It is more precious than pearles: and all thinges that thou canſt deſire, are not to bee compared vnto her.*

16 *Length of dayes is in her right hande, and in her left hand, riches and glory.*

17 *Her wayes are wayes of pleaſure, and all her pathes proſperitie.*

18 *She is a tree of life to them that lay holde on her, and bleſſed is he that reteineth her.*

Solomon therefore to make vs more and more attentiue vnto wiſedome, doth attribute to a wiſe man, that which euery one of vs greatly deſireth, that is, that hee pronounceth him *Bleſſed*. Now how he is bleſſed, wee might haue learned by the promiſes wherby Solomō hath labored heretofore for to draw vs vnto wiſdome, and may yet vnderſtand it heereafter, by the reaſon that he wil giue, to ſhew how the wiſe man is bleſſed, & by the promiſes that he will adde. But to pronounce that the wiſe man is bleſſed, Solomon vſeth a Circumlocution and compariſon. The Circumlocution ſtandeth in this, that he ſaith not, bleſſed is the wiſe man: But, *Bleſſed is the man that findeth, &c.* And hee vſeth the compariſon, in this, that he maketh the wiſe man like to a man growne rich by his labour. For as the man that is carefull in labouring to finde riches and treaſures, and hauing founde, doeth take them for him ſelfe, and ſeaſeth vpon them, is iudged riche: euen ſo he (which by yeelding himſelſe attentiue to the worde of God, getteth wiſedome, and abideth therein, by keeping the commandements of the Lorde) is wiſe, and as the riche man iudgeth himſelfe, and is thought of the worlde to bee bleſſed: euen ſo the wiſe man is aſſured that he is bleſſed before God. Nowe albeit the wiſe and the riche are heere compared together, yet it is not to ſay, that the bleſſedneſſe of the one is like and equall to the other: for the riches that are gotten by wiſedome, doe not change, but from good to better: therefore the wiſe man is bleſſed for euer, and without ende: And as the goodes of this worlde do conſume and are tranſitorie, ſo alſo the rich man is not bleſſed through his riches, but for a certaine time. What cõpariſon then ſoeuer there bee, yet is there great oddes betweene them, the which ought to giue vs to vnderſtand, vnto which of the two we muſt bee attentiue: that is to ſay, vnto wiſdome, to the which ſith the Scripture doth attribute bleſſedneſſe, it followeth therefore that in riches & in all thinges elſe of this worlde, there is nothing but curſedneſſe when they are poſſeſſed without wiſedome. Ieſus Chriſte our Lorde doeth well ſhew it vs in the ſixth of Luke. The riche man ſpoken of in Luke hath truely felt it. *Luke.6.24. & 12.20. & 16.23.* Now wiſedome is the gift of God, and the bleſſedneſſe alſo which commeth thereof. Wherupon it followeth, that the wiſe man will not reioyce in any thing hee hath, as though hee had it of himſelfe, but will confeſſe that all commeth from God, with praiſe and prayers and thankes giuing. And ſith the giftes of God and his calling are without repentance, hee neede not feare to fall into curſedneſſe to periſhe therein: but may haue this aſſurance, that if he ſtumble or fall, God wil holde him vp with his hande that he ſhall not bee bruiſed nor broken, but be bleſſed euerlaſtingly. Foraſmuch alſo as they which finde wiſedome, are bleſſed, it followeth that the fooliſhe are curſed. And foraſmuch as there is no other meanes to be wiſe, but by hearing of Gods worde, it followeth that the Papiſtes ſeeke for nothing but for curſedneſſe: when not onely they contemne the word, & wil not ſuffer it to be purely preached, but alſo perſecute them which preach it, and receiue it, and labour to deſtroy the bookes that are repleniſhed with the holy and ſound doctrine of God.

Now Solomon, to giue vs to vnderſtande, who is the man that hath founde wiſedome, addeth, *And the man that getteth, &c.* Therefore if wee wil finde wiſedome, and be bleſſed, let vs not bee like the Horſe and Mule, which want reaſon: *Pſal.32.9.* but let vs get vnto our ſelues vnderſtanding by the reading of the Scriptures, by the hearing of the word, beſeching god that it may pleaſe him to illuminate and conduct vs according to his promiſe: I will inſtruct thee, and teach the in the way, that thou ſhalt goe, and I will guid thee with mine eie. *Pſalm.32.9.* If we deſire truely to be bleſſed, and to get the true riches, we muſt thus doe, that is to ſay, finde wiſedome and get vnderſtanding.

14.15 *For the mer chandize thereof is better*: There is no ſtate in the worlde that is ſo much occupied as merchandize: & looke how much as one merchandize is thought to bring more profite than another, ſo muche the more is it deſired of many: and they that get moſt by it, are counted moſt bleſſed. And therefore Solomon willing to induce vs vnto wiſedome, and to giue a reaſon why the wiſe man is bleſſed, compareth wiſedome vnto merchandize, and doeth magnifie it aboue all precious and pleaſant thinges to bee wiſhed in this worlde. And becauſe he maketh this compariſon, wee muſt conſider wherein wiſedome is like vnto merchandize. Firſt of al to occupie & deale with merchandize, it is requiſite that the Merchant bee not slouthfull and negligent, but watchfull and diligent. The like is required in wiſedome, as wee haue ſeeene heere before in the ſeconde Chapter. *Pro.2.4.* Likewiſe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles teaching vs the true wiſedome, doe warne vs to watche: for wee bee inuironed and compaſſed with theeues and robbers, which labour for nothing but to deſtroy vs: as the falſe teachers, the diuels & our fleſhe. Secondarily, the merchandize that ought not to remain ſhut vp, but to bee put vnto ſale, that it may helpe them that haue neede thereof: *Matth.5.14* euen ſo wiſe men ought too make profeſſion of their wiſedome by good doctrine and by good workes, as it is ſaid *Matth. 25.* in the parable of the talentes. Thirdly, as the merchãts do encreaſe by occupiyng, & become rich by ſelling and buing: euen ſo they which labour to profite in wiſdome, ſhal abound: *Mat.13.12.* For whoſoeuer hath, to him ſhall bee giuen, & hee ſhall haue aboundance. But there are ſome differences: whereof the firſt is, that if wee haue *Pro.2.6.* neede of merchandize, wee muſt dearely buie it of the owners: *Eſay.55.1.* but the Lorde giueth wiſedome freely to them which neede the *Iam.1.5.* ſame: as it hath beene ſaide heerebefore, and in Iames, and Eſay. The ſeconde is, the merchandize may bee ſtollen, and alſo waxe *Mat. 6.19.* rotten: *Iam.5.2.* but wiſedome is euerlaſting. Thirdly, the gaine of merchandize is but to maintaine the body for a while: but the gaine of wiſedome is the kingdome of heauen, and euerlaſting liſe, which the wiſe man ſhall poſſeſſe for euer. It is then true that the merchandize of wiſedome is better and more certaine: but fewe ſewe men beleeue it, becauſe they are more buſied about thinges earthly, than heauenly: and they alſo to whome this merchandize is euery day freely preſented and offered, make no great account thereof. Wherefore the merchants of this world which take ſo great paine for thinges that periſhe and vaniſhe awaye, and yet coſt them very deare, ſhalbe their iudges at the laſte day. But if wee woulde not then haue them to be our iudges, we muſt take them for our maiſters and teachers, learning of them to guide our ſelues vnto ſpirituall and heauenly thinges, with ſuch diligence care and earneſt affection as they follow carnall & worldly things. Nowe wee muſt acknowledge the great kindneſſe of our GOD, who yeelding to our rudeneſſe, doth teach vs by things, moſt common and familiar in the world. And when it ſo commeth to paſſe, that wee loue, or at leaſtwiſe, iudge that wee ſhould loue the better thinges, and that wee woulde bee very loth too make the holy Ghoſt a liar, who hath ſpoken by Solomon: the merchants which ſay & count themſelues Chriſtians, ſhould not be like theſe aſſes, or rather dogs and hogges, which had rather eſteeme the tẽporall merchandize aboue the wiſedome of God: which labour to gaine a penny to their purſe, than to heare any good inſtruction by the worde of God, and take it for a troubling of their head, when a man ſpeakes to them of God: & alſo think, & make thẽſelues beleeue that ſith they are merchantes, they neede not vnderſtande what belongeth to God, and that it is enough for them to knowe how to order and mainteine their ſhop. Wee may gather of this compariſon (as the trueth is) that it is lawfull for to vſe precious thinges: for alſo they are not created of God without cauſe: but they that vſe thẽ ought to be very careful not to exceede meaſure.

Mat.13.44.
Luke.19.13.

16 *Length of daies:* There is no merchandize in the world how good ſoeuer it is, nor pearles how precious and pleaſant ſoeuer they be, that can aſſure vs to liue long: but cõtrarily the greateſt merchants, and they that poſſeſſe the precious and pleaſaunt thinges to the eye, and in the iudgement of the worldlinges, are they that moſt feare to die: and alſo their death is more wiſhed than others, and it happeneth oftentimes that ſome lye in waite for their liues, and labour to rob & to kill them, for to ſpoile them of that they haue. This is one of the miſeries belonging to great

merchantes and riche men of the worlde, that looke what they
feare, doth happen vnto them, euen after their death, and cannot
obteine their deſire, but are depriued of it for euer. The merchandize
of wiſdome is farre otherwiſe, for whoſoeuer doth enioy it,
is aſſured to liue long, as Solomon doeth affirme vnto vs by Circumlocution,
ſaying: *Length of daies is in her right hande*:
and heerein he compareth wiſdome vnto a ſtrong man, that hath
his right hand wel armed and fenced with good warlike weapons
to defende their liues which are vnder him, and in his ſeruice.
Wherevpon it appeareth that the man which findeth wiſdome is
bleſſed, and that his merchandize is better than the ſame of the
merchants of this world, which are neuer ſatisfied, and at the end
doe not inioy all that they haue gotten. But it might be ſaid that
Gen.4.8. ſome prooue, & haue tried, that the wiſeſt liue not lõgeſt, & there
Gen.12.12. hath beene ſome which haue not been aſſured of their liues. Abel
Exo.2.14. died before his Father: Abraham feared the Egiptians: Moſes alſo
Gen.32.7 feared after he had ſlaine the Egyptian: Iacob feared when hee
1.Sam.19. knew that his brother Eſau came to meete him: And Dauid feared
to ſtande before Saul. As touching the Prophetes and Apoſtles,
ſome of them were ſlaine in the floure of their age, &c. Anſwere,
Pro 2.21. That the firſt part of this obiection hath been handled and
reſolued heere before in the 2. Chapter. Concerning the ſeconde
part, the anſwere is, That the ancient & holy Fathers doubted not
but their daies were numbred, & determined before God, & were
aſſured there was no power in the worlde, howe mightie ſoeuer
it were, that coulde ſhorten them: but becauſe they knewe not
the number, and woulde not tempt God, they ſought by al means
to preſerue this life, which they knew they had of Gods gift: And
yet, inſomuch as they were weake men, like other, their fleſhe rebelled
againſt their ſpirit, ſo that their aſſurãce was not ſo perfect,
Gal.5.17. but that it was coupled with doubtfulneſſe and diſtruſt. For as it
is ſaide in the Galathians, The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirite, and
the ſpirite againſt the fleſhe: and theſe are contrary one to another.
Nowe foraſmuch as the length of dayes is in the right hande
of wiſedome, it followeth that what proſperite and eaſe ſoeuer we
haue in this worlde, if wee be voide of wiſedome, wee doe not
liue, but are in death. Contrarily, what miſerie and aduerſitie ſoe-

uer wee ſuffer, yet if we haue founde wiſedome and doe get her vnto vs, death hath no power ouer vs, but we doe liue, the which ſhal neuer be taken from vs. The worldlings doe ſcorne & laugh at this: and yet for all the wiſedome we haue, our fleſhe, which is of a vicious and corrupt nature, doeth ſtirre and tempt vs to beleeue the contrarie. For wee ſee that the wiſeſt men are moſt commonly pooreſt, and that there is no count made of them, but are a reproche to the worlde, and are perſecuted: and when wee want the riches and honours of this worlde, wee eſteeme not this to bee life, but paine & death. And it is commonly ſaide, that it is better to liue ten yeeres with eaſe, than fiftie in paine. Thus, after the opinion of the world, & fantaſie of the fleſh, it is better to folow the trade of merchandiſe, or ſome other worldly meanes to become rich, for to liue eaſily, and haue honour, and ſo to liue but a while; then to folow wiſdome, and liue poorely and in contempt a long time. For this cauſe then, that the contempt of the worlde, the moouing & fantaſie of our fleſh, ſhoulde not turne vs away from Wiſedome. Solomon doeth ſhew there is no paine in the life of wiſe men, but that they liue in riches and honour: for he ſaieth that in *her left hand are riches & glorie*. Wherein he compareth Wiſdom vnto a liberal rich man, that beareth a good wil towards the needie, & doth not deſpiſe his tenants, & vnderlings, but carieth his purſe in his hande, readie to emptie it, for the comfort of the poore: and doeth not torment his inferiours by contempt, but doeth honour them, doing his duetie towardes them. Such is Wiſdome towards them that finde her: for they that are truely wiſe, what pouertie ſo euer they ſuffer, in the feeling of the fleſh, yet are they neuer emptie, but haue enough, the which they preferre vnto all worldly riches, and are contented therewith: for alſo it is much better. And moreouer, though they bee in contempt of the world, yet are they aſſured that God doth not deſpiſe them, but by his mercy he greatly eſteemeth them: and therefore they eſteeme & loue contempts better then all the riches of the world. As S. Paule witneſſeth of him ſelfe: and the Apoſtle teſtifieth of Moſes: and alſo our Lord woulde haue vs to reioyce in ſuch contempts. And when Solomon doth attribute a right hand & a lefte hand vnto wiſedome, we muſt take good heede from thinking any

Pſal. 37.16.

1. Cor. 4.10.
Hebr. 11.25.
Mat. 5.11.

carnall thing of it,as if Wiſdome had hands : but by this kinde of ſpeech Solomō doth teach vs that the wiſe are aſſured to liue lōg, and that ſo much as ſhal be expedient for their ſpirituall health,& that they ſhal haue goods & honors enough wherewith they ſhal be contented,tarying & looking by this promiſe,to obtaine a life, riches,and honours,permanent for euer : the which the richeſt of the world can not promiſe themſelues.

17 *Her wayes are wayes of pleaſure.* When Merchants & other worldly paſſengers walke in the fieldes, they are glad when they finde faire way,& in the ſame doe meete with ſuch things as are pleaſant & ioyful: they greatly deſire not to be ſtayed nor hindered in their iourney, but to go at their eaſe without any diſturbance: the which ſometime they miſſe.For as the ſtate which they profeſſe can not aſſure them of that, ſo alſo oftentimes they meete with that which is cōtrarie to their deſire: wherat they are grieued & wax wery of their way,& are vexed through the euil miſchances,and finde no reſt in their mindes. The wiſe are not after this ſorte : for whereſoeuer they folow Wiſdome,they finde pleaſure, and their affaires doth proſper wel: whervpon they haue great quietnes in mind: euen in the moſt hardeſt afflictiōs that can happē in the worlde,in folowing this counſel, My brethren count it for an exceeding great ioy,when ye fal into diuers temptations.For they doe well knowe that they are bleſſed that endure temptation,&c. And therfore,by what way ſo euer they muſt paſſe to folow Wiſdome,yet are they cheereful & merie : Therfore the wiſe are not like vnto diuers rich men,who although they abounde in worldly wealth,yet on which ſide ſo euer they turne them, nothing doeth pleaſe them,they haue neyther ioye nor comfort,nor reſt in their mindes.If then we would be happie,let vs not folow the trade of worldly rich merchants, but let vs lift vp our minds after wiſdom, and ſhe wil enrich vs,& giue vs ſufficient and contented mindes: ſhe wil pleaſure vs,& deliuer vs from all ſorow & melancholy:ſhe wil giue vs reſt, and quiet mindes, and wil make vs proſper in all things: and that not for a litle ſpace of time onely,but all the daies of our life,the which ſhal not be ſhort, as Solomon doeth affirme the ſame vnto vs,ſaying, that *length of daies is in the right hand of VViſedome* : and alſo doeth affirme hereafter,ſaying,

Iam.1.2.
Iam.1.12.

18 *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her,&c.* A tree of life, that is to ſay, a tree whoſe frute is of ſo great vertue & goodnes, that it giueth life to them which eate therof: not like the trees which wayfaring men finde in the fieldes, whoſe frute if they eate, their thirſt is alayed and they refreſhed for a litle while: but they that eate of the frute of this tree, are quickened, for neuer to dye: and it is therefore called the tree of life. Wherein Solomon compareth wiſedome vnto the tree of life (whereof Moſes ſpeaketh in Gene.) and doeth put a difference betweene the tree of knowledge of good and euil, whereof alſo Geneſis ſpeaketh. For as the tree of life was giuen vnto man for to aſſure him that hee ſhoulde liue for euer, and by the gift and promiſe of God it had this effect and vertue to make man liue, & to preſerue him from death: ſo doeth Wiſedome giue eternal life vnto thoſe which laye holde on her with truſt in the goodneſſe of God, by keeping of his commandements. And herein it differeth from the tree of knowledge of good & euil, whoſe fruit mã eating, brought death, into the world, and depriued him ſelfe, and all his poſteritie of life. We muſt then take this tree of life, and holde it by Fayth, and obedience to the worde of the Lorde, and not deſire any thing that hee forbiddeth, and which is not acceptable vnto him, as we are taught by his lawe and his Goſpel. Thus doing wee ſhal be happie: as Solomon concludeth, ſaying, *And bleſſed is hee that reteyneth her:* This particle *and*, is as muche as then: as if he did ſay, Thẽ bleſſed is he, &c. He ſaith not, bleſſed is he which is counted amongſt wiſe men, and deferreth him ſelf to their Wiſdome: but hee ſayeth, Bleſſed is euery man that reteineth her him ſelfe, and liueth thereby: as in the world they wil not iudge him happie that ſuffreth him ſelf to dye with hunger in the midſt of his goods, and will onely content him ſelfe to ſee others eate, and wonder at them that eate and ſatisfie their hunger. As ſuch people are right worthie to bee eſteemed fooliſhe and madde, and deſerue to drye and fal away: euen ſo alſo are they worthie which content them ſelues onely to eſteeme wel of wiſe men, and wonder at them. With ſuche kinde of people is poperie ſtuffed, and there is no ſmal number of them, beſides in other places. Wherof it foloweth, that the world is full of curſed people, and that the

Gen.2.9.& 3,22.24.

Gen.2.9.17. & 33.

number of the bleſſed is verie ſmall: for of ten thouſande, hardlie ſhal one be found that wil take hold of this tree of life, & reteine her to refreſh him ſelf with her fruites, and to enioy her reuenew. The world is wonderfully out of taſt: it had rather eate the fruite, whereby at the laſt it ſhal feele what benefite it hath forſaken, and into what euils it hath caſt it ſelf headlong. We alſo are all of this nature, in as much as we are the children of Adam, who contented not him ſelfe to eate of the fruite that GOD had permitted and giuen him: but againſt the wil of God would taſte of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and euil, whereby afterwardes he knew what riches hee had loſt, and into what miſerie hee had caſt both him ſelf and al his poſteritie, if God of his goodnes & mercie had not ſent a remedie, by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, of whome this tree of life was a figure. For it is he which is the true Wiſdome, the euerlaſting Word of God, wherein life remained. If then wee will liue, & be bleſſed, wee muſt take Ieſus Chriſt for our tree of lyfe, wherwith our ſoules ſhould be nouriſhed eternally.

19 *The Lord by VViſedome hath laide the foundation of the earth, and hath ſtabliſhed the heauens through vnderſtanding.*

20 *By his knowledge the depthes are broken vp, and the cloudes droppe the dewe.*

21 *My Sonne, let not theſe things depart from thine eies, but obſerue VViſdome and counſell.*

22 *So they ſhalbe life vnto thy ſoule, and grace vnto thy necke.*

To the end that we ſhould not iudge that the Wiſdom which Solomon doeth ſo carefully commend vnto vs, (attributing great vertues, & excellent graces vnto her) is a thing fained in the braine of men, and that it doeth periſhe with them, and for this occaſion ſhould be led to miſtruſt her, and to deſpiſe her; and therfore he doeth declare vnto vs his eternitie, diuinitie, & power. For if the Lorde haue builded the earth by Wiſedome, &c. it foloweth, firſt that ſhe is before al creatures, & ſo ſhe is eternal: and foraſmuch as there is none but God that is euerlaſting, we muſt vnderſtande that Wiſdom is of one diuine eſſence with God, and conſequently of all one power.

When Solomon ſpeaketh thus of wiſedome,he doeth attribute the creation,ordering and gouernment of al things, aſwel heauenly as earthly vnto her:and therein he ſheweth that it is the eternal worde: wherof Moſes ſpeaketh. Whereupon we muſt vnderſtand that this wiſedome is the euerlaſting Sonne of God, our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.And ſo by theſe wordes Solomon allureth vs to put al our felicitie,al the hope of our ſaluation, al our ioy & pleaſure in Ieſus Chriſt,and that hee only ſhould be our contentation and ſatiſfying: ſo that we ſhoulde not deſire other riches nor treaſures,but that he ſhould be vnto vs al in al, as he only hath created al things,ordered al,and holdeth al in his power.And if in this ſorte we take him vnto vs,and holde him faſt,then bleſſed are we, for we ſhal want nothing.Nowe that by theſe woordes of Solomon we ſhoulde be induced to knowe the eternite diuinitie and power of wiſedome,to ioyne our ſelues vnto her, and to put al our truſt in her, wee may learne the ſame by other places of the ſcripture, in the which the holy Ghoſt willing to turne vs from the vaine truſt of Idols,and to make vs leane vpon one God onely,doeth attribute the creation of the worlde,the diſpoſing, guyding and gouerning of al things vnto him.It is then the maner of the ſcripture to ſet the creation of the worlde before vs, when it endeuoureth to induce vs to put our truſt in God:and alſo when we make confeſſion of our faith, wee confeſſe that God is maker of heauen and earth.As touching the reſt, when wiſedome hath ſo holpen,and ſtil doeth mainteine al things which are created for man his ſake,and doe ſerue him: we ought to vnderſtand thereby that ſhe wil not forſake vs,ſeeing that wee are much more excellent then the things which are created for our vſe and ſeruice.

Gen. 1 3.
Iohn.1.1.
Gen.1.1.
Eſa.40.26. & 42.5. & 44.24.& 45 18.
Ier.10.12.
Mat. 6.26.

For if God take care of things that are leſſe then we,by a ſtronger reaſon he wil aſſiſt vs in al our needes. Moreouer when wee ſee the earth ſo ſtedfaſtly ſettled,and that it vpholdeth greate buildings and high mountaines,without any remoouing: that it beareth both great and ſmal trees,and bringeth forth al greene things for foode to man and beaſt: that the heauens with their hoſtes doe continually keepe their courſe, without ſhaking and wearineſſe: that out of the deepes do riſe the ſprings of waters, from whence the welles,riuers, pondes, and ſea doe come, for the neceſſitie

ceſſitie both of man and beaſtes : and that we ſee alſo that to giue vs abundance and greater fruitefulneſſe, the cloudes drop downe, the raine to moiſten and to make the earth fat : and that of all theſe thinges there is none in our power, that by our thought and care wee can in no wiſe further them: we muſt confeſſe it is God onely that worketh by his wiſedome, though he would haue that man ſhould labour, and that he vſeth man as his inſtrument. And therefore with knowledge we muſt confeſſe, O Lord, how manifolde are thy workes, in wiſedome haſt thou made them all. And for to make this confeſſion truely, we muſt (through the conſideration of gods workes) renounce our owne wittes, and be willing to be brought to the knowledge of the euerlaſting power and diuinitie of God, that we may glorifie him as God, and not turne away our ſelues from him vnto ſuperſtitiō and idolatrie, the which if wee ſhoulde doe, wee ſhal deſerue that God ſhoulde bee mooued to powre his wrath vpon vs, as vpon the wicked and vngodly, and to giue vs vp vnto a reprobate minde, for to damne vs eternally. As concerning the reſt, if God haue giuen vs any knowledge of the gouernment aſwel of the heauens as of the earth, of the aire and of the waters, let vs not ſwel with our knowledge, as the Philoſophers, which did attribute vnto their diligence, wit, and capacitie the knowledge that they had of this world: but with all humilitie let vs confeſſe, that it is GOD that imparteth vnto vs his wiſedome, vnderſtanding and knowledge. Alſo let vs take heede from finding any faulte in the workes of God, neither let vs murmure at all when matters ſhal not follow our fantaſie: but let vs thanke God for all, in that it pleaſeth him to gouerne all by his wiſedome for our ſeruice.

Pſal. 104. 24

21 *My ſonne.* Wiſedome is a treaſure ineſtimable, wonderfull, profitable and full of pleaſure, as wee haue hearde, and ſtill may heare. When wee ſee that Solomon is not contented with the former prayſes, whereby he hath declared vnto vs the profite and pleaſure that they haue which are poſſeſſed with wiſedome, but doeth admoniſhe vs, carefully to keepe it, ſaying, *My ſonne, let not theſe thinges depart, &c*: When wee ſee that God by Solomon ſpeaketh vnto vs gently, calling vs his ſonnes, and that hee

he doth admoniſh vs for our great profite and honor; wee muſt be redie to heare him, and diligent to obey him: if not, we deſerue to be depriued of theſe great riches, which are offered vnto vs, and miſerably to periſhe. Now if ſo be that worldly rich men doe warn their children ſafely to kepe the treaſures that they haue gathered for them, the which notwithſtanding are tranſitorie, ſo we ought not to thinke it ſtraunge nor painefull, if God by Solomon commende vnto vs ſo carefully his treaſure of wiſedome, which cannot periſhe, but we without it ſhall periſh: And it behoooueth vs throughly too praiſe and loue our heauenly father, by ſetting foorth his praiſes, and giuing him thankes for that hee doeth offer dayly vnto vs by his worde, the treaſure of his wiſedome, & doth exhort vs to keepe it carefully. And for to ſhewe that we doe truly eſteeme both our Father and his treaſure, repleniſhed with ſo great riches and precious iewels, wee muſt take heede that ſuch goods bee not pulled and taken from our eyes. And for to do this duelie, wee muſt not vſe our wittes and fantaſie, but ſtande in neede to bee armed with counſel and Wiſedome, to keepe diligent watche ouer this treaſure: the which wee ſhall obtaine, if our deſire bee ſet in the lawe of the Lorde, &c: and that we folowe the counſel of Moſes: And theſe wordes which I commaund thee this day, ſhalbe in thy heart, &c. Theſe are the eyes which Solomon chiefly requireth, as hee him ſelfe doeth ſhewe, when after hauing ſpoken of the eyes, hee addeth, *but obſerue VViſedome and counſell, &c.* And for as muche as wee can not haue better Wiſedome and counſell, then to folowe the word of God, wee learne not to come vnto the Sermon to feede our eyes, and to fill our eares, but to receiue Wiſedome and counſel, and therafter to bee guided and gouerned. Thus doing, wee ſhall poſſeſſe Wiſdome, we ſhal keepe it, and it wil preſerue vs.

Deu.6.6. & 11,18.

Mat.7,24.

22 *So they ſhal be life vnto thy ſoule.* As Solomon is very diligent to exhort vs to bee hearers of Wiſedome: ſo alſo to encourage vs to folowe his admonitions, hee promiſeth vs life & honour. And becauſe that the riche of this worlde thinke them ſelues well aſſured to liue (as the riche glutton which is ſpoken of in Saincte Luke) and moſte commonly are deceyued,

therefore to aſſure vs that the obteining of wiſedome is better
then al worldly riches, hee promiſeth vs that wee ſhal liue euer-
laſtingly: for hee doeth promiſe vs the life of the ſoule, whereby
wiſe men doe liue, euen preſently, when they are fed with the
ſeede of life, which is the Euangelical woorde, aſſuring them-
ſelues of the goodneſſe of God in Ieſus Chriſt. For man liueth
Mat.4.4. not by bread onely, but by euery woorde that proceedeth out of
Dent. 8.3. the mouth of God. The wolrde which perſecuteth the wiſe in-
deed, doth not ſee this life: for it is compaſſed with many miſe-
ries and afflictions, and ſeemeth rather that the wiſe are in death,
and that they periſh. The very wiſe themſelues heere in this life
Rom.18.24 doe not ſee it: but they hope for it. Wee are ſaued through hope.
And albeit that for the wronges and reproches that the wiſe doe
ſuffer, they bee tempted to murmure and to lament, as if they
were in death: yet knowing that hope maketh not aſhamed, they
abide patiently for the day wherein this life ſhal bee declared, vn-
til which time it is hidde with Chriſt in God, who is faithful: &
therefore they are aſſured of this, that hee wil not denye them
that, which hee keepeth for them; ſeeing alſo that this their life
is common with Ieſus Chriſte, who wil not diſappoint his bre-
thren and companions. Euen ſo that which the wiſe and faithful
holde in hope, they ſhal one day enioy and openly poſſeſſe. For
Col. 3.4. when Chriſt, which is our life ſhal appeare, then ſhal we alſo ap-
peare with him in glory. Contrarily, the ſoules of the fooliſhe
are and ſhalbe in death. Hee compareth the honour that hee pro-
miſeth the wiſe, vnto a purſe of iewelles hanging about the
necke: and indeede, wiſedome is a gliſtering purſe before GOD,
who looketh into the inwarde beautie, and to the goodneſſe of
the harte, and doeth ſo wel pleaſe him and ſo greatly doth eſteeme
it, that hee rewardeth the ſame with eternal life. For vnto them
Rom.2.7. which through perſeuerance in well dooing, ſeeke glory, honour
and immortalitie, eternal life, &c. Wee may alſo vnderſtande
that the wiſe wil ſpeake ſo diſcretly, that men ſhall receyue his
woordes with honour and reuerence, and that they will
gladlye heare him ſpeake, and his woordes ſhal ſerue to edifica-
tion.

23 The

23 *Then ſhalt thou walke ſafely by thy way: and thy foote ſhal not ſtumble.* Pſal. 91.11.

24 *If thou ſleepeſt, thou ſhalt not bee afraide, and when thou ſleepeſt, thy ſleepe ſhalbe ſweete.*

The former promis ought to be ſufficient ynough for to encourage vs to followe the trade of wiſedome, and carefully to giue our ſelues therunto, & neuer to forſake her: but foraſmuch as the ſaid promiſe reſpecteth chiefly the tyme to come, vnto the which time the ful poſſeſſion of that which is promiſed is deferred: and leſt the delay might make vs negligent, except wee had preſently ſome commoditie, and might waxe deſperate, as if wee were in death, ſeeing that the life of the godly wiſe, is compaſſed with miſery: Therefore Solomon doth promis vs that in the mids of troubles we ſhal be preſerued, that they ſhal not hurt vs, but that we ſhal proſper in our way, and in al our affaires: ſo farre off ſhal it be that we ſhal fal, to periſh; that we ſhal meete with nothing to hinder vs, from going the right way, but ſhal come to the ende of our affaires with eaſe. For through wiſedome, wherwith we ſhalbe ſeaſoned, ſtaying our ſelues vpon the worde of God, we ſhal ouercome al lets that the fleſh, the worlde and the Deuil can ſet againſt vs, ſo that no euil ſhal betyde vs, nor any wounde ſhal come neere our dwelling. And this wee muſt wel note, that Solomon ſaith, *in thy way*. Hee doeth not promiſe vs ſafetie, if wee followe any other trade or way then we ought, if we forſake our vocation and folowe our good intents, and being diſobedient to the commandementes of God, doe folowe mens traditions and the doctrines of Deuils. For when we delight in our ſelues, and forſake the wayes which the Lorde teacheth vs, the ſayde promiſe doeth nothing perteine vnto vs: but it is made vnto vs, and alſo we ſhal enioy the ſame, ſo that we giue our ſelues to do our duetie, and to folowe our vocation, not ventering our ſelues further then the ſame vocation requireth. For after this wee ſhal ſhewe our ſelues to be wiſe indeede, and in the mids of moſt horrible tēpeſtes we ſhalbe preſerued, that nothing ſhal bring vs hurt: albeit that after the ſight of the eyes and feeling of the fleſh it ſhal ſeeme cleane contrary. For the wiſe alſo doe meete with many hinderances, the which were able ynough, not only to make them ſtũble, but alſo to fal & periſh, if God by his wiſedome did not vpholde them. The which wiſedome he giueth vnto his faithful children, and doeth exalt them, ſo much as he knoweth to be expedient: howbeit they ſtumble & do often fal, that they may be warned of their frailtie, and that they may haue their recourſe vnto the almighty, who hath made this promiſe the which hee doeth truely performe, not ſuffering the fal of the wiſe to bee mortal. *Pſal. 37. 23.* The pathes of man are directed by the Lorde, and his way pleaſeth him: though he fal, he ſhal not be caſt of, For the Lord putteth vnder his hande.

24 *If thou ſleepeſt, &c.* He proceedeth to declare the commodities that the faithful haue in this life by wiſedome, and ſetteth here before vs twoo of them: that is to ſay, the reſt, without feare, *and the ſweete ſleepe:* of the which commodities the riche worldlings (whoſe hartes are ſet on couetouſnes) are depriued, being in continual feare of looſing their riches, not ſeruing God, but their vnſatiable deſires: and therefore they haue not the ſweete ſleepe, but ful of dreames, ſorowes and troubles. The fulneſſe of the riche wil not ſuffer him to ſleepe. In this promiſe wee may firſt of al learne, that it is laweful for a wiſe and faythful man to reſt and ſleepe, but not to giue vnto the fleſhe his eaſe, as doe the vnſatiable and intemperate, which doe beſtowe the greateſt parte of their tyme in gluttony and in ſleepe: but to the ende that taking his reſt, hee may be more diſpoſed to ſerue God and his neighbour according to his vocation.

Secondly, that the ſleepe is not a thing ſo natural vnto man, that hee can vſe the ſame at his wil, except GOD of his grace doe giue it him. Wherefore, if wee reſt quietly, wee owe thankes vnto GOD therefore: and if wee cannot ſleepe at our eaſe, let vs take heede from beeing grieued, knowing that GOD doeth diſtribute his gifts as ſeemeth him good, and in the meane whyle, that wee may bee occupied about our vocation, let vs aſke of GOD that it woulde pleaſe him to giue vs quiet ſleepe. It pleaſeth him wel that wee aſke it: for it is a parte of our dayly bread, and if hee woulde not that wee ſhoulde aſke it, and that hee woulde not voutſafe to giue it, hee would make vs no promiſe therof.

Thirdly, that the wiſe haue in this preſent life ſo much reſt and eaſe, as is neceſſary for them : and albeeit that oftentymes they bee greatly troubled, and that after diuerſe ſortes, knowing that God is their helper: yet they are contented, and ſay with Dauid, I wil lay me downe, and alſo ſleepe in peace: for thou Lorde, only makeſt me dwel in ſafetie. *Pſalm.4.8.* *Pſal. 91.1.*

25 *Thou ſhalt not feare for any ſodaine feare, neither for the deſtruction of the wicked, when it cometh.*

26 *For the Lorde ſhal be for thine aſſurance, & ſhall preſerue thy foote from taking.*

For further to admoniſh the wiſe and faithful of the bleſſings that they ſhal obteine during this life, by giuing themſelues vnto wiſedome, hee maketh heere a defenſe the which anſwereth in egal degree with the promiſe, and which ought to cauſe vs to fixe our eyes vpon wiſedome, whereby and not otherwayes, wee may bee aſſured that wee ſhal not bee beaten downe with the calamities, howe ſodaine ſoeuer they bee: although that beeing mixed amongſt the wicked, wee cannot eſcape but haue our parte of the euils that they ſuffer, and bee ouerthrowne with them. Solomon woulde not haue vs to holde ſuch opinion, & that rightly: for ſodaine *feare* is due vnto them that haue not the feare of God, and which without remorſe of conſcience giue themſelues vnto diſhoneſtie for to cõmit al filthines with greedines through contempt and diſobedience againſt the woorde of God. Such kind of people doe thinke themſelues ſafe, and doe falſly beleeue that no harme ſhal come to them : but when they feare nothing, after that God hath deferred their puniſhment for a time, they finde themſelues ouertaken with euils, from the which they cannot eſcape. This is the *ſodaine feare*, as Solomon doeth declare the ſame, when hauing forbidden to bee afraide of the ſodaine feare, hee addeth, *neither for the deſtruction of the wicked, &c.*

The which falleth vppon them vnawares, and when they thinke not of it, and ſooner then they woulde. The worlde deſtroyed by the fludde hath prooued it: ſo haue the Sodomites and Gomorrhians, Dathan, Core, and Abyram, with their companie. Contrarily, when this deſtruction came, Noe and his familie, Loth and his daughters, Moſes and Aaron were preſerued from it: for they were not of the conſpiracie of the wicked. Nowe as theſe ſame, were deliuered, ſo Solomon alſo woulde haue, that al they that through feare of offending God, do giue thẽſelues vnto wiſdom, ſhoulde bee aſſured, that the deſtruction which happeneth vnto the wicked, ſhal not ouertake them: and albeeit they ſuffer with them, yet ſhal they not bee ouercome: for they foreſee a farre off the deſtruction to come, becauſe they knowe that God is iuſt, & that hee cannot alwaies diſſemble but at the laſt wil puniſhe wickedneſſe. And alſo that which the wiſe and faithful do ſuffer, they beare it patiently, knowing that they haue wel deſerued it: & thus the deſolation doeth not turne to their hurt, but to their benefite.
Rom. 8. 28. Alſo wee knowe that al things worke together for the beſt vnto thẽ that loue God. Thoſe that were among the Iewes elected, did wel vnderſtand this: for it was alſo foretolde them by the Prophetes long tyme before the captiuitie of Babylon. In folowing the examples of theſe good olde fathers, let vs not be afrayde for any calamitie that ſhal happen to the world, although we light on the ſame, as if it did aſſault vs vnprouided, and as though we had not foreſeene it. For the faithful conſidering the wickedneſſes which reigne in the worlde, and that they themſelues doe dayly offende, ought to confeſſe that the roddes are prepared for them,
2. Pet. 2. 3. and that the condemnation of the wicked from a long time tarieth not, and their deſtruction ſleepeth not. To the reſt, Solomõ would not haue vs to be bold of our ſelues, nor truſt in our own ſtrẽgth. For giuing a reaſon for the which we muſt not feare, hee ſaith not, for yee are ſtrong and mighty, hardy and couragious: yee knowe the ſubtilities of Satan and the deuiſes of the wicked: but he giueth al the prayſe vnto God, as alſo it is moſt due vnto him: for hee ſaith,

26 *For the Lorde ſhall, &c.* It is not Solomon onely that affirmeth vnto vs, that God helpeth his faithful ſeruantes: the holy ſcriptures are repleniſhed with ſuch witneſſes, and alſo with examples, whereby wee may wel knowe it. Seeing then that wee haue many witneſſes heereof, and that this helpe ſurmounteth al heauenly, earthly and infernall powers, wee muſt in no wiſe feare, but holde an inuincible aſſurance againſt all the afflictions of the worlde, otherwiſe wee doe not beleeue that GOD is on our ſide, and doe belye the Scripture, and doe counte the examples thereof to bee fables: as doe all they which woulde winne paradiſe by their woorkes and free will. If wee bee aſſured againſt ſodaine feare and the miſeries that happen vnto the wicked, let vs confeſſe that it commeth of the onely helpe of GOD. By this that Solomon compareth vs vnto beaſtes, for which men ſet nettes and ſnares to take them and kil them, and compareth the ſodaine feare, the puniſhmentes and iudgements of GOD, the which hee prepareth either by men, or by the Deuils, vnto nettes and ſnares, when he ſaith, *and ſhal preſerue thy feete: &c.* hee doth ſpoile vs of al ſtrength and power of francke & free wil. For if we coulde deliuer our ſelues from the ſodaine feare, and from miſeries, we ſhoulde not need to haue GOD to keepe vs: but now if wee be left vnto our ſelues, we are like vnto feeble beaſtes, which runne into the nette, and are taken in the ſnare, out of the which they cannot eſcape. This compariſon is often vſed in the ſcripture. Let vs note further, that the woorde which wee haue tranſlated *helpe*, after the Chaldee interpretour doeth ſignifie hope and confidence.

27 *Withhold not the good from the owners therof: though there be power in thine hand to doe it.*

But nowe to teache vs mercifulneſſe, he giueth vs commandements belonging vnto the ſeconde table, the which doeth ſhewe vs, how we ſhoulde liue with our neighbours, and what duetie we owe vnto them. Firſt of al, hee forbiddeth vs theft; not onely that, for which theeues are puniſhed by the magiſtrates, but chiefly the ſame, for which ſome do eſteeme themſelues, and woulde bee accounted of, and alſo are praiſed & commended of thoſe that extol couetouſnes, who count it nothing to hurt their neighbours, ſo that they may winne by it. The which they doe, when they ſee that there is no reſiſtance nor power to bee reuenged. There are many kindes of ſuch theeues, the which not only goe vnpuniſhed by men, but honoured: yet notwithſtanding ſeing they bee ful of crueltie, they ſhoulde not thinke to be exempted from puniſhement. For as it is ſaide, Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhal obteine mercy: ſo alſo, curſed are the cruel & vnmerciful, for iudgement without mercy ſhal fal on him that ſheweth no mercy. And in this ſorte they ſhal buy their honours very deere, and it had beene much better for them to haue confeſſed their fautes, and to be puniſhed in this worlde with ſhame, then to heare this fearful ſentence, Depart yee curſed from me, &c. Wee ſay with ſhame: for ſith they ſay they are Chriſtians, it ſhoulde bee a foule ſhame for them to ſuffer hanging, as is ſhewed vnto vs by S. Peter. See that none of you ſuffer as a murtherer, or theefe, or an euil doer, &c. But wee ſhal auoide them both, if being merciful and charitable, we doe vnto our neighbours as wee woulde be done vnto: and withholde not the good from the owners thereof. For to performe this wel, it ſuffiſeth not to forſake al euil trades, all vnlawful and vnreaſonable meanes to drawe vnto vs the goods of our neighbour: but wee muſt renounce al enterpriſes, purpoſes & deliberatiõs to enriche our ſelues with the hinderance of our neighbour, and to doe our duety for to conſerue euery man his, and readily to giue the hyreling his wages, & almoſe vnto the poore, when we haue the goods of this world: for to ſuch kind of people do they alſo belong, and not onely vnto vs, Therefore vpon what title ſoeuer we poſſeſſe them, they are committed vnto vs to diſpoſe them, according as God doth teach vs by his word. Now that it is needful that wee ſhoulde with al ſpeede giue the hyreling his wages, we may vnderſtand if we conſider our owne nature, which is, to bee grieued when men deffer to render that which they owe vnto vs, and chiefly when neceſsitie pincheth vs. But that we may be further aduertiſed, Solomon doeth giue vs a commandement therof, ſaying:

Mat.5.7. Iam.2.13. Mat.25. 41. 1.Pet.4.15. Mat.7.12.

28 *Say not vnto thy neighbour, goe and come againe, as I*
to morowe wil I giue thee, if thou now haue it.

This 2.commandement is plaine, and there is none ſo dul of vnderſtanding but may vnderſtand the ſame, ſeing hee aſketh nothing of vs which wee would not haue done to our ſelues. Solomon demandeth nothing of vs which paſſeth the boundes of nature wel gouerned, and alſo he addeth nothing vnto the law of Moſes. For it is ſaid, Thou ſhalt not ſteale. again, Thou ſhalt do no wrong vnto thy neighbour, nor poll him. Thou ſhalt not oppreſſe an hired ſeruant that is needy & poore, &c. Thou ſhalt giue him his hire for his day, &c. Now if we may not vſe ſuch delaies, much leſſe may we ſeeke waies vtterly to depriue our neighbors of that which we owe them. Let vs then take heed wee doe not as thoſe which S. Iames reproueth, ſaying, For if a brother or a ſiſter be naked & deſtitute of dayly food, and one of you ſay vnto them, depart in peace: warme your ſelues, & fil your bellies, notwithſtanding ye giue them not thoſe things which are needful to the body, what helpeth it? For the loue that wee owe vnto our neighbours, is not paide with words. Euen ſo, whoſoeuer ſhal haue this worlds good, & ſhal ſee his brother to ſtand in neede, & wil ſhut vp his compaſsion frõ him, how dwelleth the loue of God in him? We muſt then be readie to pay our debts, & to helpe the neceſsitie of the poore, otherwiſe we withhold the good frõ the owner therof, and bid them come againe to morow, the which is a deteſtable theeuerie before God, who can wel puniſh it, euen as murther and manſlaughter as the ſcripture witneſſeth in diuers places: although it be counted but a ſmal fault before men, who doe pardon great theeues and hang vp the litle ones.

Leui.19.11. & 13.

Deut. 24.14

Iam.2.15.

29 *Intende none hurt againſt thy neighbour, ſeing he doth dwel without feare by thee.*

For the thirde commandement of mercy, hee ſheweth that wee muſt walke in integritie of harte with our neighbours, and chiefly with thoſe which ſtande not in doubte nor miſtruſt vs, otherwiſe wee deſerue greatly to bee blamed of treaſon, conſidering that they which dwell and occupie with vs, doe not diſtruſt vs, becauſe outwardly wee ſhewe them a faire face and ſmoothe countenance. For none can bee

aſſured of his neighbour, except hee loue him, and deſire his
proſperitie. Therefore when wee ſee that our neighbours doe not
feare that wee wil hurte them, let vs not inuent any euill againſt
them, and much leſſe put it in practiſe, otherwiſe wee muſt looke
for nothing but a curſe: as it is written, hee hath didgged a pit,
and made it deepe, and is fallen into it himſelfe. Hee that rewardeth
Pſal.7.15. euil for good, euil ſhal not departe from his houſe. And
Prou.17.13. albeeit that Solomon doeth not heere make mention but of the
deuiſes that are made againſt thoſe that thinke themſelues to bee
at peace and quietnes, and woulde haue vs to abſtaine from it, it
is not therefore to ſay, that hee alloweth conſpiracies and treaſons
Pro. 20. & that are made againſt enemies: for hee ſaieth, *Say not thou*,
25.21. I wil recompenſe euil, but waite vpon the Lorde, and hee ſhal ſaue
thee. Againe, If hee that hateth thee, bee hungry, giue him
bread to eate, and if hee bee thirſty, giue him water to drinke.
But by forbidding one kinde of treaſon, hee giueth vs to vnderſtande
that al treaſons are euil, and that wee muſt haue our hartes
pure from al euil thoughtes and purpoſes. And namely hee forbiddeth
to ymagine any thing againſt him, that ſo loueth his
neighbour, that he hath no euil ſuſpicion of him: for if a man
be giuen to ymagine againſt them that are ſuch, hee wil alſo ymagine
Iere.17.5. againſt his enemies. And albeit that Ieremie ſaith, Curſed is
the man that putteth his truſt in man, &c. it is not to ſay, that it is
vnlawful for a man to truſt in his neighbour, when there is perceiued
nothing in him but honeſtie. For as the ſcripture blameth
the truſt that is put in man againſt the word of God, euen ſo alſo
it commandeth vs, loue, the which beleeueth al, and hopeth al, &
1.Cor.13.7. indureth al things and thinketh none euil. If then wee loue our
neighbours in whome wee ſee none euil, wee wil put our truſt in
them, and wil not feare that they wil do vs wrong, but rather that
they wil helpe vs at our neede. This is the truſt wherof Solomon
heere ſpeaketh, and not the vaine and fooliſhe truſt that one putteth
in another, & in worldly things forgetting God: as the ſame
which the Iewes had in the helpe of Egipt: and like the ſame that
the Papiſtes haue in their Saintes and in their merites, and other
baggage.

30 *Striue not with a man cauſeles, when hee hath doone thee no harme.*

For the fourth commandement of mercy, hee woulde haue vs to auoyde contentions, which are fruites of euil thoughts: and chiefly that wee ſhoulde not ſtriue with him that douteth vs not. For ſeeing that in not miſtruſting vs, hee ſheweth vs ſigne of loue. And againe that wee haue no tryal that hee woulde nor doeth vs any euil, then ſhoulde we doe him greate iniury to contende with him. Hee expreſſely forbiddeth ſuch contentions, becauſe they are moſt deteſtable, both before God, and men which haue any ſparke of good feeling: and alſo becauſe that that man who is wont to ſtriue without cauſe, wil make no conſcience to ſtriue & contend againſt them which ſhal ſomething offend him. The which Solomon alloweth not of, as wee haue ſeene by the witneſſes before alleaged.

Moreouer our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is the true Solomon, forbiddeth vs al contentions: when hee ſaith, But I ſay vnto you, reſiſt not euil: and when hee ſaieth a little after, Loue your enimies: And S. Paul, Recompenſe to no man euil for euil: By forbidding vs theſe debates, and commanding vs peace and loue with al men, they adde nothing vnto the lawe, though it bee commanded, hee ſhal giue life for life. For therein the iudges are taught howe they ought to puniſhe the offenders, and not howe particular perſons ſhoulde reuenge themſelues vpon their enemies, to whome by the lawe they ought to doe wel. If thou meeteſt with the Oxe of thyne enemie, or his aſſe going aſtray, thou ſhalt bring it home to him. Dauid did wel vnderſtande the ſame, as it may bee ſeene in the hunting that Saule made after him.

Mat. 5.39.
Rom.12.17.
Exo.21.23.
Deut.19.21.
Exo.23.4.
1.Sam.24.2

31 *Be not enuious for the wicked man, neither chooſe any of his wayes.*

32 *For the frowarde is abhomination vnto the Lord: but his ſecret is with the righteous.*

Foraſmuch as they which are voide of mercy, doe ſhewe vnmercifulneſſe and crueltie, wherewith they are ful fraught, giuing themſelues to inuent euil againſt innocentes which diſtruſt them not: and that they which ſtirre vp ſtriſes without cauſe againſt the good, doe floriſh commonly in the worlde, liuing eaſily and peaceably, and poſſeſsing great riches with honours: and contrarily, they which walke with integritie of hart, which ſeeke peace, and faine woulde doe wel, doe ſuffer much miſerie, and are contemned of the worlde: for this cauſe the poore faithful ones are tempted to forget mercie, and to ſerue the wicked for parte of their proſperitie. There is none ſo perfite in all the worlde, if ſo bee it hee fal into affliction, but doeth feele theſe temptations. And Dauid alſo doeth acknowledge the ſame in his owne perſon, and conſequently in the ſame of all the faythful, ſaying, As for mee, my feete were almoſt gone, my ſteppes had wel neere ſlipt: For I fretted at the fooliſhe, when I ſawe the proſperitie of the wicked. Againe, Loe, theſe are the wicked, yet proſper they alway, and increaſe in riches. Pſal.73.2.

The elect and faithfull ones haue ſuch like temptations: but to the ende that they ſhoulde take heede from beeing ouercome with them, Solomon giueth alſo the fift commaundement of mercy: ſaying, *Be not enuious for the wicked man*. Therfore if wee wil folowe mercy wee muſt put far from vs the deſires and affections to bee like vnto the enuious man, and the man that ſuffers himſelfe to bee caried about by his luſtes, and runneth after them with might and maine, and cares not what hee thinketh, or ſaieth, or doeth, whether right or wrong, ſo that hee may come to the ende of his enterpriſes. And becauſe there are ſome, that make themſelues beleeue that they would not bee like the enuious, and yet folowe their manners: to the ende that wee ſhoulde not deceiue our ſelues with them, Solomon doeth warne vs to chooſe none of their wayes. Whereunto wee muſt obey, nothing declining from the right way, albeeit wee finde therein great incombrances, and that wee muſt ſuffer much euen to the vttermoſt after the feeling of the fleſh. Al thoſe are like vnto theſe enuious men, which doe chooſe ſuch kinde of life as bringeth eyther ſpiritual or temporal hurte vnto their neighbours. To auoide then the calamities of this preſent life, and to liue eaſily, wee muſt not wander out of the right way, & forſake mercie. And to make vs more willing to obey his commaundement, Solomon doeth bring vs reaſons for to feare the enuious, and to comfort the vpright, ſhewing that the wicked cannot long endure, and that the good ſhal not be alwaies in miſery, but that ſhortly they ſhalbe deliuered therefrom. The firſt reaſon is:

For the frowarde, &c. Hee whome before hee called enuious, hee nowe calleth frowarde: becauſe that through his frowardnes wherevnto hee is accuſtomed, hee goeth backewarde and falleth from the right way: and therefore, albeeit that he eſteemeth himſelfe and is honoured of the worlde, which knoweth not what kinde of people are to bee praiſed, hee is abhominable before the Lorde, who can ſurely in due time ſuppreſſe his enuiouſnes, and caſt it farre from him, and depriue him of his helpe, without the which nothing can ſtande. Thus the enuious which forſake the right way of righteouſneſſe, ſhal not endure, but ſhal goe into deſtruction. For as wee may ſee by the holy hiſtories, thoſe which haue beene abhorred of the Lorde for their enuiouſneſſe and frowardnes, haue not long continued, but haue beene rooted out, euen when they ſeemed to floriſh and proſper moſt: & haue bene rooted out not only by temporal puniſhment, but alſo haue receiued iudgement of eternal fire, and haue beene made example for al them which ſhoulde liue without reuerence of God. This threatning ſerueth to feare the enuious and the froward, which haue no reuerence of God, nor mercy towards their neighbours: and alſo to make them vnexcuſable, except they returne vnto repentance. The faithful alſo ought to tremble at ſuch threatenings, and feare the iudgementes of GOD, ſeeing that of their corrupt nature they are ſuch, that they cannot of themſelues but bee in abhomination before GOD, and ſo go to deſtruction as they deſerue. But to the ende that being humbled, & as it were in deſpayre of themſelues, they might take courage, and not remaine vnder the burden of deſpayre, the holy ſcripture for their comfort addeth the promiſe againſt the threatning. As alſo Solomon vſeth it to the ſame purpoſe: for hauing threatned the frowarde, ſaying, that they are abhomination before

Iudg.5.
2.Pet.2.4.

the Lord, he addeth to comfort the faithful, *but the ſecrete of the Lorde is with the righteous:* that is to ſay, with them who for feare of offending G O D, and for loue they beare vnto their neighbours, doe abſtaine from enuiouſneſſe, and flye from all frowardneſſe. Nowe to haue boldneſſe to folowe the righteous, and to bee ſtirred to deſire the communication and participation of this ſecrete, wee muſt vnderſtande that this *ſecrete* is the couenant of God with his faithful children, whereby hee promiſeth *Iere. 31. 31.* them to bee their G O D, as it is written, Beholde, the dayes come, ſaieth the Lorde, that I wil make a newe couenant with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Iudah, &c. Dauid doeth teache vs thus to expounde it, when hee ſaieth, What man is hee that feareth the Lorde? Hee wil teache him the way that hee ſhal chooſe. &c. This ſecrete then conſiſteth in this, that God doeth giue vs to knowe his good wil towardes vs, and doeth teache vs his lawe, that beeing aſſured of his fauour and mercie, wee ſhoulde giue our ſelues to feare and obey him. Nowe this couenant is rightly called a ſecrete, For firſt of al howe wiſe ſoeuer wee bee, wee cannot enter into it of our ſelues: Ieſus Chriſt doeth *Mat. 11. 25.* witneſſe the ſame, I giue thee thankes, O Father, Lorde of heauen and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe thinges from the wiſe men of vnderſtanding, and haſt opened them to babes. Bleſſed art thou Symon, the ſonne of Iona: for fleſh and blood hath *Mat. 16. 17.* not reuealed it vnto thee, but my father which is in heauen. *1. Cor. 2. 6.* And wee ſpeake wiſedome among them that are perfit: not the wiſedome of this world neither of Princes of this world which come to naught. Secondly the faithful haue no more vnderſtanding thereof, then it pleaſeth God to reueale vnto them by his holy ſpirite: and yet what reuelation ſoeuer they haue thereof, yet *6. Cor. 13. 9.* haue they no perfit knowledge in this worlde. For wee knowe in parte, and we propheſie in parte: but when that which is perfit, is come, then that which is in part, ſhalbe aboliſhed.

33 *The curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked: but he bleſſeth the habitation of the righteous.*

34 *With the ſkorneful he ſkorneth, but hee giueth grace vnto the humble.*

In this worlde the enuious and the frowarde are bleſſed, whome Solomon heere calleth wicked, becauſe hee hath neither feare nor reuerence of GOD, nor good affection towardes his neighbours, but ſuffers himſelfe to bee led about of his vnbridled luſtes. Such a man is bleſſed of the worlde, in whoſe iudgement he floriſheth and proſpereth: and not only do they thus iudge of him, but alſo his children, ſeruants, and houſholde, are counted happy, ſo that there is preaſſe to ſpeake with him and to ſerue him and his. But heere at the faithful ought not to bee enuious, neither to deſire to bee in ſuch eſtimation, nor to haue ſuch prayſe, knowing that ſuch thinges cannot continue, but fal to decay. For the curſe of the Lorde, the which deſtroyeth whatſoeuer commeth againſt it, is in the houſe of the wicked, to ſpare neither him nor his familie, that foloweth his trade. I ſay expreſſedly which follow his trade: for if the wicked man beget a ſonne, that ſeeth al his fathers ſinnes which hee hath done, and feareth, neither doth the like, &c. hee ſhal not dye in the iniquitie of his father, but hee ſhal ſurely liue. Let vs not therefore enuie the worldly bleſſing, but let vs deſire the bleſſing of God: whereof if wee wil bee aſſured, let vs forſake enuiouſneſſe, frowardneſſe and al wickedneſſe, and giue our ſelues vnto righteouſneſſe, ſtaying our ſelues vpon the grace and mercy of GOD by fayth, and framing our liues according to his holy woorde, exerciſing vnfaigned charitie one of vs towardes another. And if for thus doing we be accurſed of the worlde, let vs reioyce: as S. Luke teacheth vs, bleſſed are ye when men hate you, &c. Reioyce yee in that day, and bee glad: for beholde, your rewarde is great in heauen. This rewarde is the bleſſing of the Lorde, that Solomon promiſeth vnto the righteouſe, when hee ſaieth, *but hee bleſſeth the habitation of the righteous*. For mainteyning them in this earthly manſion, & giuing them ynough of al thinges and wherewith they are contented, though they ſuffer much: yet finally hee giueth them the perfection of al bleſſedneſſe, that is to ſay, the kingdome of heauen. And albeeit that nothing doeth proſper nor increaſe, nor growe without the bleſſing of God: yet is it not to ſay, that they which haue greate aboundance of worldly riches, are bleſſed of God. For it is ſayde, Wo be to you, yee riche, for you haue your

Eze.18.

Luke.6.22.

Luke.6.24.

conſolation heere. They vſurpe the things that are bleſſed of God for the vſe of the faithful, & yet are they curſed of God, and are neuer the better for al their wealth. For what ſhal it profit a man, though he ſhoulde winne the whole worlde, if he looſe his owne ſoule? The thirde reaſon is: *Math. 16.*

With the skorneful he skorneth, &c. It ſeemeth wel vnto the enuious frowarde, and wicked that they ſhal finiſhe their enterpriſe, & enioy their deſires: & becauſe they eſteeme that there is none other felicitie then that which they ſee with their eyes, they make no conſcience to abounde in al iniquitie: and what exhortations ſoeuer they heare in the name of God, yet make they no account thereof. And this is the cauſe why the ſcripture calleth them ſkorners: but as they ſkorne, ſo alſo God mocketh them. For aſmuch as naturally wee bee al ſkorners, wee ought to tremble at this threatning, and not to harden our ſelues againſt it, but humbly to confeſſe our faultes, and to aſke pardon: and in ſteede to bee ſkorned as wee deſerue, wee ſhal pleaſe God: as Solomon doeth promiſe vs, ſaying, *but he giueth grace vnto the humble.* S. Peter exhorteth vs to learne this humilitie, Decke your ſelues inwardly with lowlineſſe of minde: for GOD reſiſteth the proude, and giueth grace vnto the humble. Hereby wee do learne that the ſkorners and proude perſons are al of one order: and whoſoeuer ſkorneth, is proude. The contraritie of humbleneſſe doeth ſhewe it: likewiſe doeth the threatening made by Solomon and by Saint Peter. Of theſe three reaſons Solomon maketh a concluſion for the comforte of the faythful and confuſion of the wicked, ſaying: *Prou. 1. 26.* *1. Pet. 5. 5.*

35 *The wiſe ſhal inherite glory: but fooles diſhoner, though they be exalted.*

This concluſion agreeth very wel with the former reaſons: for ſith that God reuealeth his ſecretes vnto the righteours, giuing them grace to follow his commandementes, and to be aſſured of his mercy, and that he bleſſeth the righteous, giuing them ynough and contentation, & alſo helpeth and receiueth vnto himſelfe the humble which are forſaken of the worlde, and counted as filth, it

foloweth

ſoloweth right wel that the wiſe which are wel learned in the ſchoole houſe of God, whome before he hath called right, iuſt, & humble, ſhalbe honoured for euer, as Solomon doeth ſignifie, ſaying, *they ſhal inherite honour*. For ſith they bee contemned and ſlandered in the worlde, and yet do inherite honour, it ſoloweth that it commeth from God who hath the power to vphold them, and indeed wil defende them: for he is faythful and conſtant, and changeth not, but bringeth that to perfection which hee hath begun. The giftes and vocation of God are without repentance. Rom.11.29. And foraſmuch as the wiſe ſhal inherite honour, and yet haue no certaine abiding place in this world, wee muſt vnderſtand that the ful poſſeſsion of this honour, is in the kingdome of heauen in euerlaſting life. Therefore to obteine this honour, let vs giue diligent eare vnto wiſedome, wherby we may walke the right waies Rom.2.7. with the iuſt and humble. Let vs not enuie the fooliſhe, who the more they are giuen vnto abhominable things before God & his faithful, doe the more commend themſelues, and would be had in admiration, & feare. This is it that Solomon ſignifieth ſaying, *but fooles diſhonour, though they bee exalted*: for they delight in their enuiouſnes, frowardneſſe, wickedneſſe, and ſkorning, for the which they are ſet at naught both before God and his elect. Heereby we may vnderſtande that there are many fooles in the worlde, yea euen where the Goſpel is preached.

The

The fourth Chapter.

1 HEare, O ye children, the inſtruction of a father, & giue eare to learne vnderſtanding.

2 For I do giue you a good doctrine: therefore forſake yee not my lawe.

Chap. 1.8 & .2.1. & .3.1

SOlomon yeeldeth himſelfe vnto our rudenes, as a father vnto the weakeneſſe, ſlownes, and forgetfulnes of his childe. He repeateth againe the ſelfe ſame exhortations that hee hath made vs heeretofore. And in ſteede that wee well deſerue to bee ſharply reprooued; hee calleth vs children: and in place for to threaten vs as a iudge, hee calleth vs to heare the inſtruction of the Father of ſpirits, to the ende that wee being made attentiue hearers thereof, might bee deliuered from ignorance, and ſhould knowe what wee ought to learne, and what is profitable for the health of our ſoules: hee giues vs the reaſon for the which wee ſhoulde be moued to heare, and become diligent.

For I doe giue you, &c. By this reaſon hee woulde haue vs to knowe that al doctrine which doeth turne vs from the lawe of GOD, is nought, vnprofitable and hurtful: and therefore wee ſhoulde not deſire to bee inſtructed in any other doctrine then the ſame that our heauenly Father giueth vs, the which onely is good as hee alone is good. This doctrine is none other thing then his lawe, the which in no wiſe ought to bee deſpiſed, as hee ſheweth vs, when hee concludeth, *therefore forſake yee not my lawe.* Hee ſpeaketh heere, in the name and in the autoritie of

God, whoſe ſeruant hee was, and committed to inſtruct his people: and therfore he affirmeth that his doctrine is good, and that it is the lawe of God: and therfore alſo are bounde to heare his inſtruction, and to learne the knowledge that hee teacheth vs. Heerein he ſheweth vnto the miniſters, what they ought to bring vnto the people: that is to ſay, the pure woorde of God inſpired from God by the ſcripture, the which is profitable to teache, &c. 2.Tim.3.16 It is the inſtruction of our father, it is the learning whereunto al men ought to apply their mindes, to obteine the true knowledge. It is the doctrine which is profitable & neceſſary for vs, it is the lawe of God, which we ſhould neuer forſake, but continually to be exerciſed therein. In the which alſo he teacheth the people how to behaue themſelues. Firſt of al, that they ſhould heare for to be inſtructed, not by men, but by our heauẽly father, who is the only teacher: for mẽ which ſpeake, are but his organes & inſtruments. Secõdly, that they ought to be attẽtiue & giue diligent heed, that they may be deliuered out of the dũgeon of ignorance, to receiue light for to learne the true knowledge. Thirdly, that they ſhoulde confeſſe the goodnes and faithfulnes of God, who wil not ſuffer them to be deceiued with fables and lyes, with vaine and fruteles doctrines: but doeth offer and ſet before them, the wholeſome doctrine of his lawe, of his Prophetes, and of his Goſpel: the which as hee freely vouchſafeth to giue vs, ſo ſhoulde we againe willingly receiue the ſame with faith and obedience. Fourthly, that they ſhoulde not be negligent to doe wel as the lawe commandeth. And in this manner wee ſhoulde apply our hartes and bodies vnto the ſeruice of our God, as hee requireth: and ſo wee ſhal not receiue the preaching of the woorde of GOD in vaine, nor to our condemnation, as they that doe come to heare but for order and faſhion ſake, &c. And to the end that none ſhould doute of his doctrine, and that they ſhoulde not bee grieued as with an heauie and hard burthen to beare, he ſheweth of whome he learned it, and at what age.

3 *For I was my fathers Sonne, tender and deere in the ſight of my mother.*

4 *When hee taught mee, and ſaide vnto me, let thine hart holde faſt my wordes: keepe my commandementes, and thou ſhalt liue.*

King Dauid the Prophet, was the father of Solomon, who was indued with the holie Ghoſt, wherby he did, ſaid, and taught ſuch things as were acceptable before God, and profitable for his familie, & for al the people that were committed vnto his charge. Now albeit that Dauid had many children, yet Solomon ſpeaketh of himſelf as if he had beene the only ſonne of Dauid: for hee ſaieth not, we were many children of one father: but he ſaith, *I was my fathers ſonne*. It may be ſaid that it is, becauſe that Dauid ſhewed greater ſignes of loue vnto Solomō, then vnto his other childrē, & exalted him aboue the reſt, making him King in his place. His mothers name was Berſabee, by whome he remained the only ſonne of his father: for he that was borne in adulterie, was dead: and the ſcripture maketh no mention that ſhee had any afterwardes: and whiles his father and mother liued, hee was yet *tender*, and was not yet come vnto mans age. Againe, alſo it may bee ſaide that Solomon was tender and deere, and his mothers only ſonne, becauſe ſhe loued him tenderly and with a ſingular loue, as ſhee ſheweth. But by the firſt expoſition wee learne that Solomon whiles he was tender and yong, did not runne from his father and mother, to worke wickednes and to giue himſelfe vnto follie, and vanitie, as the youth at theſe daies, but was readie at hand to obey them, as he declareth it, when hee ſaith, that hee was *his fathers ſonne, & tender & deere before his mother*. For when hee thus ſpeaketh, he giueth to vnderſtande that his father & mother were wel pleaſed with him, and alſo endeuoured to pleaſe them. Otherwiſe hee coulde not haue truly reioyced that hee was his fathers ſonne, &c. For hee that trulie confeſſeth his parents, hee loueth their preſence for to obey and honour them. We learne, I ſay, that the fathers and mothers ought to be careful and diligent ſo to gouerne their children, that they ſhould not be gadders abrode, but be readie to come before them, ſo often as need ſhal require, to do al kinde of dueties, and not to runne abroade after fooliſhnes and vanitie.

1. *Chro.* 13. 5. & 29. 1.

vanitie. We learne alſo that wee ſhould not fly from the preſence of G O D, our only father, to turne away from his woorde, the which teacheth vs to giue vnto him al honour and obedience, & aſſure our ſelues that we doe pleaſe him. Contrarily, wee decline from his inſtruction and forſake his lawe: wherein wee ſhewe our ſelues ſtrangers and baſtards, and cannot truly reioyce that we are of his houſhold and his children. But not to flye the preſence of our father, it behoueth vs to be in the company of our mother the Church, that we do often reſort vnto the holy aſſemblies, wherein the Goſpel is preached vnto vs, by the which we all beholde as in a mirrour the glorie of the Lord with open face. Solomon being yet tender, and not running from the preſence of his *2,Cor 3, 18.* father and his mother, but being obedient vnto them, was taught by his father in the worde of the Lord, the which he himſelf witneſſeth, ſaying,

4 *When he taught me, &c.* The youthes which make no account of inſtruction, but doe hate correction and admonition, and alſo giering and ſkorning all diſcipline and religion, ſaying they are too yong to becom wiſe, cãnot, I ſay, truly boaſt that they haue bin inſtructed of their fathers, as doeth Solomon: for none can be taught, except he become willing to learne, and cannot by their example induce others to heare good inſtruction, as doeth Solomon, when he ſaith that his father hath taught him: as though he did ſay, when I exhorte you to heare the inſtruction of your father, I lay no more vpon you then I my ſelfe haue borne whiles I was yet yong. Nowe Dauid for to haue his ſonne Solomon wel taught, committed him into the handes of Nathan the Prophet. The leſſon that Dauid giueth to his ſonne is, that hee ſaieth vnto him, *Let thine harte holde faſt my woordes, keepe my commandements.* *2,Sam.12.25.* Heere we learne that wee ought in no wiſe to doute of the inſtruction & doctrine of Solomon, & we may iudge that he doth not teache vs any other thing then the ſame that he had learned of his father, who was a Prophet: and alſo (as hath beene ſaid before) he ſet him to ſchoole with the Prophet Nathan. For albeit that Dauid calleth the doctrine & inſtruction which hee giueth to his ſon, his words & cõmãdemẽts, yet it is not to ſay, they

are the commaundementes and woordes of any other but of GOD. But it is the phraſe of the ſcripture, that it attributeth vnto the Doctours that which they teache, becauſe they are the Organes and inſtrumentes of GOD, by whome hee communicateth his woorde vnto vs, and giueth vs his commandementes. Wee ſee that GOD ſaieth to Moſes, Commande the children of Iſrael: and againe, that Moſes commaundeth the people to keepe his woordes: and alſo God reprooueth his people, for that they woulde not heare the woordes of his Prophets, &c. Wee learne alſo that it belongeth to fathers and mothers, to gouernours and paſtours of the Church to command, and that they ought to be obeyed when they command in the name of God and by his word. And that the wordes of Dauid and his commaundements come not from him, but from God, Solomon doth declare, when he ſaith that his father addeth vnto his commandementes, *and thou ſhalt liue:* the which is a promiſe wherby we do not obteine the reward for obeying the commandementes of men, but thoſe of God, &c. Moreouer, let vs note that if wee wil liue, wee muſt giue our hartes wholy vnto the wordes which are declared vnto vs in the name of God, and outwardly to doe as they commande vs.

5 *Get wiſedome: get vnderſtanding: forget not neither decline from the wordes of my mouth.*

6 *Forſake her not, and ſhe ſhal keepe thee, loue her, & ſhee ſhal preſerue thee.*

He ſheweth vs louingly that he would not haue vs to languiſh & pine away through need and want, or be hurt, but would haue vs take and make our profit: ſo that wee ſhoulde bee more riche *Prou.3.13.* then the worldlings which abounde in al wordly wealth: for bleſſed is the man that findeth wiſedome, and the man that getteth vnderſtanding: and therfore this poſſeſsion cannot bee gotten by any thing of this worlde, howe precious ſoeuer it is, but commeth by free gift. For the Lord giueth wiſdome, out of his mouth *Pro.2.6.* cometh knowledge and vnderſtanding. And although it is giuen, yet the negligent and ſlouthful do not poſſeſſe her, but thoſe that watche and ſeeke her with al diligence. *For if thou calleſt after knowledge, & crieſt for vnderſtanding*, &c. This care & diligēce is heere briefly noted, when Solomon ſaieth, *Forget not, &c.* Therefore if wee woulde gladly get and poſſeſſe wiſedome and vnderſtanding, wee muſt haue the woorde of GOD printed in our hartes, not turning our ſelues away from the ſermons which are made vnto vs out of the ſame by the miniſters and Paſtours which are as the mouth of God, when they doe faithfully exerciſe their office. In this ſorte wee ſhal get wiſedome and vnderſtanding without any exchange or coſt, and without our deſertes, trauaile and diligence. For this getting and poſſeſſing is not like vnto the earthly and temporal poſſeſſions, the which requireth exchange, or ſeruice, or paine. Wherefore it may ſeeme that Solomon hath ſpoken vnproperly, when hee exhorteth vs to get wiſedome, the which wee muſt receiue from the onely goodneſſe and free gift of God: and that hee ought rather to haue exhorted vs to aſke it of God. But when hee ſpeaketh thus vnproperly againſt the vſe and cuſtome of the worlde, hee ſpeaketh the propre ſpeeche of the ſpirite of GOD who giueth teſtimony to the faithful that the goodnes of their Father is ſo great, that therby he imputeth for getting & poſſeſsing, that which he freely giueth of his meere liberalitie, & would that we ſhould poſſeſſe it vppon that title: prouided that wee receiue the ſame with thankes giuing, and alſo that wee take and receiue the gift of GOD with ſuch reuerence and eſtimation, that wee neuer let it ſlippe, but diligently and carefully, keepe it, as a precious thing, of greate value, and very neceſſary for our preſeruation and ſauegarde. Solomon ſo vnderſtoode it, as hee wel ſheweth by the admonition folowing, ſaying. Pro. 2. 3.

6 *Forſake her not, &c.* This exhortation ought to bee highly eſteemed of vs, when not onely thereby wee are aduertiſed not to bee ſo fooliſhe, as to let wiſedome eſcape, when the Lorde ſetteth before vs the getting thereof: but alſo that it is a promiſe of warrantie and ſauegarde, which is this, that by the poſſeſsion and reteyning of wiſedome, wee ſhoulde haue no hinderance, but ſhalbe preſerued from al hurte: as hath beene expounded, *When wiſedome*, &c. Wherein we may learne Prou. 2. 10.

that this getting ought to be highly deſired of vs aboue al worldly gettings, that coſteth much, and are not alwayes ſure, ſith this ſame commeth freely, and remaineth ſure: for it is giuen by ſuch a Lord as is able to mainteine his gift, and alſo both wil and doeth. We may alſo vnderſtand that the poſſeſsion thereof ought not to be deſpiſed, but ſhoulde by al meanes poſsible bee mainteined & defended. For if wee labour to keepe the poſſeſsion of earthly goods, for the which ſome are oftentimes in danger of their perſons, much more by reaſon wee may not let wiſedome goe, but with great loue and affection keepe poſſeſsion: ſeeing that we are ſo farre from danger for poſſeſsing thereof, that rather it keepeth and preſerueth vs from al euilles. For albeeit that they which are godly wiſe, doe ſuffer many miſeries and aduerſities, both ſpiritual and corporal: yet doe they neuer periſh thereby, but doe ouercome through the wiſedome that GOD giueth them. Though their fleſh, the deuil and the worlde doe tempt and aſſault them, yet are they not caried away by temptation: for God is faythful, who wil not ſuffer them to bee tempted aboue their ſtrength. Though the worlde, the wicked and infidels doe perſecute them, yet are they not ouercome: for they feare not them that can kil the body, knowing that one hayre of their head ſhal not periſhe, In which dooing they mainteine and poſſeſſe their life by their patience. Though pouertie or ſicknes doe pinche them, yet are they not diſcouraged, neither care one whit, knowing that God feedeth the birdes of heauen. They are contented with their dayly bread, the which neuer faileth, what ſcarcitie ſoeuer they abide: & albeeit that through ſicknes they looſe their taſte and ſtomacke, after the feeling of the fleſhe, yet the Lorde who hath commanded them to aſke, Giue vs this day our dayly bread, wil not forſake them. Let your conuerſation be without couetouſnes, and be content with thoſe things that ye haue, I wil not faile thee, neither forſake thee.

1.Cor.10.13.

Luk.21.19.

Mat.6.26.

Pſal.34.21.
& 37.17.
Heb.13.5.

7 *Wiſedome is the beginning: get wiſedom therfore: & aboue al thy poſſeſſion, get vnderſtanding.*

8 *Exalt her, and ſhe ſhal exalt thee: ſhe ſhal bring thee to honour, if thou embrace her.*

9 *She*

9 *Shee ſhal giue a comely ornament vnto thy head, yea, ſhee ſhal giue thee a Crowne of glorie.*

Although we confeſſe that wiſedome is a moſt excellent acquiſition or getting, the which wee ought ſo muche to loue, that wee ſhould neuer forſake her; and that we confeſſe, it is right & good for our profite, that Solomon calleth vs vnto this getting; yet doe we not deſire it, neither aſpire after it, as wee ought, but doe ſet it at naught, by preferring the wiſedome of this world, and the luſts of the fleſhe before it: the which is a turning of our backe vnto God, when wee make no account of his Word, but labour to fill our houſes with riches, howe ſo euer they be gotten, ſo that wee may obteine our purpoſe: and doe perſuade men to beleeue that when we haue wel filled our houſes, and haue gotten great gaines and riches, that wee ſhal come time enough at laſt for to learne wiſedome, and to feare and worſhip God: and which worſt is, we perſuade our ſelues that it is not needfull to trouble our brain about marking what is preached, for to refourme our liues after that which is taught vs: but that it is enough to giue a good gaſpe when wee dye. Beholde how the loue of our fleſhe doeth drawe vs away, and the wiſedome of this worlde deceiueth vs. To the which abuſe Solomon willing to giue a remedie, and to other abuſes alſo, doeth teach vs that in all thinges wee muſt begin by wiſdom, & that for this cauſe he hath called vs, and ſtil preſently calleth to get wiſedome, and woulde haue vs with all our heartes to folowe this gaines, and that we ſhould prefer it before al worldly gettings: ſo that the ſame ſhould pleaſe vs, and we alſo contented therewith: for truely, whatſoeuer is precious in the iudgement of the world, and al whatſoeuer men doe delight in, is nothing in compariſon of this wiſedome and knowledge. But for al Solomons exhortation, and for al the reaſon that may be alledged, yet men are fleſh, & doe eſteeme the things that the fleſh deſireth. A ſenſual man loueth to be honoured, and had in eſtimation: and becauſe he ſeeth that rich men are honored, & commended & prayſed, & that euery man deſireth to feaſt them, he imputeth the ſame vnto the riches: & therfore, to attaine vnto honor, & to be welcomed of the world, he ſtudieth to get temporal & earthly goods.

that this getting ought to be highly deſired of vs aboue al worldly gettings, that coſteth much, and are not alwayes ſure, ſith this ſame commeth freely, and remaineth ſure: for it is giuen by ſuch a Lord as is able to mainteine his gift, and alſo both wil and doeth. We may alſo vnderſtand that the poſſeſsion thereof ought not to be deſpiſed, but ſhoulde by al meanes poſsible bee mainteined & defended. For if wee labour to keepe the poſſeſsion of earthly goods, for the which ſome are oftentimes in danger of their perſons, much more by reaſon wee may not let wiſedome goe, but with great loue and affection keepe poſſeſsion: ſeeing that we are ſo farre from danger for poſſeſsing thereof, that rather it keepeth and preſerueth vs from al euilles. For albeeit that they which are godly wiſe, doe ſuffer many miſeries and aduerſities, both ſpiritual and corporal: yet doe they neuer periſh thereby, but doe ouercome through the wiſedome that GOD giueth them. Though their fleſh, the deuil and the worlde doe tempt and aſſault them, yet are they not caried away by temptation: for God is faythful, who wil not ſuffer them to bee tempted aboue their ſtrength. Though the worlde, the wicked and infidels doe perſecute them, yet are they not ouercome: for they feare not them that can kil the body, knowing that one hayre of their head ſhal not periſhe. In which dooing they mainteine and poſſeſſe their life by their patience. Though pouertie or ſicknes doe pinche them, yet are they not diſcouraged, neither care one whit, knowing that God feedeth the birdes of heauen. They are contented with their dayly bread, the which neuer faileth, what ſcarcitie ſoeuer they abide: & albeeit that through ſicknes they looſe their taſte and ſtomacke, after the feeling of the fleſhe, yet the Lorde who hath commanded them to aſke, Giue vs this day our dayly bread, wil not forſake them. Let your conuerſation be without couetouſnes, and be content with thoſe things that ye haue, I wil not faile thee, neither forſake thee.

1.Cor.10.13.

Luk.21.19.

Mat.6.26.

Pſal.34.21.
& 37.17.
Heb.13.5.

7 *Wiſedome is the beginning: get wiſedom therfore: & aboue al thy poſſeſsion, get vnderſtanding.*

8 *Exalt her, and ſhe ſhal exalt thee: ſhe ſhal bring thee to honour, if thou embrace her.*

9 *Shee ſhal giue a comely ornament vnto thy head, yea, ſhee ſhal giue thee a Crowne of glorie.*

Although we confeſſe that wiſedome is a moſt excellent acquiſition or getting, the which wee ought ſo muche to loue, that wee ſhould neuer forſake her; and that we confeſſe, it is right & good for our profite, that Solomon calleth vs vnto this getting; yet doe we not deſire it, neither aſpire after it, as wee ought, but doe ſet it at naught, by preferring the wiſedome of this world, and the luſts of the fleſhe before it: the which is a turning of our backe vnto God, when wee make no account of his Word, but labour to fill our houſes with riches, howe ſo euer they be gotten, ſo that wee may obteine our purpoſe: and doe perſuade men to beleeue that when we haue wel filled our houſes, and haue gotten great gaines and riches, that wee ſhal come time enough at laſt for to learne wiſedome, and to feare and worſhip God: and which worſt is, we perſuade our ſelues that it is not needfull to trouble our brain about marking what is preached, for to refourme our liues after that which is taught vs: but that it is enough to giue a good gaſpe when wee dye. Beholde how the loue of our fleſhe doeth drawe vs away, and the wiſedome of this worlde deceiueth vs. To the which abuſe Solomon willing to giue a remedie, and to other abuſes alſo, doeth teach vs that in all thinges wee muſt begin by wiſdom, & that for this cauſe he hath called vs, and ſtil preſently calleth to get wiſedome, and woulde haue vs with all our heartes to folowe this gaines, and that we ſhould prefer it before al worldly gettings: ſo that the ſame ſhould pleaſe vs, and we alſo contented therewith: for truely, whatſoeuer is precious in the iudgement of the world, and al whatſoeuer men doe delight in, is nothing in compariſon of this wiſedome and knowledge. But for al Solomons exhortation, and for al the reaſon that may be alledged, yet men are fleſh, & doe eſteeme the things that the fleſh deſireth. A ſenſual man loueth to be honoured, and had in eſtimation: and becauſe he ſeeth that rich men are honored, & commended & prayſed, & that euery man deſireth to feaſt them, he imputeth the ſame vnto the riches: & therfore, to attaine vnto honor, & to be welcomed of the world, he ſtudieth to get temporal & earthly goods.

Solomon would not haue vs remaine in this errour, wherewith wee are naturally infected : and therefore, hee teacheth vs by what meanes wee may come vnto honour : when he ſayeth,

Pro 3.19.

8 *Exalt her,&c.* Therefore if we wil come to honour,we muſt exalt and embrace Wiſedome.But it wilbe ſaid , Foraſmuch as the Lorde by Wiſdome hath layde the foundation of the earth, and hath ſtabliſhed the heauens through vnderſtanding : that it ſoloweth, that Wiſedome is exalted enough. Wherefore it might ſeeme,that in vaine Solomon doth exhort vs to exalt and embrace it, and that it is paſt our reache to doe it. I anſwere,Euen as when we pray that Gods name may be ſanctified, wee doe not meane, that the glorie of God can either encreaſe, or decreaſe of it ſelfe: but wee aske,that his glorie ſhoulde be manifeſted as it ought, & whatſoeuer God doeth, that al his workes may appeare glorious, as they are : ſo that on all ſides he may be glorified.Euen ſo,when Solomon woulde haue vs to exalt and magnifie Wiſedome, hee meaneth not that wee can giue her greater honour, and place her in higher degree then ſhee is in,of her ſelfe : but his deſire is, that wee ſhoulde haue her in good eſtimation, and that wee ſhoulde make great account of her, and that ſo muche as in vs lyeth,ſhe ſhoulde bee exalted, praiſed,and magnified of all perſons,as it behooueth. Alſo when hee woulde haue vs to embrace it, hee meaneth not that we can receiue, hold and keepe it duely as we ought to doe: but that wee ſhoulde ſo ſet our affection on her, that we ſhoulde neuer let her eſcape, and that we ſhoulde not let it ſlippe out of our heartes,but rather that through the great loue that we ought to beare vnto this Wiſedome, we ſhould ſtirre vp others to deſire and to loue her. Wee may vnderſtand that this is the meaning of Solomon by his exhortation. For when after his admonitions hee exhorteth vs to exalt and embrace his Wiſdome it, is as muche as if hee did ſay, If thou getteſt Wiſedome, thou doeſt exalt and magnifie her,and ſheweſt thy ſelf to beare a good minde vnto her, and doeſt embrace her. This is that, which Solomon ment by this exhortation,*Exalt her,&c.*Whom we ſhal not need to obey for naught, but ſhalbe wel rewarded : for as hee doeth promiſe vs, ſhee will alſo exalt and glorifie vs. But Solomon

not content with this declaration, addeth thereto an other, ſaying,

9 *Shee ſhal giue,&c.* Solomon doeth heere declare howe
Wiſedome doeth exalt them which magnifie her, and howe ſhee
glorifieth them which embrace her: the which he doth by a ſimilitude
taken of the doings of Kings and great Princes, which doe
exalte them to honour and glorie, which doe honour them, ſeeking
the profite and preſeruation of their perſons and kingdomes:
As Pharao tooke the ring from of his finger, and put the ſame on *Gen. 41.42.*
Ioſephes hande: And Mardocheus departed from the King in royall *Heſt.8.15.*
apparel of blewe, and white, and with a great Crowne of gold,
&c: or els the ſimilitude is taken of the reward that is giuen vnto *2.Sam.5.8.*
them which fight and runne at tilte. For he that fighteth and runneth *1.Cor.9.24.*
beſt, getteth the Crowne. How ſo euer it is taken, this declaration *2.Tim.2.5.*
hath two partes, whereof the ſeconde doeth expounde the
firſt: for the increaſe of grace, is a Crowne of glorie, the which is
giuen vnto the wiſe of this life, after two ſortes. For firſt of all,
they are prayſed and honoured ſo of God, that hee cauſeth the
worlde to wonder at them: albeit that the fooliſhe and ſcorners
doe perſecute and refuſe them, but yet againſt their conſcience,
whereby they are conuinced that they doe naughtily. Secondly,
by Fayth and hope, they haue eternall life, which is the Crowne
of glorie, which in the ende they ſhal wholly and fully poſſeſſe,
wherevpon they may ſay, A Crowne of righteouſnes is kepte for *2.Tim.4.8.*
mee, &c. The perſecutions of this worlde ſhal not depriue vs of
this Crowne: but contrarily, Bleſſed is the man that abideth
temptation: for when hee hath beene tried, hee ſhall receiue the *Iam.1.12.*
Crowne of life.

10 *Heare my Sonne, and receiue my wordes, & the yeeres of thy life ſhalbe many.*

Solomon doeth often repeate vnto vs one leſſon, as they can
tell that heare or reade his doctrine: and this is to helpe the ignorance
of thoſe which haue a good wil to learne and to become
obedient. For becauſe of the corruption of our fleſhe, we are verie *Rom.8.7.*
dull to receiue and retaine good doctrine; and the affection thereof,
which is enimitie againſt God, prouoketh vs to rebellion:

for it is not ſubiect vnto the lawe of GOD, neither can bee. Vnto the which fleſhe wee muſt not conſent, except wee wil bee vnexcuſable. For as the repetitions of al one doctrine, ſerue for the eaſe of them which become willing to learne, ſo alſo they ſerue to make the careleſſe and rebels vnexcuſable. And albeit that the Word is not directed, but vnto the children of God: yet it ceaſeth not to ſound in the eares of ſtrangers which are mingled with the houſhold of God: but becauſe they heare it with contempt, as they declare by not receiuing the ſame with fayth and obedience: for this cauſe it ſerueth vnto their condemnation of death: Contrarily, vnto them that receiue it, to them ſhee is as life. Solomon doeth ſo affirme, when hee ſayeth to his Sonne, that his wordes ſhal increaſe the yeares of his life. If then wee deſire long life, let vs yeelde our ſelues willingly to learne, and diligently to heare the preaching of the Word: let vs ſubmit our ſelues thervnto with true obedience, labouring to perfourme that which it commaundeth vs by reuerence that we beare vnto God, who is our Father, and through feare that wee haue to diſobey him. In this ſort our yeares ſhalbe prolonged: not that we can liue in this worlde beyonde the terme that God hath ordeined from euerlaſting: but howe ſhort ſo euer our life is, it ſhal be ſo long as is expedient for the ſaluation of our ſoules: as alſo wee will content our ſelues therewith, knowing that by temporal death, our yeares are not ſhortened, but that wee ſhal enter into the true length of life, for the ſame ſhal be without ende. Wee ſhewe right wel that wee beleeue not Solomon, or that wee make no great accounte of life. There are not many which giue eare vnto the Worde of life, & yet leſſe that receiue it. In ſo doing, we declare vs to be foliſh, and that we make no count to come vnto Wiſedome, wherevnto the wiſeman laboureth to bring vs by his wordes, as he ſheweth, ſaying,

11 *I haue taught thee in the way of VViſdome, and ledde thee in the pathes of righteouſnes:*

12 *VVhen thou goeſt, thy gate ſhal not be ſtraight, & whē thou runneſt, thou ſhalt not fall.*

13 *Take hold of inſtruction, and leaue her not: keepe her, for ſhee is thy life.*

When Solomon declareth that by his wordes he leadeth men to Wiſedome, and that hee guideth them the right way vnto life, then he reprooueth thoſe of foliſhneſſe, & condemneth them vnto death, which wil not heare & receiue his words: and therewith he ſheweth what is the office of fathers vnto their children: that is, they ſhould not mainteine them in vaine fooliſh thinges: but in al Wiſdome, that they may ſay with Solomon, *I haue taught thee, &c.* Likewiſe the dutie of children, is, to be willing to learne, and to folow the Wiſedome and righteouſnes that their Fathers, Superiours, and Teachers ſhal teach them by the Worde of God. But as it is verie harde to finde many Parents which doe teache wiſedome and righteouſnes, (for the moſt parte careth not what becomes of their children, ſo that they ſpende not their goods) ſo alſo the greateſt parte of the worlde which are the youth, are the worſt ruled, in ſuch wiſe that they care not what they doe, ſo that they may liue at eaſe. And therfore, albeit that we haue the Word of God daily preached vnto vs, the which is the way of wiſdome and righteouſnes, yet is it verie hard to perſuade many that they are rebels againſt the Word, and that the way hath beene taught them, &c. After the meaning of Solomon, which ſpeaketh vnto obedient children: for none but they doe truely receiue the way of wiſdome, and walke in the pathes of righteouſnes, That Solomon doeth direct his words vnto theſe, we may vnderſtand by the promiſe folowing, when he ſayeth,

12 *VVhen thou goeſt, &c.* This promiſe can not appertaine to the fooliſh & ſcorners, neither vnto the wicked and diſſolute: but contrarily, they are threatened with ſorow & affliction, with miſeries and calamities, with deſolation & deſtruction: but it belongeth vnto the wiſe and righteous. And foraſmuch as Solomon doeth apply it vnto them to whome hee did direct his former affirmation, ſaying, I haue taught thee, &c. It foloweth right wel, that he ſpeake not vnto the fooliſhe & diſobedient, but to thoſe which through loue of wiſedome & righteouſnes, doe heare and receiue his words. If we would then be exempted from ſorow & diſtreſſe, and to be at libertie with eaſe, as Solomon doeth promiſe, ſaying, *VVhen thou goeſt, &c:* If wee would auoide deſolation and deſtructiō, and dwel ſurely and ſafely, we muſt haue al our thoughts & purpoſes, & al our ſayings & doings, (the which are our wayes & paths) to be taught by wiſdō, & gouerned by righteouſnes, &c.

Pro. 1.26. & 2.22. & 3.32. Pſal. 37.

But though that Solomon hath directed him ſelfe to the wiſe and righteous, making them this affirmation, adding thereto the promiſe: yet are we neuer ſo wiſe and wel ruled, but that wee haue neede to bee admoniſhed not to forſake the way that hath beene taught vs: neither are wee alwayes ſo aſſured of the promiſes that are made vs by the Worde of God, but that we haue neede to be exhorted and called vpon to receiue his admonitions, and not to forſake them, promiſing vs that we ſhal liue: for he ſaieth, *Take holde of inſtruction:* This verſe hath alreadie bene expounded in this ſame Chapter in the tenth verſe.

14 *Enter not into the way of the wicked, and walke not in the way of euil men.*

15 *Auoide it, and goe not by it: turne from it, and paſſe by.*

16 *For they can not ſleepe, except they haue done euil, and their ſleepe departeth, excepte they cauſe ſome to fall.*

17 *For they eate the bread of wickednes, and drinke the wine of violence.*

Pro.1.10. The waye of the wicked is to be giuen to doe hurt vnto their neighbours without cauſe, the which is a moſt wicked cuſtome and maner of doing: therefore Solomon hath exhorted vs in the 15. verſe, Walke not in the wayes with them, &c, Likewiſe one of their wayes is to loue fooliſhnes. Wherfore if we enter into their pathes, then doe we not walke in the way of Wiſedome: wherof it foloweth, that we fall into the ſtraight and diſtreſſe, and light vpon deſtruction, and ſo runne vnto death. For life, ſtandeth only in the way of Wiſedome and righteouſnes, in the which for to preſerue vs, Solomon is not ſatisfied with the aduertiſementes that he hath giuen: but againe hee doeth admoniſh vs, that in no wiſe we ſhould folow the cōditions & maners of the wicked. And for to ſhewe vs that we ſhould be verie careful to take heed from partaking with their doings, it ſufficeth him not to haue ſaid, *Enter not &c.* But further to expreſſe how muche wee ought to abhor & deteſt the maners of the wicked, & to ſhun thē, he addeth, *Auoide it, and goe not by it.* Foraſmuch as the greateſt part of the worlde conſiſteth of the wicked and vngodly, which proſper, and are happy to the ſenſe of the fleſhe: therefore the rude, ignorant, and ſimple, and vndiſcreete are tempted to follow them, and count themſelues happy, if they may come to bee accounted with them, to be partakers of their proſperitie. Solomon did ſomething touch it before, when he ſaide, *And treade not*: hee vſeth a worde that ſignifieth to bleſſe, or to thinke ones ſelfe happy: as if hee did ſay, doe not count thy ſelfe happy to walke in the wayes of the wicked: for contrarily, bleſſed is the man that hath not walked in the counſell of the wicked. For this cauſe Solomon ſtudieth earneſtly to beate into vs, & to make vs vnderſtãd in what horror & execratiõ we ought to haue the waies of the wicked: for hauing ſaide, *Enter not, & walke not*, he proceedeth yet further, and becauſe of our rudeneſſe and dulneſſe, hee gathereth together many wordes, as *Auoide, goe not, turne from it, and paſſe by.* By this heape of wordes hee ſheweth wel, that there is great danger of communicating with the wicked and vngodly, & is like as if a man would giue himſelfe into the handes of theeues. He compareth a man heere vnto a merchant that ſendeth out his ſeruant, or his ſonne laden with golde and ſiluer, to buie and ſell withall, and fearing hee ſhoulde bee ſpoyled, and robbed, and ſlaine by theeues and robbers, warneth him to auoide the ſuſpecte paſſages, & to turne out of the pathe, til he be paſt the dangerous way. But beſides this, we haue to marke, that if wee communicate with the manners and conditions of the wicked, and thinke our ſelues bleſſed to keepe them company, that then wee are loſt: & albeit that in ſuch eſtate we woulde be aduaunced, and labour to goe forward, yet do we fall backwarde, in ſteede of gooing forwarde one ſtep, and become like vnto Creafiſhes, or Seacrabbes which goe backewarde. There is no going forwarde but in wiſdome and righteouſneſſe: for in them, the yeeres of life are prolonged, the which is loſt through wickedneſſe and vngodlineſſe, and that rightly, as Solomon doeth ſhewe, alledging the reaſon wherefore wee ſhoulde auoide the way of the wicked, ſaying,

Pſal.1.1.

16 *For they cannot ſleepe.* Heereby he ſheweth the great de-

ſire that the wicked haue to hurt their neighbours, and too bring them hinderance, when he ſaith, that they cannot ſleepe before they haue executed their diſpleaſure: and therewith hee ſheweth, that looke wherein they moſt delight, that is, to doe euill, euen thereby are they moſt tormented, ſeeing they looſe their ſleepe, which is one of the chiefeſt partes of the eaſe of this life: If thou ſleepeſt, thou ſhalt not bee afraide. It is then vpon good cauſe that Solomon doth admoniſh vs to auoide the way of the wicked. For ſith they are depriued of this gift of this ſleepe, that God giueth to the wiſe and righteous, and whereby this life is mainteined; it followeth that they cannot remaine long in this worlde, whereof alſo they are vnworthie: and if they be not worthie of it, ſo much the leſſe are they worthie of eternall life. As then they depriue themſelues of ſleepe through vehement deſire that they haue to do euill, the which they neuer obteine: ſo alſo they cannot be partakers of eternall reſt, but are ſent downe deepe into darkeneſſe, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. If then wee communicate with them, after we haue been in diſtreſſe, wee ſhall fal into deſtruction. Wherfore we muſt take heede from hurting of our neighbors, and to worke their deſtruction, & we ſhal be preſerued from damnation: after this reaſon, hee giueth vs yet another why we ought to ſhunne the way of the wicked, ſaying:

Pro.2.14

Pro.3.24

17 *For they eate the bread, &c.* Foraſmuch as there is none but would be counted wiſe and righteous, therefore to obteine this reputatiõ truely, we muſt abſtaine frõ al iniurie & violence, and to doe wrong to no perſon: the which the wicked in no wiſe doe: but labouring to liue at eaſe, they rauiſh the goodes of their neighbours, by vnlawfull meanes, by lawing, and ſubtiltie, by force and violence, and thus they eate the bread of wickedneſſe, wherevpon their deſtruction followeth. Wherefore they ſhal eate of the fruite of their waies, &c. It is thẽ vpon good cauſe that Solomon hath exhorted vs to eſchew their way. It may alſo be ſaid that he ſheweth by this reaſon, how the wicked doe not ſleepe, except they haue wrought ſome euil firſt. For euen as it is accuſtomed by men to take their meate before ſleepe, euen ſo it followeth (ſeing they feede themſelues with wickedneſſe and violence, ſeeing they delight to doe wrong to their neighbours and to ſpoile

Pro.1.31

them, that doe not ſleepe, before they haue doone euill by ouerthrowing and deſtroying their neighbours. Furthermore by this reaſon we may learne to flee farre from the company of theſe wicked ones, and greatly to feare communicating with them in their meates and drinkes. For as the body is partaker of the nature of meates it receiueth, euen ſo, if we communicate with the meates and drinkes of wickedneſſe and violence, wee muſt needes become wicked and outragious, and haue our heartes and mindes corrupted, whereupon followeth death &c.

18 *But the way of the righteous ſhineth as the light, that ſhineth more and more vnto the perfect day.*

19 *The way of the wicked is as the darkeneſſe: they knowe not wherein they ſhal fall.*

Foraſmuch as heere aboue in the 14. and 15. verſes, he hath forbidden vs to enter into the path of the wicked, and that before in the 11. verſe, he hath affirmed that he hath taught vs the way of wiſedome, and then in the 12. verſe, hath promiſed vs that when we walke or runne in the way of wiſedome, that we ſhall not bee ſhut vp in diſtreſſe, and that wee ſhall meete with nothing which may make vs fall to bring vs to deſtruction: To the intent that we ſhoulde make no excuſe for hauing forſaken this way, becauſe we coulde neither ſee nor knowe it, he ſheweth vs that wee cannot pretend this excuſe, for that this way is as cleare as the day at high noone, and that in the ſame there is nothing darke or miſtie, that may hide the ſame from vs to bee ſeene and knowne for to be our way. Solomon doth ſo meane, when he compareth the pathes of the iuſt man, whom he calleth wiſe and righteous, vnto a *Light*. If then we knowe nothing therin, it is not becauſe that the righteous doe not ſhewe themſelues plaine enough by ſound doctrine holyneſſe of life and honeſt conuerſation (for they are the ſalt of the earth) but becauſe we are either blinde, or els by malice & enuie do cloſe the eies of our vnderſtāding, that we wil not know any thing: but which worſt is, there are ſome which ſeek by al meanes to quench this light, by blaſpheming the holy doctrine, & perſecute the profeſſors therof. But wil or nil they the path of *Matth.5.*

the righteous ſhall ſhine , and they that will walke in the ſame ſhall reioyce and proſper, the which ſhall not be taken from them, but rather ſhal go forward in growing vntil the day be riſen in her perfectiō, that is to ſay, til they haue perfect ioy, & ful bleſſednes in the kingdom of heauē. In this world this ioy and proſperitie are not perfect, but as the day groweth according too the aſcen- *1.Cor.15.* ding of the Sunne, euen ſo is it needefull that wee ſhoulde profite more and more dayly, vntill that all thinges bee fulfilled, and that God be al in all thinges. Beſides this, when the pathe of the righteous is ſaide to be ſhining, and compared vnto the light of the Sun, we ought to vnderſtand, that as a man walking in the brightneſſe of the day, ſeeth, and knoweth where hee goeth, and taketh heede from ſtumbling and falling, euen ſo alſo when we walke in *Pſal.119.* the pathes of the righteous, wherein wee are guided by the word which is a light vnto our feete, wee knowe whither we goe, and are aſſured not to periſhe. They then which are ignorant and applie not their minde to vnderſtande the worde, doe not walke in the pathes of the righteous, what faire ſhewe of holineſſe ſoeuer they pretende outwardly: neither thoſe alſo which are vncertaine whether God doth loue them, & whether hee will ſaue them or no, doe not walke in the ſame way, albeit that by ſtraightneſſe of life they bragge to bee in the ſtate of perfection, the which is not founde but in wiſedome, righteouſneſſe, and true dealing: and thus they faile in two ſortes. For firſt of all, doubting of the loue of GOD, and ſaying that they are in the ſtate of perfection, they contrary themſelues: for it rightwell followeth, that if they bee perfect, that God loueth them, ſeeing they are ſuch as he com- *Mat.5.47.* mandeth them to be, you ſhalbe therefore perfect, as your father which is in heauen is perfect. Secondarily, in that they ſet perfectiō in the obſeruing of mans traditions, and diueliſh doctrines. The thirde errour may bee added, to bee, in that they boaſt themſelues of perfection, of the which the wiſe, righteous, and faithful, haue but a ſmall beginning in this preſent life: contrarily they *Matth.6* ſhoulde haue no neede to aſke God forgiueneſſe for their ſinnes, as they are taught of the Lord to doe it. Likewiſe theſe proude perſons which boaſt them ſelues of the ſtate of perfection, as Monkes, and Nunnes, albeit that with their mouthes they ſay, Forgiue vs, yet they thinke not to haue neede of the grace & mercy of God, ſeeing they make workes of ſupererogation, as they ſay, by the which they thinke to merite for other, and chiefly for them that doe well to their Conuent and Cloyſter: And if they deſerue for other, by a ſtronger reaſon for themſelues. But as in their ſtate (which they cal of perfection) they perfectly ſerue the diuell, and make them whome they deceiue, to ſerue him: euen ſo alſo they merite to be partakers with the Diuell in eternall damnation, whereunto they drawe them which rather beleeue their lies than the ſincere truth of god. Furthermore, when the ſhining of the path of the righteous is compared vnto the light which goeth and gliſtereth, that is to ſay, vnto the light which groweth higher and higher: we may not thinke that ſo ſoone as wee haue any taſt of the Goſpel, that by and by wee are in the pathes of the righteous, and that wee muſt ſtay there, as if wee were far enough forward. But as the Sunne alwaies riſeth, till hee come vntoo his perfection: euen ſo when wee haue once gotten any ſauour of the Goſpell, we muſt labour to attaine perfection: whereunto for to bee guided, the Lord in his Church hath appointed workmen. *Ephe.4.* And foraſmuch as we muſt grow vnto perfection, & that by the miniſtery of the worde, it followeth, wee muſt not bee greeued though the Miniſters ceaſſe not by diuerſe exhortations to open the ſame vnto vs, but ſhoulde receiue the ſame right gladly, and iudge our ſelues bleſſed, for that the Sunne of righteouſneſſe doth ſo often viſite vs, and ſhine in our hearts. For if the worldlings are glad to ſee the Sunne, & do iudge themſelues happie when he warmeth the earth in due ſeaſon, to make it fruitfull: by a ſtronger reaſon, the comming of the Sonne of righteouſneſſe, which maketh vs fruitefull in all goodneſſe, righteouſnes and trueth, ought right wel to reioyce vs, inſtructing vs by the example of Dauid, *Pſal.4.6.* who ſaith, But Lord, lift thou vp the light of thy countenance vpon vs.

But wee cannot bee glad at the comming of this brightneſſe, *Iohn.3.19.* becauſe wee are men, and that wee will not bee reproued though *Iohn.1.5.* wee bee neuer ſo faultie, and that our workes bee euill. The *Ephe.5.8.* light is come into the worlde, but men loued darkneſſe more than light, Nowe of our owne nature wee loue theſe darkneſſes ſo

muche

much, that we deſerue to becalled nothing but darkenes. Wherfore,
if wee would haue true ioy at the comming of this brightneſſe,
we muſt ſuppreſſe our nature, and be regenerated and renued
by the holy Ghoſt. This is it that Saint Paul commandeth,
Let vs caſt away the workes of darkeneſſe, and let vs put on the
Rom.3.12. armour of light. If wee doe thus, it may be ſaide of vs, Yee were
ſometimes darkeneſſe, but nowe are ye light in the Lorde. But
yee brethren, are not in darkeneſſe, that that day ſhould come vpon
Ephe.5.8. you as a theefe. Furthermore, ſeeing that the pathes of the
1.Theſ.5.4. righteous ſhineth, it followeth that the falſe *Nicodemitans* doe
not walke therein: for they which walke in the day, deſire not to
be hid. Much leſſe then doe the Papiſtes walke therein, and theſe
wretched intermiſtes or newters, which reiect the pure woorde,
which is the Sonne that doeth ſhewe vs this path, and doeth guid
vs therin. And ſeeing that the word is our guide, it is not enough
that it be preached vnto vs, but alſo we muſt follow it, to be directed
right thereby: as in the night, they which deſire to holde the
right way, will follow the light going before.

19 *The way of the wicked, &c.* For to ſhew & better to point
vs the path of the righteous, he ſetteth the way of the wicked in
oppoſition againſt it, & cōpareth the ſame vnto darkeneſſe, which
is contrary vnto light: whereof inſueth, that they which walke
therin, & they that follow the maners and life of the wicked, neither
ſee nor know what they doe, and haue no knowledge of wiſdome,
Luke.23.34. righteouſnes nor faithfulneſſe. Our Lord doth wel ſhew it,
ſaiyng: Father forgiue them, for they know not what they do. For
as they that know not how their buſines goeth forwarde, cannot
reioyce, but are ſorrowful and heauie, and thinke them ſelues in a
miſerable caſe: euen ſo alſo they which walk in the waies of the
wicked, haue no ſure ioy, nor ſtedfaſt proſperitie: for ſith they are
in darkneſſe, they know not where they become. And albeit that
in the ſight of the eyes, and outwarde appearance, to the ſenſe of
the fleſh, & iudgement of the worlde, the wicked are they which
haue greateſt ioy, & that laugh moſt of all, & doe moſt inioy the
pleaſures & luſts of this life, & abound in wealth & riches for the
which they are eſteemed happy: yet notwithſtāding becauſe theſe
things are of no cōtinuance, & that within a while after they feele

great troubles, & ſorowes, & that they ſee thẽſelues ouerthrowne with the great miſeries and calamities (as they are threatened with them heere aboue,) therefore we muſt not iudge their ſtate and condition to be ioyfull & proſperous : as alſo our Lord ſheweth them. But ſeeing the way of the wicked, is, the life they leade, in mannerrs and doings, the which are knowne by their fruites & workes, which are the workes of the fleſh, and are wel knowne: It might be aſked in what ſort Solomon ſaith, that *their waies are like vnto darkenes*? I anſwere, Albeit the faithful being taught by the worde of God, doe know wel what the workes of the fleſh are, wherevnto the wicked conſent and obey, following their luſtes, and that they know for to flie and abhorre them, & rebuke them, that by their reprehenſion the wicked might confeſſe their faultes (as Saint Paul hereto doth exhort vs) and haue no felowſhip with the vnfruitful workes of darkeneſſe, but euen reprooue them rather, &c: yet neuertheles they are like vnto darkeneſſe: for moſt commonly the wicked doe neuer confeſſe that they doe euil, no more then they which walke by night, knowe whether they goe out of their way or no. And yet let a man bring them light, they are ſo amazed at times, that they can not diſcerne where they be: or els, they are ſo farre out of their way, that they can not tel how to come in againe. Euen ſo, albeit the wicked are reproued by their cõſciences, or by the exhortations that are made vnto them out of the worde of God, and ſo be lightened : yet doe they not know where they are, neither can apply to take the good way.

Pro.1.26
Luke.6.
Gal.5.19.
Ephe.5.1.

Caine, Pharao, Saule, and Iudas do teſtifie it, and the wicked nowadaies doe feele it: and chiefly they to whome God hath ſent his woorde, to the end that dayly it may bedeclared vnto them, doe feele and knowe the euil they doe. But becauſe they haue conceiued hatred without cauſe againſt them that ſeeke but their ſaluation, they are blinde, and cannot get out of this darke way, but from day to day entangle thẽſelues further therin, & do run into a laberinth wherout they cãnot eſcape. Theſe people & their like thinke thẽſelues ſtrong & mighty, & they ſeeme to be wel ſtaied, and that they cannot periſhe, becauſe they are enuironned with flatterers which doe commende them, and bleſſe them, and in the meane while they knowe not howe they are deceiued, and howe in this ſorte they walke in darkeneſſe, wherethrough they goe to deſtruction, though they knowe it not: and this is the cauſe why Solomon ſaith, *That they knowe not where they fall*. This falling ſometime beginneth in this preſent life, to wit, when the wicked are ſo ſore affraide that they deſpaire, as did Caine, and Iudas, or elſe haue ſuch afflictions which torment them, and cauſe thē to acknowledge and confeſſe their wickedneſſes, for the which they will not, nor cannot repent them. And therefore, they are ſhut vp into ſuche a ſtraight, that they knowe not howe to eſcape: but more and more entangle themſelues in dangerous difficulties wherwith at laſt they are beaten downe and looſe their life without knowing what ſhalbe come of them, ſauing that they can not looke but for eternal damnation: or els they thinke it ſtands with them after this life, as with a beaſt when it is dead. Pharao, the perſecuter of the children of Iſrael, and Saul of Dauid, haue thus fallen. It happeneth alſo, that the falling is ſo ſodeine, that they perceiue it not in this life, but comming vpon them vnlooked for, it rauiſheth & violently taketh away the wicked euen in the midſt of their iollitie. The world deſtroyed by the flood hath ſo prooued it. Likewiſe did the Sodomites & Gomorrhians: & the rich glutton alſo. All theſe people are ſet foorth by the Scriptures, for examples of eternall fal to them which ſhal worke wickednes: & the faithful hearing theſe things, ought to tremble & feare, not for to diſpaire and diſtruſt the goodnes of GOD, but that with al humbleneſſe they ſhoulde confeſſe their miſerie and corruption, and that they ſhoulde promiſe themſelues nothing; but might knowe that if GOD woulde execute his wrath againſt them, as they do deſerue, they were vndone: & for that that they remaine and doe not periſh, it commeth from the working of the good wil of God. So make an ende of your owne ſaluation with feare and trembling. Nowe theſe are examples to vs, &c.

Matth. 24. *Luke*.16. 2.*Pet*.2.

Phi.6.12. 1.*Cor*.10.6.

Moreouer wee may note in the Antitheſis & oppoſition that Solomon maketh betweene the pathes of the righteous and the waies of the wicked, that albeeit the wicked doe reioyce in their wickednes, & would be ſeene, & indeed ſhewe themſelues to bee praiſed for their doings, yet neuertheles their way ceaſeth not to be like vnto darkneſſe: for they hide themſelues, inſomuch as they wil not be knowne ſuch as they bee in deede, but wil be counted men ful of honeſtie, as they bragge with open mouth, but oftentimes againſt their conſcience, which condẽneth them, frõ whence alſo oftentimes commeth their fall: For God reſiſteth the proud, and giueth grace to the humble and lowly. Contrarily, although the righteous, following the commandements of our Lorde, doe not their workes before men for to bee ſeene of them: yet notwithſtanding their pathes ceaſſeth not to bee cleare as the light: for after the commandement, their light ſhineth before men, not onely before the good, but alſo amongeſt the wicked, amongeſt whome Saint Paul woulde haue vs to liue without reproche: As S. Peter alſo, ſaying, Dearely beloued, I beſeech you, as ſtrangers & pilgrimes, abſtaine from fleſhly luſtes, &c. For though the wicked doe blame the righteous, and perſecute them as euil doers, yet can they not ſay, but that they doe againſt their owne conſcience, as they are oftentimes compelled to confeſſe it. 1 Pet.5.5. Iam.4.6. Mat.6.1. Mat. 5.16. Phi.2.15. 1.Pet.2.11

20 *My ſonne, hearken vnto my words, encline thine eare vnto my ſayings.*

21 *Let them not depart from thine eies, but keepe them in the mids of thine heart.*

22 *For they are life vnto thoſe that finde them, & health vnto all their fleſh.*

When Solomon doth continue ſpeaking ſo gently, and is not weeried with often exhorting vs one thing, and that he is not ſatisfied that we ſhould apply one part of our wittes onely vnto his exhortations, but woulde, and craueth of vs to giue our ſelues wholy with conſtancie and perſeuerance, he doeth therein teache ſuch as are miniſters of his worde, howe they ought to behaue themſelues towardes them they teache. Firſt of al, except they knowe them to be deſperate, indurate and obſtinate, mockers and ſcorners of good counſel, holy exhortations, and wholeſome corrections, perſecutours of the trueth, and of the louers thereof, they ought to ſpeake louingly, as the father doth to his ſonne. Secõdly, as though through weakenes and dulnes they had not wel vnderſtoode and borne away the former inſtructions, let them begin to preach the ſame again vnto their hearers, not twice, but thrice, yea foure times, and more oftener, if neede require: let them not waxe weary of admoniſhing one thing often. Thirdly, let them labour to vſe ſuch vehemencie, that they may not onely awake vpp their corporal eares, but alſo ſtirre vp al the ſenſes of man to vnderſtand, receiue & keepe their exhortations, for to go forward conſtantly in them, & in no wiſe to forget them. Hee alſo giueth a leſſon euen to vs al: Firſt of al, that as hee ſpeaketh amiably, ſo ſhould we alſo loue & imbrace his exhortatiōs: & as he declareth himſelf to be our father, ſaying, *My ſonne*, ſo we alſo ſhould ſhew our ſelues his children, acknowledging him to be our father, not onely generally, but alſo particularly, yea father of euery one of vs as he him ſelfe declareth, ſaying to euery one of vs, *My ſonne*. Nowe ſeeing hee hath no neede of vs, and that wee can doe nothing without him, we are very vnthankful, very blockiſh, and beaſtlike, if we doe not confeſſe him to be our father, & alſo ſhew our ſelues to be his children. For to doe this wel, we muſt giue diligent eare vnto his wordes, the which Solomon calleth his: not that hee is God, but onely his Miniſter and his inſtrument by whō he ſendeth his wordes: and therefore, inaſmuch as they come frō his mouth, he calleth them his. For throughly to vnderſtand them, he would haue vs applie wholy our eares, preparing them to heare what is ſaid vnto vs in the ſermōs, that our eies alſo ſhold be opē without turning away frō them by diſtruſt and vncertaintie, by rebellion and diſobedience, by contempt and diſdaine: but that we ſhold haue them in ſo great eſtimation, that we ſhould neuer ſuffer them to depart from vs, but that our heartes ſhould be continually armed with them, as he teacheth vs, when he ſaith,

21 *Let them not depart from thine eies.* Heereby wee learne that Solomon requireth faith and obedience of vs, and ſo, that he is both a lawgiuer and an Euangeliſt, as hath beene ſaide heere afore in the firſt Chapter. For when he calleth vs to heare & to prepare our eares, it is to the end that we ſhold do according as we ſhalbe cōmanded: It is alſo to the end that we ſhould beleeue that which ſhalbe preached vnto vs. For faith cōmeth by hearing, and hearing by the worde of God. But Solomon doth yet expreſſe this ſame more plainely vnto vs, when he addeth, *Let them not depart, &c.* For he ſpeaketh not here of the bodily eies, the which

Rom. 10.17.

ar not capable of the word, which is ſpiritual, but of the thoughts and inward mind wherewith we imbrace the law of God, to obey it, without declining from it. Likewiſe by the *Eies*, he meaneth the knowledge and intelligence, whereby we delight in the worde of God and are aſſured of his goodnes & of his loue toward vs, as he doth declare the ſame by his gracious promiſes, which are a parte of his worde. That we muſt thus vnderſtand that which hee ſaith of the eyes, it is manifeſt enough: but againe hee giueth the ſame to be vnderſtood, when he ſaith immediately after, *But keep them in the mids of thine heart*. there the eies of the body ſee nothing. The ſcripture alſo in diuers other places ſpeaketh of the eies in the ſame ſenſe. Mine eyes are euer toward the Lord. I lift vp mine eies to thee, that dwelleſt in the heauēs. The eies of the blind, ſhal ſee out of darknes. The eies of the ſeeing ſhal not be ſhut, & the eares of them that heare, ſhal hearken. Then ſhal the eies of the blind be lightened, and the eares of the deafe be opened. The light of the body is the eye. If thou diddeſt beleeue, thou ſhouldſt ſee the glory of God. And when Solomon hath beene already ſo careful to commend wiſedome vnto vs, in like ſort as he now commendeth vs his wordes: we muſt vnderſtand that by his wordes he guideth and leadeth vs vnto wiſedome, and that otherwaies we cannot attaine vnto it, and conſequently that his words are not earthly, but diuine. Furthermore, foraſmch as he calleth euery one of thē his ſonne, (not carnally, but by adoption and regeneration of the holy Ghoſt) to whom he directeth his word, we ought to be aſſured that we are the children of God, when we gladly heare the preaching of the Goſpel, and doe diligently frequent the ſame, and doe yeelde our heartes and vnderſtandings therevnto, to be guided in true obedience and aſſurance of the goodneſſe of God towardes vs, and to forſake al rebellion, and to caſt of al diſtruſt in ſoundnes of heart voide of al diſſimulatiō & hypocriſie. Beſides this, for to learn well our leſſon in that which Solomon cōtinueth and often telleth the ſame exhortatiōs, we muſt acknowledge our weaknes & ignorance, & by deſiring to bee fortified & wel inſtructed, wee may not be greeued oftē to heare one doctrine, & that the ſame admonitiōs, & reprehēſiōs, be oftē repeated vnto vs: & that we do not only prepare our eares to heare the ſermō, but that we ſubdue al our ſēſes, as Solomō teacheh vs ſaying, *Let them not depart*

Pſalm.25.15. & .4.21. & .1. 23.
Eſay.29.18. & 31.3. & .35.5.
Mat. 6.22.
Iob.11.40.

from thine eies. For albeit he ſpeaketh of the ſpiritual eies, yet whē after the cuſtome of ſpeaking, men refer the ſight vnto all the ſenſes, there is no incōuenience that by this kind of ſpeach we ſhould vnderſtand, that we muſt captiuate all our ſenſes vnto the worde.

Verſe.4.10. 13.Cap.3.2. 8.16.22. 22 *For they are life.* As Solomon doth often exhort vs one thing, ſo alſo for to encourage vs to follow his exhortations, & to confirme vs more and more in the aſſurance of Gods goodnes, he repeateth oftentimes the very ſame promiſes that hee hath made heere aboue. After the cuſtome of the worlde, that which is moſt vſed, is leaſt of al eſteemed: and alſo it is ſaid that men are weary to eate alwaies of one loafe. Wherfore it might ſeeme to be good that Solomon did not ſo often ſet foorth one promiſe, for feare it ſhould be deſpiſed. But as a very healthful ſtomack, that doth well digeſt, doth not refuſe any good meat, though his diet be not chāged, and that the ſame meate bee often giuen him: euen ſo hee alſo which hath a good hart vnto God, knowing that he hath need to be daily cōfirmed in the aſſurance of Gods goodnes, wil neuer deſpiſe one promiſe, although the ſame be often reiterated: & chiefly whē it offereth that which is to be deſired aboue al thing, bicauſe it is eſtemed of greateſt profite & laſteth longeſt. The promiſe that Solomō preſently maketh vs, is euen ſuch. For thereby he offereth life to them which hold faſt his ſayinges, that is to ſay, to them which do not depart frō the exhortatiōs that they heare: but as the ſame is offered, ſo alſo they come for to meet & receiue them in humble ſubmiſſiō & true obediēce. Now though ther were nothing but this preſent life promiſed heere, yet ought we not to deſpiſe it, but to reioyce thereat, for it is Gods gift, which hath giuē vs this mercy to be created in this world by him, & doth continue it, promiſing to mainteine vs long in this life: the which as it is miſerable, and is ſo called & eſteemed, yet it is not in that as we take the ſame from God, but becauſe we defile it by our ſins, therfore we deſerue to ſuffer much miſerie: and in deede, we ſuffer the ſame one in one ſort, & another in another. And albeit the wicked know not this, yet do they greatly reioyce of this life, & eſteeme it aboue al thinges, ſo that nothing is more precious to them then it. By a ſtronger reaſon when we know that the ſame is the gift of God, the which is not promiſed, for afterward to bring vs death:

but that this preſent life is promiſed vnto vs, for to make vs hope for the eternal life, the which wil neuer faile, for it is conteined vnder the promiſe, as it hath been expounded heretofore. When I ſay, wee haue this knowledge, this promiſe ought to bee highly eſteemed of vs, and wee ſhoulde bee very careful to followe the meanes which are ſhewed vs, for to cõſerue this life: and the rather ſeeing it coſteth vs nothing to doe it, but haue euery day the meanes freely offered vnto vs by preaching; there remaineth nothing on our ſide, ſauing that we ſhoulde ſeeke (by not departing from them) to meete and receiue them. And becauſe that a miſerable and paineful life is counted no life, but rather death, Solomon promiſeth health vnto al creatures which wil ſeeke his wordes, not onely corporal, but ſpiritual and eternal. This health hath beene ſpoken of heere aboue in the 3. Chap. verſe 8. Woulde wee then bee aſſured of health and life? Let vs giue eare vnto the worde of wiſedome.

23 *Keepe thine heart with al diligence: for thereout commeth life.*

It is the heart then that muſt make our eares to encline, and our eies fixed on the holy exhortations, as Solomon hath well declared the ſame vnto vs, when calling our eares to encline, & our eies to be bent to his wordes, he would haue vs to keepe them in the mids of our hearts. He hath not then promiſed life and health, for the inclination of the eares, nor for the ſight of the eyes, but for the care and diligence of the heart. For this cauſe Solomon cõcludeth, admoniſhing vs that we ſhould keep our *hart with all diligence*, and he giueth a reaſon, *For therout commeth life*. For wel to keepe our heart, wee haue neede of very meete and conuenient armour, the which Solomon hath taught vs heereaboue, & haue ſeene that the weapons of the heart are wordes, commandements, wiſedome, and vnderſtanding. Whereuppon followeth, that albeit wee are admoniſhed to keepe our heart, yet it is not to ſay that the ſame is in our power, but wee muſt pray vnto God, that he wil vouchſafe to defende and keepe it. For the Lorde giueth wiſedome; &c. For this cauſe alſo we are exhorted here aboue in the 3. Chap. and 5. verſe, Truſt in the Lorde with all thine hearte, &c. And albeit theſe defenſes come of God, and not of our ſelues, yet muſt wee take heede that we be not negligent, as if in vaine Solomon had exhorted vs to keepe our heart with all diligence. For though it be not in our power, becauſe of the corruption of our nature, yet this admonition ſerueth to aduertiſe vs of our duetie, to the end that we knowing that we cãnot do it, ſhold haue our refuge vnto God, who onely hath the power to defende and keepe our hearts: & yet in the meane while wee ſhould not ſleepe and doe nothing: but as the Lorde doth offer his word vnto vs, and thereby his wiſedome; euen ſo alſo our thoughtes and cogitations, our affection and deſires, ſhould be wholy giuen therunto, and that we ſhoulde gouerne all our life as wiſe men & wel learned. If we haue thus our refuge vnto God, wee will keepe our heartes withal diligence, albeit therein is nothing of ours, but ſo much as it pleaſeth God of his grace to iudge it ours. And foraſmuch as the weapons for to keepe our heartes are ſuch, as is ſaid, we may gather that we looſe our heartes, by rebellion, incredulity, fooliſhnes, ſlouthfulneſſe & ignorance, & conſequently our life: for this that we liue and ſhal liue, is becauſe our heartes are wel fenced with the former thinges. Solomon doth well ſignifie it, when hauing warned vs to keep our harts, he ſaith, *For out thereof commeth life*. In the which he maketh two reaſons, the firſt is, that he giueth the reaſō why he exhorteth vs to keepe our hearts. The ſecond is, that we haue life becauſe our heartes are kept. And as the keeping and preſeruing of them is the gift of God, ſo is the life alſo which commeth thereof: wherevpon it followeth that we cannot deſerue the ſame, as doe the popiſh Friers falſly lie.

24 *Put away from thee a froward mouth, and put wicked lippes farre from thee.*

Solomon here aboue in the 14. & 15. verſes hath forbidden vs the pathes of the wicked: and for the better inſtruction thereof, hath made an Antitheſis of the ſame with the pathe of the righteous, and for to know how we may walke in the one, & flie the other, he hath exhorted vs to giue eare vnto his words. And bicauſe it is not ſufficient to haue our eares attentiue, & our heartes well fenced, &c. except by the gouernance thereof our outward works, be wel framed, and our faultes corrected, whereby wee hurt our neighbors in hindering thē, either in their goods, or in their bodies, or in their good fame, or in their ſoules, by ſlaunders & euill examples: For if the tree be good, it wil bring foorth good fruits, *Matt.12* and to make it more fruitful, they vſe to cut away the dead branches and al ſuperfluities, and muſt be purged from al thoſe thinges that are hinderances to let his fruite. For this cauſe Solomon after hauing inſtructed our heartes, which is as the roote whereby the tree liueth, and by the which it bringeth foorth his fruites, then he laboureth to refourme the life outwardly. And firſt of all hee hath reſpect to reforme the mouth from the which he woulde haue vs to put away frowardnes: & therein he accuſeth vs to be inwardly frowarde: For from the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh. *Mat.12.34.* For this cauſe alſo he hath laboured heretofore to reforme the inward partes. If wee wil wel followe this reformation of the mouth, we muſt chiefly follow that which God by Moſes cōmandeth in the 3. and 9. commandements of the law. Therefore to put away frowardneſſe from our mouthes, we muſt abhorre all periuries, blaſphemies, and ſuperfluous and idle othes, & alſo to abſtain frō pronoūcing at any time the name of god, but onely with feare and humbleneſſe to glorifie God. For according as hee is holy and worthy, euen ſo ought wee to beware from taking it in ſuch ſorte, that we might ſeeme to haue the ſame in contempt, or that we giue occaſion of the ſlaundering thereof. To bee ſhort, wee muſt take heede of al manner of idle wordes, laſciuious and wanton talke which giueth offence, and may cauſe vs for to forget, and to make any other to forget the feare and reuerence that men ſhoulde haue vnto God, and wherewith his name ſhould be blaſphemed: for ſeeing that his praiſe ought to be alwaies in our mouthes, if we vſe laſciuious and wanton ſonges, it is a plaine argument that we make no count to giue him the honour that is due vnto him: and thus wee deſpiſe the name of GOD, and by vs it is blaſphemed ſo that by the vnſauerineſſe of our lippes, the which ſhoulde bee farre from vs, wee giue an occaſion of the abaſing of the holy name of God: for the which we muſt looke for greeuous puniſhment. *Leuit.24.14* For the Lord wil not hold him giltles that taketh his name *2.Kin.19.35* in vaine. By this and other threatnings, that are made againſt the blaſphemers, wee may vnderſtande that blaſphemie is a moſt horrible ſinne, and worthie of great puniſhment. The Magiſtrates which beare the ſworde, ought to looke ſtraightly thereunto, &c. They alſo which haue the office of teaching the people, ought to be very careful to ſpeake the ſincere trueth, to the end that hauing their mouthes voide of frowardneſſe, and their lippes free from wantonnes, they may the better purge the ſame of the peoples, ſo much as in them lyeth: contrarily, the Lord wil aſke the blood of the people which periſh, at the handes of ſuch paſtours. And ſith that for to put away frowardneſſe from our mouth, wee may not beare falſe witneſſe, it followeth that wee muſt abſtaine from periurie in iudgement, from lying, from backbiting, frō flattering, & from al maner of words, wherby our neighbor is wounded in his goodes and good name, &c. And as for to put away this frowardneſſe, we muſt beware to take the name of God in vaine, and to beare falſe witneſſe, euen ſo muſt we not ſuffer in our preſence any to ſinne againſt theſe 2. cōmandements. For we muſt zealouſly mainteine the honour and glory of our God, whereſoeuer wee become, except we wil be infidels and vnfaithful, traitours & wicked: conſidering that hee is our Creatour, and Father, our King, and our Sauiour. Likewiſe, wee muſt in no wiſe ſuffer that any ſpeake iniuries of our neighbours: ſeeing we muſt loue them as our ſelues, and that they are our fleſhe: otherwiſe, it were as if we take the name of God in vaine, and that wee did beare falſe witneſſe againſt our neighbour. Notwithſtanding wee muſt not ſpare to chide them, to rebuke them, to blame them, and to accuſe them whome we knowe to leade a ſlanderous and diſſolute life. Thus doing, wee backbite them not, we hurt not their good name: but endeuour to bring them to amendment, or els to chaſten them, that others may feare, and by ſuch examples may withdraw them ſelues from euill. But in this doing wee muſt take heede wee be not led with hatred, with enuie, with anger, or with deſire of vengeance: but onely with the deſire of the glory and honour of GOD, and with the edifiyng and ſaluation of our neighbours: otherwiſe, wee deceiue our heartes. If any man ſeeme to bee deuoute, and refraineth not his tongue, &c. this mans religion Iam.1.26.

is in vaine. Wee muſt alſo beware to condemne our neighbours in iudging too proudly of their doings and ſayings, and to make a lawe for their life: and alſo that wee may not vſe any euil words, which proceede from a corrupt and wicked iudgement, whereby wee arrogantly condemne whatſoeuer diſpleaſeth vs in our neighbours: for in ſo doing, wee obey not the lawe. But ſo dooing (I ſay) our mouthes are full of poyſon, and yet wee wil appeare in prayer honeſt folkes: &c. But God alloweth not ſuch bleſſings, By it we bleſſe our God and Father: and thereby we curſe men made after the likenes of God. *Iam. 4.11.* *Iam. 3.9.*

25 *Let thine eyes behold the right, & let thine eye liddes direct thy way before thee.*

Solomon woulde not haue vs to looke heere and there, where wee haue not to doe, for feare wee ſhoulde goe out of the way, & ſhoulde wander into thinges that nothing apperteine vnto vs, or that might bee hurtfull to vs or to our neighbours: but to looke right before vs, that euery one looke to his own worke, according to the ſtate wherin he is called of God, and that euery one ſhould folowe his office. It is not without cauſe that Solomon demaundeth this: For wee be curious and eaſie to caſt our ſight hither & thither, wee fall away, and forſake our ſtate and office: In which doing, we bring our ſelues in danger, and it happeneth oftentimes that we bring hurt to our neighbours: and which is much worſe, we diſhonour God: for our ſight which is not right, cauſeth vs to fall into diſobedience and rebellion. Our ſtate is to acknowledge one onely God, to worſhip him, to commend, to prayſe and to call vpon him: but if we liſt vp our eyes for to marke here and there howe the worlde is full of idolatrie, and that wee earneſtly looke vnto the ſayre ſhewe of holineſſe, they haue in the ſeruice of their Idoles and goodly gaye Images; wee are in danger to forget God, and to worſhip ſtrange Gods, as did the children of Iſrael, as we may knowe by the complaintes that God hath made againſt them by Moſes and his Prophets, and alſo the holy hiſtories doe declare the ſame: and as the Papiſts doe at this day. Our office is to heare the voice of our great Paſtour, for to folowe and hang vpon him, & to put al the truſt of our ſaluation in him only:

but if we looke to theſe faire ſchooles of Popiſh & diuelliſh diuinity,
beholding the great multitude of the worldly wiſe, which folowe
it, and lead after them people without number, there is danger
1.Cor.7.1. leſt we ſhould deſire to heare ſtrangers. It behoooueth vs therfore
Heb.13.4. to leade a chaſt and a ſhamefaſt life, according to Gods commandement,
Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie, and as Saint Paul
doeth teach vs: but if contemning the holie ſtate of Matrimonie,
or els that wee are not pleaſed with our lawful yoke ſelowe, gaze
Mat.5.28. here and there on the beautie of men and women, we are alreadie
whoremongers before God, and are in danger to defile and pollute
Gen.6.2.& our bodies, and to make them the members of an harlot: as
34.1.& 5.19 befell vnto the ſonnes of God: and virgins are in danger to bee
violated, as was Dina. And not this onely, but alſo we are giuen
to ſinnes againſt nature, as were the Zodomites and Gomorrhians,
Rom.1.26. and thoſe whereof Saint Paule ſpeaketh. But as by ſuch filthineſſe
God hath bene diſhonoured, ſo alſo could he wel tel how
to reuenge it. By the which vengeance he teacheth vs, that whoſoeuer
ſhoulde folowe ſuche iniquities, could not eſcape his hand.
Our duetie is not to ſet our handes on our neighbours goods, for
to rauiſh & take the ſame from them, but rather to preſerue them,
ſo farre as we can: but if through couetouſnes, or impatient bearing
of the pouertie that pincheth vs, wee looke vnto our neighbours
ſubſtance, wee bring our ſelues in danger to bee theeues or
robbers, to couet the riches of our neighbours, and for it to enuie
them, to hate & malice them, euen to kil them, if we could, wherof
death enſueth: for it is ſaide, Whoſoeuer hateth his brother,
1.Ioh.3.15. is a manſlear: and we knowe that no murtherer hath eternal life
dwelling in him. And when wee knowe that it is God that ſendeth
our afflictions and aduerſities, ſeeing hee doeth nothing but
iuſtly, and as he knoweth to be expedient for his faithful ſeruants;
our duetie is to beare them patiently without murmuring, and to
preferre our miſeries and calamities before al the eaſe, delightes,
and pleaſures of this worlde, and before al, that euer our fleſh can
wiſhe or deſire: but if through impatiencie wee turne aſide our
eyes for to marke the proſperous ſtate of the wicked, we ſhal
bee tempted to folowe them, and to deſire to bee like them,
for to haue parte of their proſperitie, wherein wee deceiue our

ſelues : for this proſperous ſtate, is of no continuaunce. The office of Magiſtrates is, to giue right vnto al that demaunde the ſame, and to miniſter good and ſpeedie iuſtice, aſwel to the leaſt as to the greateſt, aſwel to the poore, as to the riche : but if they turne aſide their eyes to marke other matters, and not to conſcience : if they delight to ſee and receiue preſents and giftes : if they turne their eyes vnto their parentes and friendes, to the riche and mightie, to their Goſſeps and neighbour, any of theſe things doe eaſily peruert iudgement, and make them not to giue right vnto the owners. Wherfore though they be Gods, yet ſhal they die as men, &c. Wee may heere ſpeake of the duetie of Miniſters, of Fathers and Mothers, and al ſuch as haue charge ouer others.

Pſal.37.2.

Pſal.82.7.

26 *Ponder the pathe of thy feete, and let al thy wayes be ordered aright.*

27 *Turne not to the right hande, nor to the left: but remooue thy foote from euil.*

Hee vſeth a ſimilitude taken from them, which ſell and buye by waight, and which for to ſeparate the heauie from the light, and to chooſe the beſt from the worſt, doe vſe balances and other inſtruments and engins to waye withal : and to the end that they may learne to diſcerne and knowe the beſt and the moſt lawfull merchandiſe, they looke vnto the euen ſetting of the balances, & to make them ſtande right. For hee ſayeth, *Ponder the pathe, &c* : and that wee may ponder it wel, hee woulde that as before waying, wee vſe to dreſſe and mende the balances and other engins, euen ſo ſhoulde wee order and direct our wayes, that wee might knowe whether our pathes were good and lawful. Nowe for to learne wel howe wee ſhall obeye this exhortation, we muſt vnderſtand that as our feete in the Scriptures are taken for our affections, euen ſo our pathes ought to be taken for whatſoeuer we are ledde to by our affections. Our pathes then, is our outwarde conuerſation, our manners and cuſtomes, our workes and deedes, wherein wee beſtowe the tyme of our life, and whereby we maintaine one another, doe ſeruice and pleaſure, & helpe one of vs another. And as we iudge that the Merchants do not behaue them ſelues faithfully in their eſtate, when they care not to haue good waightes and meaſures, and ſel the light for as much as the waightie, the ſmal meaſure as the true, & care for nothing but for their particular profite, according as their concupiſcences doe lead them about: euen ſo, if wee folowe our carnal affections, not taking heede what wee doe, ſo that wee may doe as we luſt, and take our delight and pleaſure, we raſhly proceed, and imploy not our ſelues lawfully and faithfully to ſerue our neighbours, The which is abhominable before God, and is not pleaſing to men of ſound & vpright iudgement, and is an offence vnto the ſimple and ignorant. For this cauſe Solomon is not contented with the pondering of our pathes : for the wiſe of this world doe weigh (as they think good) their pathes : when they ſo gouerne them ſelues by natural reaſon and carnal wiſedome, that they winne reputation, and are eſteemed in the worlde. It ſeemeth wel alſo vnto the diſſolute and wanton, that they ponder deepely their pathes, when they narowly watch, leſt they ſhould be hindred of their pleaſure, and looke circumſpectly about them, whereby they may come to the end of their purpoſe, be it right or wrong. It is not enough therfore that wee ponder our pathes, but as Solomon demandeth, we muſt let al our *wayes be ordered aright* : that is to ſay, that al the meanes wee folowe to guide the buſines that wee haue to doe one with the other, ſhould be good and lawfull, iuſt and reaſonable. Nowe they ſhal be ſuche, if renouncing the affection of the fleſhe, which is not ſubiect to the lawe of God, wee labour to yeelde our ſelues obedient vnto the Worde of God, without adding to or diminiſhing any thing therefrom in any wiſe. It is the ſame onely, wherby we muſt haue our affections framed, whereby our pathes muſt be guided, and whereby all our life ought to be ruled, Wee ought wel to learne this, when wee ſee howe God commendeth vnto vs ſo carefully, his onely Word, both by Moſes and by his Prophets, and finally by Ieſus Chriſt, his Apoſtles and Miniſters : and that hee threateneth with horrible vengeance thoſe which ſhal deſpiſe it, and wil neither beleeue nor obeye it. For this cauſe Solomon deſiring our ſaluation, doeth teach vs how we ſhoulde ponder the pathes of our feete, and order all our wayes aright when hee ſayeth,

Turne not to the right hand, &c. Solomon is not the firſt that

hath giuen this doctrine. Moſes which went before him, hath
ſaide, Yee ſhal put nothing vnto the Worde which I commaund Deu.4.2.
you, neither ſhal ye take ought therefrom. Take heede therefore, & 5.32.&
that ye doe as the Lorde your God hath commaunded you: turne 12.8.32.
not aſide to the right hand, nor to the left. Ye ſhal not doe after all
theſe things, that we do here this daye: that is, euery man whatſoeuer
ſeemeth him good in his owne eyes. Thou ſhalt put nothing
thereto, nor take ought therefrom. But thou ſhalt not decline & 28.14.
from any of the wordes, which I commaunde you this day,
either to the right hande or to the left, to goe after other Gods to
ſerue them. Be ye therefore of a valiant courage, to obſerue & doe
all that is written in the booke of the lawe of Moſes, that ye turne Ioſua.23.6.
not therefrom to the right hande nor to the left. Howe long halte 1.Kin.18.21
ye betweene two opinions? This is not then a new doctrine, but
moſt auntient, and is needefull for vs to folowe, if wee wil truely
ſay, that we are Chriſtians. For our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath giuen Iohn.8.26.
vs this doctrine, when hee preached that which hee heard of his & 6.38.
Father: and that hee witneſſeth hee came not to doe his owne
wil, but the ſame of God his Father, who ſent him. His Apoſtles
alſo followed him, preaching nothing but the pure Goſpel, that
they might teach the right way, & hold the people therin. Wherfore
wee muſt take good heed of the Pope and of his mainteiners,
which bragge them ſelues to be the ſucceſſours of the Apoſtles, &
yet by ſtrange doctrines, and mens traditions they labour to make
vs decline from the pure doctrine of the trueth, from the which
when we are turned away, we eaſily giue ouer our ſelues vnto all
kind of wickedneſſes, & know not how to come backe: & which
worſt is, we delight therein, and ſo make vice vertue. Thus doing,
wee decline to the right hand, or to the left. For to *turne to the
right hand or to the left*, is none other thing, than to deſpiſe the
good, that is taught and commaunded vs by the Worde, and to
giue our ſelues ouer vnto euil. Solomon doth wel ſignifie it, when
hauing ſaide, Turne not, &c: he addeth, *But remooue thy foote
from euil.* Wherein firſt of all he ſheweth vs, that there is no euil
but that which is committed againſt the Word of God: for then
we decline, & not when we deſpiſe the commandements of men:
and though they alledge vs this, Whoſoeuer heareth you, &c: yet Luk.10.16.

we muſt not be afraid, except they declare the pure word of God. Secondly, that there is nothing but al euil, when we turne on the right hand or the left: albeit that many things may be done which can not be reprooued before men. For alſo as there is but God only which is good, ſo alſo ſhould wee not eſteeme any thing to be good, but onely that which is done after his holie, good, and iuſt commaundement: but from man which is altogether corrupted, which is carnal and ſold vnder ſinne, can proceede nothing but all euil, &c.

Gen.6.1.

The fifth Chapter.

1 *My Sonne, hearken vnto my wiſedome, & encline thine eare vnto my knowledge,*

2 *That thou mayeſt regard counſel, and thy lippes obſerue knowledge.*

WHen Solomon exhorteth vs as his children, to hearken vnto wiſdome and knowledge, the which hee calleth his, becauſe that God had giuen him of his grace, whereby alſo hee communicateth it vnto vs, as hauing charge to teach vs: And in that hee often repeateth the ſame admonition, thereby we muſt vnderſtād that it is a thing very needful for vs to be attentiue vnto this wiſdome: otherwiſe he would not bee ſo carefull to repeate ſo often vnto vs one ſentence, ſeeing hee ſpeaketh by the holie Ghoſt, whoſe ſpeech is not ſuperfluous. He hath alreadie declared vnto vs diuers profites & fruites which come of wiſedome: and becauſe he is not ſatisfied with this declaration, he purſueth to amplifie the ſame, ſaying, that wee muſt hearken vnto wiſedome, to the end that wee may keepe his counſels, the which he hath alreadie giuen vs, and ſtil remaineth readie to giue vs hereafter. Now amongſt other counſels & aduiſemēts, he would haue our *lippes to obſerue knowledge*: that is, that wee ſhould not ſpeake but as wiſe and wel learned, & that we ſhoulde knowe and learne what to ſpeake, and howe we muſt ſpeake: not as the worldlinges knowe, but after the inſtruction of our Father, and folowing his commandements, whereby hee counſelleth vs what wee haue to doe, and what to ſay. This is the knowledge that we muſt learne, to the end that we may know what we ſhould ſay, and that we ſhould not ſpeake as amazed, as fooles and inſenſed, nor as beaſtes and ignoraunt, which are without vnderſtanding: nor yet as malicious, which ſpeake fraudulently, to deceiue and hurt their neighbours. This counſel is directed vnto vs al, & principally vnto the Miniſters of the Worde, the which ought to be ſo indued with knowledge, that others may drawe from their mouth: otherwiſe al goeth to deſtruction: as if the blinde leade the blinde, both fall into the ditche. *Mat.* 14.15. To the end alſo that our lippes ſhould keepe knowledge, we muſt beware that wee doe not applie them to vnlawful touchings, as do whoremongers by vnſhamefaſt kiſſes, which are done without knowledge: for if they knewe wel what they did, they woulde be much more afraide thereof then of temporal death, when they knowe that by ſuch laſciuiouſnes they fal into eternal damnation: and ſo it ſhal bee a verie deare kiſſing vnto them, the which they finde ſweete to the feeling of the fleſh. Solomon giuing a reaſon for the which he would haue our lippes keepe knowledge, doeth aduertiſe vs of this ſweeteneſſe and ſoftneſſe, when he ſayeth,

3 *For the lippes of a ſtraunge woman drop as an honicombe, and her mouth is more ſoft then oyle.*
4 *But the end of her is bitter as VVormewood, and ſharpe as a two edged ſword.*
5 *Her feete goe downe to death, and her ſteppes take hold on hell.*
6 *Shee weigheth not the way of life: her pathes are moueable: thou canſt not knowe them.*

Here aboue, in the 2. Cap. & 16. verſe, hath bin declared what this ſtraunge woman is, and wherefore ſhee is ſo called.

The diſtilling of her lippes, and the ſoftneſſe of her mouth lyeth in that, that ſhee flattereth with her wordes, as hath beene ſaide, and ſhall bee treated of agayne, heere vnder, in the ſeuenth Chapter. Now that we muſt abhorre this honie and this oyle of flatteries, and conſequently, the kiſſes and touchinges which folow the ſame, he ſheweth wel, when he ſayeth,

4 *But the ende of her, &c.* As they which eate of Allume or drinke the iuice thereof, doe afterwardes feele the ſharpe taſte in their mouthes long after: and as they that vſe kniues with two edges, if they take not good heede doe eaſily wound themſelues: euē ſo alſo they which delight in the flattering ſtyle of the ſtrāger, in her kiſſes & imbraſings, ſhal fele great ſourenes, & ſhalbe ſtroke with mortal wounds for euer: as Solomō doth ſhew it, ſaying,

5 *Her feete goe downe to death, &c.* In the 2. Chapter and 18. and 19. verſes, this death hath beene treated of. But there is this difference, that there the houſe of the whore is ſpoken of, which is her ſelf, & al thoſe which are acquainted with her: & here her feete are ſpoken of, which are her euil affections, her carnal deſires, & her diſordered luſtes. But the things wel cōſidered and ioyned together, come al to one end. For if the whore by her concupiſcences, enterpriſes, and inticements which folow her, goe downe to death, and that ſhee taketh holde on hell, that ſhee be ſnared with eternal damnation: for when any ſicknes or hurt happeneth to any man, we ſay that he hath taken this ſicknes. It foloweth right wel, that al they which cōſent vnto her deſires, and haue communication with her, ſhalbe ouerthrowne with death, & taken with hell, from whence they ſhal not returne, &c. If the whore & her gallants & companions, goe into ſuch deſtruction, it is no meruel: for they take neither coūſel nor aduiſe, neither ſtrēgth nor knowledge, but doe raſhly & amazedly proceed in ignorance and without aduiſement. Solomon doeth declare it, when he ſayeth,

6 *Shee weigheth not, &c.* Hee that maketh no count to folow the neceſſary meanes to preſerue life, is wel worthie of death: He that careth not, neither regardeth where hee goeth, deſerueth wel to fal into the ditch, from whence he can not get out: and foraſmuche as naturally euery man deſireth to liue, wee wil ſurely iudge a man out of his witte, that wil not care to preſerue his life, but wil ſeeke meanes to deſtroy it. Such are the whores & whormongers, as Solomon doeth ſhewe vs, ſaying, *She weigheth not the way of life, &c*: for albeit he doeth not ſpeake but of the

whore, yet doeth he giue vs wel to vnderſtande that the whoremongers ſhal not bee exempted from the puniſhment due vnto their wickednes, ſeeing that God ſpareth not the moſt weakeſt kinde or ſexe.

7 *Heare ye me now therfore, O children, and departe not from the wordes of my mouth.*

When Solomon ſpeaketh vnto children, he ſpeaketh as wel to the Female as to the Males. For as there are vnſhamefaſt whores, which doe entice and deceiue fooliſh and vndiſcreete men : euen ſo alſo there are wicked whoremongers, which giue their ſtudie to induce maydes and vndiſcreete women to agree vnto vncleannes and filthines, and to commit whoredomes. He giueth the meanes vnto them both, whereby they may be kept from deceit : to wit, in hearing that which ſhal bee ſpoken in the name of God, who is Father both of Males and Females, and alſo by his Worde, and to giue obedience vnto that which they ſhal receiue from his mouth, when he ſpeaketh to them by his Miniſters, which preach nothing but his pure Worde. Solomon, (as we haue ſeene) maketh gladly his exhortations general, & then for more plaine declaratiō he deſcendeth vnto the particular parts, that we may vnderſtād the ſayings of his mouth, for to folow thē. Thē after this maner, he ſaith,

8 *Keepe thy way farre from her, and come not neere the doore of her houſe:*

9 *Leſt thou giue thine honour vnto others, and thy yeeres vnto the cruel:*

10 *Leſt the ſtranger ſhould be filled with thy ſtrength, and thy labors be in the houſe of a ſtranger,*

11 *And thou mourne at thine end, (when thou haſt conſumed thy fleſh and thy bodie.)*

12 *And ſay, Howe haue I hated inſtruction, and mine heart deſpiſed correction:*

13 *And haue not obeyed the voice of them that taught me, nor inclined mine eare to thē that inſtructed me?*

14 *I was almoſt brought into al euil, in the midſt of the congregation, and aſſembly.*

If we wil then diligently heare and not goe backe from his ſayings, we muſt take heed that our maners and liuing doe not agree with the affections & deſires of whores & whoremōgers, & that

we haue no maner of familiaritie with ſuch people, for to conſent
vnto their luſtes, and agree vnto their flatterings & ſweet words:
contrarily, if we folowe them, if wee deſire the entrance of their
gates, for to fulfil our wicked concupiſcences, wee are out of the
1.Cor.6.9. way of life, we are ſhut out of the houſhold of God, we haue no
Ephe.5.3. entrance in thither: Bee not deceiued: neither Fornicators, nor Idolators,
Ephe.5.10. &c. ſhal inherite the kingdome of heauen. But fornication,
and al vncleannes, or couetouſnes, let it not be once named amongſt
you. We may wel reſort vnto ſuch, for to reproue them.
And haue no felowſhip with the vnfruitful workes of darkeneſſe,
but euen reproue them rather. This is the greateſt plague that cã
happen to any man to be depriued of the houſe of God: for in that
caſe he hath neither part nor portion but in death & hel: but before
that theſe miſerable creatures and infected, doe feele and perceiue
ſuch calamitie, they ſpende and ſpoile their owne ſubſtance,
ſpending the ſame with ſuch people as they ought not, & that wil
giue thẽ neuer the more thanks, but are cauſe of their deſtruction,
and haue no pitie nor compaſſion vpon ſuch pore miſerable ſpendthrifts,
albeit they ſpoyle themſelues euen to the harde bones, by
giuing of preſents, & making ſuperfluous & exceſſiue coſts, for to
enioy their wicked deſires. Solomon doeth wel ſignifie it, when
he ſayeth,

9 *Leſt thou giue. &c.* When al riches belong vnto God, & that
he giue part to them that pleaſeth him, for to preſerue the yeares
of their life, in what ſort ſo euer wee poſſeſſe and come by them,
whether it be by patrimonie, gift, getting, or by our handie labor,
we muſt confeſſe therein that God doeth not honour vs, & mainteineth
vs in this life, to the end that we ſhould not be fruſtrate of
the yeares which he hath giuen vs in this world. Wherefore, if for
to get acquaintance & familiaritie, to accompliſh our wicked wil,
and to enioy our carnal pleaſure with whores & whoremongers,
we giue preſents and gifts, and prodigally doe ſpend our goods in
gorgeous and pompeous apparel, and in ſuperfluous and ſumptuous
bankets, in ſtead of reaſonable expences, for to helpe our familie,
and to giue to the neceſſitie of our poore Chriſtian brethrẽ,
which are or ſhould be of our houſhold, yea, our members: if, I
ſay, for to get ſuch deuiliſh acquaintance, we ſpende thus curſedly

the riches that are committed vnto, and giue our honor vnto the
ſtranger, and ſo much as in vs lieth, giue ouer our yeares vnto ſuch
as haue no pitie nor compaſſion of vs, and care not, though wee
ſpoile our ſelues, to cloth them, though we ſtarue our ſelues, to
feede them fatte, ſo vnmerciful are they and cruell. Luke.15.14

The prodigal ſpendthriſts which are driuen to beg, doe prooue
the ſame with the prodigal child. If their repentance were known,
and that they truly confeſſed their faultes, as did the poore prodigal
childe, we ought to haue pitie on them, and helpe their neceſſitie, Gen.2.15.
&c. But that we muſt thus vnderſtand, this honour and theſe
yeares, Solomon ſheweth it, ſaying,

10 *Leſt the ſtranger ſhould be filled, &c.* Foraſmuch as
from the beginning of the world the Lorde God tooke man and
placed him in the garden of Eden, that hee might dreſſe and keepe
it, and that in al ages, ſuche as were of right iudgement haue beſtowed
themſelues to good workes, becauſe they woulde not liue Exo.20.9.
idlely, and be vnprofitable in this world, and that God ſayeth vnto
vs, Sixe dayes ſhalt thou labour: and alſo according to the ſaying
of Saint Paule, Let him that ſtole, ſteale no more, &c. And againe, Ephe.4.28.
Neither tooke wee bread of any man for naught. Wee will 2.Theſ.3.8.
here take *the ſtrength and the labour*, for the goods that a man
getteth and gathereth by his worke, for to ſuſtaine his life. The Gen.4.12.
Scripture vſeth it in this ſignification. God ſaid vnto Cain, When Iob.6.22.&
thou ſhalt til the ground, it ſhal not hencefoorth yeeld vnto thee 31.38.
her ſtrength. Was it becauſe I ſaid, bring vnto me? or giue a reward Eccle.2.10
to mee of your ſubſtance? If my land crie againſt mee, &c. Thus verſe 11.12.
much for ſtrength. But labours is ſpoken of in diuers places. My Deut.28.33.
heart reioyced in al my labour; and this was my portion of all my Pſal.78.46.
trauell. The fruite of thy lande, and all thy labours, &c. Pſal.105.44.
Hee gaue alſo their fruits vnto the Caterpiller, & their labour vnto
the Graſhopper: And gaue them the landes of the heathen, and
they tooke the labours of the people in poſſeſſion. And albeit that
it come from the power and goodnes of God, that we become rich
(for of him onely haue we our ſtrength and ablenes, our wiſdom
and wil to imploy vs, it is he alone that maketh the earth fruitful)
yet notwithſtāding he is ſo good, that what he giueth vs, he eſteemeth
ours, and doeth declare it vnto vs, to the end that we ſhoulde

know that hee hath giuen vs libertie to vſe them with praiſe and thankeſgiuing, with ioy & gladnes. But if it be not lawful for vs to vſe our owne goods prodigally, ſo muche the leſſe is it lawful to ſteale, or to borow, to ſpend prodigally, and to liue diſſolutely, brauely, and in coſtly buildings and belly cheare.

11 *And thou mourne at thine ende*. As in liuing chaſtly, & by ſuſtaining our ſelues with the goods which God giueth vs to vſe ſoberly and temperately, the bodie is mainteined, and kepte from feebleneſſe and diſeaſes, and is ſtrengthened & made ſtrong to labour about good and honeſt things, for to profit our ſelues & our neighbours: euen ſo contrarily, by whorehunting and waſting the goods of God immoderately, we ſpoile our bodies, and make them ſubiect to diuers ſickneſſes, and become vnprofitable, ſo that we can neither profit our ſelues nor our neighbours, but are conſtrained to periſh miſerably: Wherevpon finally, we mourne and make lamentation, when we ſee and feele our ſelues in ſo pitiful a caſe. But al in vaine: for ſo litle is our griefe aſſuaged by ſuche mourning, that rather it is increaſed. Solomon did wel perceiue the ſame by the wiſedome he had receiued of God: and therefore he forbiddeth to haue felowſhip with whores, and to ſpende our goods prodigally: and now he declareth the meanes whereby the bodie is conſumed, and looſeth his ſtrength: nowe ſeeing & perceiuing them ſelues in ſuch miſerie, they lament: but it is to late, as he doeth wel ſignifie it, ſaying, That it *is at the end*, and when we can no longer: for the bodie and the ſtrength faileth, and cannot be recouered nor reſtored. For this cauſe Solomon woulde haue vs to liue with ſuch ſhamefaſtneſſe & chaſtitie, with ſuch ſobrietie & temperancie, that we ſhould not be cōpelled to mourne.

Not ſo, but that lamentations are profitable, when they proceede
Eſai.66.2. out of a contrite & lowly heart, truely repentant: For with ſuche
Pſal.34.18. mournings God is pleaſed, & doth hear thē: alſo the mourning of
& 51.19. the theefe was heard, & the bitter teares of Peter: but the mour-
Luk.23.41. nings that are made only for the paine wee ſuffer, or that is iudged
Gen.25.32. to be at hand, & not for the euil that hath bin cōmitted, doth no-
& 27.34. thing profit them that ſo mourn. Cain, Pharao, Saul & Iudas haue
Heb.12.17. prooued it: Eſau alſo may ſerue as an example for the prodigall. At
the firſt ſight ſuch kinde of lamentations, ſeeme that they ſhoulde
profit, and that God ſhould receiue them: but Solomon doth con-

demne them, as hee ſheweth, when hee ſets before vs heere, ſuch as haue a faire ſhew, ſaying,

12 *And ſay, how haue I hated inſtruction? &c.* Although Dan.9.5. Daniel confeſſeth his ſinnes, and the ſinnes of his people, and that 1.Ioh.1.9. Iohn ſaieth, If wee confeſſe our ſinnes, God is faithfull and iuſt to forgiue vs our ſinnes: yet it might ſeeme that Solomon neede not to feare that the whorekeepers and ſpendthrifts ſhould make this mourning, lamenting their wickedneſſes paſt. But if wee diligently marke, wee ſhal ſee that Solomon doeth not reprooue the mourning, but regardeth from whence the ſame proceedeth, that is to ſay, either from the paine they ſuffer, or els that they feare to ſuffer, and not from the griefe of hauing offended God, frō the which the confeſſion of our ſinnes ought only to come, & not from the paine we feele or that we feare. True it is, that if wee bee afflicted, we ſhould cal to memorie that we haue offended God, and confeſſe that we haue wel deſerued to be puniſhed, cōfeſſing our ſins, and crauing pardon for them, as did Daniel and the theefe. Alſo Luk.23.41. this cōplaint ſhould be made by al true repentant ſinners: for they ought to confeſſe that they doe not take the inſtructions and corrections in ſo good part as they ſhould: for wee al of our own nature commend our ſelues, & think our ſelues wiſe & righteous enough. They which repent not truely, will oftentimes make moſt goodly confeſſions in ſhew, and wil ſtuffe them with many words which ſhal ſeeme to proceed of a great ſorowfulneſſe of heart. Solomon here doeth wel expreſſe it, when hee is not ſatiſfied to attribute to them the former confeſſion, but for a more plaine declaration thereof, addeth their ſaying,

13 *And haue not obeyed.* In this addition we ſee how it commeth that men hate inſtruction, and regarde not correction, that is to ſay, when they deſpiſe the reading of the holie Scriptures, and are negligent to heare the preaching of the Worde. To the end then that we be not compelled to make this mourning, for the paines that ſhal pinche vs by whoredome and prodigalitie, let vs obey Moyſes and the Prophets, and aboue al, the chiefe Prophet and our onely Maiſter Ieſus Chriſt, and his Apoſtles and Miniſters, which are ordeined by him for to bee our Maiſters, and to teach vs his wil, & not for to make new commandements, & ordinances at their pleaſure and fantaſies, as doeth that tyrant of

Rome, The miſerable whoremongers and prodigall ſpenders will not mourne for that they haue diſobeied theſe doctours and maiſters, for they are dumbe dogs which barke not: but though they ſay themſelues to be the ſucceſſors of the Apoſtles, & eſteeme themſelues the rulers and gouernours of Chriſtendome, and the pillers of the Church: yet through their diſſolute life they offend & deſtroy the people, cauſing great multitudes to fal by their euil example. Theſe woful whoremongers and prodigal ſpendthrifts might rather bewaile themſelues for hauing almoſt giuen them ſelues ouer vnto al euil by their example, then not hauing obeyed their voice: for in companying with them, they ſee, heare, & learne nothing but al euil. Wherfore, we muſt flye both them and their like, to the end that we be not prouoked by their example to waxe corrupt in al euil, and that wee ſhould haue no cauſe to mourne with theſe ſtinking whoremongers, who al in vaine doe bewaile themſelues, ſaying,

14 *I was almoſt brought, &c.* Albeit, that more euil is learned, & that men are more eaſily corrupted with wicked company, and by euil examples, then otherwiſe: yet neuertheles the fooliſh and vndiſcreete, the contemners & rebels, the mockers and diſſolute ceaſe not to be corrupted, and to bee giuen to al euil, though they are admoniſhed by good Doctours and Maiſters, and do liue and be mingled with good people, in the congregation and aſſembly of the faithful. Wherfore we may take this mourning as if the wicked did lament that in what companie ſo euer they came, good or bad, they grew corrupted and altogether giuen vnto euil. Notwithſtanding, ſeeing the former lamentation, it is more likely true, that they bewaile themſelues, for that they haue not ceaſed from running to al euil, when they were taught & admoniſhed by good Doctors & Maiſters in the company of the faithful, which were no ſmal number: as this repetition doeth ſhewe, *In the midſt of the congregation and aſſembly:* for it is as much as to ſay, as in the great aſſemblie. In this their lamentation, they ſhewe that they haue ſinned more greeuouſly then if they had companied onely with the wicked, amongſt whom they ſhould haue had no inſtruction. This laſt expoſition is the moſt meeteſt vnto the line of the text of Solomon. He ſetteth before vs theſe lamentations, to the

end that we ſhould not commit wickednes, wherby we ſhould be conſtrained thus to lament, for the puniſhmẽt that foloweth therof: and not but that we ſhould be diſpleaſed with our ſelues, for the euil that we haue done. For they that doe ſo lament, ſhould be verie readie to doe the like, if they had the power.

15 *Drinke the water of thy Ceſterne, and of the Riuers out of the midſt of thine owne well.*

16 *Let thy Fountaine flowe foorth, and the Riuers of waters in the ſtreetes.*

17 *But let them bee thine, euen thine onely, and not the ſtrangers with thee.*

15 For to teach vs what we ſhould do, that wee might not giue our honour vnto ſtrangers, leaſt wee bee compelled to lament for the conſumption of our fleſh and of our ſtrength, he exhorteth vs to drinke the waters of our Ceſterne. And therein he reſpecteth the deſcriptiõ of the land of Iuda, in the which were mountaines and vallies, that were moiſtened with the raine from heauen: and therfore they had made wels & Ceſterns to hold & keepe water, very neceſſary for them. As when Abraham came & dwelt in this land, his ſeruants digged & caued wels. Regarding this ſituation (as hath bin ſaid) he ordeineth that we ſhould drink water, wherby he meaneth al fruites which we gather of our labor & trauell: the which he ſignifieth, when he ſaith, not abſolutely of Ceſternes & of welles: but, of thy Ceſternes and out of thine owne welles, that is to ſay, that thou haſt caued and digged, and keepeſt. Nowe when as Solomon, vnder this which is of leaſt price and eſtimatiõ in the prouiſion of a houſe (for there is nothing that is more ſpilt then water, & alſo that leſt ſerueth for marchandiſe) comprehendeth al the neceſsities of the houſe; he alſo ſheweth that we muſt keepe great ſobrietie and temperance, and not deſire to make exceſsiue and ſuperfluous coſt, & that we muſt not folowe gluttony nor dronkẽnes. And whẽ he ſaith, *drinke*, & not to call drinke, he ſheweth that we ſhould be careful to nouriſh our houſhold, and not to ſpẽd our goods prodigally vpon making good cheere with knaues and whoores, with bellygods and vnſatiable throates. Beſides this alſo we wil firſt of al note, that albeit we muſt bee ſober and temperate, and contented moſt with ſimple drinkes and meates, yet that it is lawful for vs to vſe all kinde of meates. As

Deut.11.11.

Gen.26.15.

when God promiſed the land of Chanaan vnto the children of Iſrael,
1.Tim.4.4. he did not promiſe them that they ſhould drinke water onely,
Exo.3.8. but he alſo promiſeth abundãce of all fruites of the land for to
Leuit.26.4 eate with fulneſſe, with ioy, and in peace, and reſt. Secondly,
Deut.28.1. what licence ſoeuer is geuen vs, to vſe all benefites, yet muſt wee
Exo.20.15. abſtaine from thoſe that belong vnto our neighbour, as we haue
two expreſſe commandements for it: And Solomon doth ſignifie
the ſame here, ſaying, *Of thy Ceſternes, and of thine owne wels.*
Thirdly, foraſmuch as the Ceſternes and Welles do runne to decay
and fall downe, except they be mended and tended, and both
coſt and labour be beſtowed vpon them: euen ſo Solomon doeth
aduertiſe vs to labour, and priuilie forbiddeth vs begging, from
the which cõmeth much euil. Fourthly, although that the wels &
Ceſternes be ours, and that Solomon biddeth vs drinke water, yet
ought we not to be ſo partial, nor ſo much giuẽ to our own profit,
but that we ſhould haue care of our neighbors, and endeuour to
communicat part of ours, for to relieue their need, we muſt not be
ſuch pinchers, to eate our bread alone: but we muſt diſtribute the
ſame into diuers partes, as Solomon teacheth vs, ſaying,

16 *Let thy fountaine flowe foorth, &c.* As he that hath one
or many fountaines, wanteth no water, though they runne ouer
and ſpred here and there far of, euen ſo the man which ſhal diſtribute
the goods that God hath giuen him, ſhal haue enough & not
want. When we were Papiſts, wee were wont wel to ſay, To giue
for Gods ſake doth not make a man poore. If in ſuch darkeneſſe
of ignorance, of ſuperſtition and idolatry, of al wickednes and
abhomination, we ſpake and felt ſo rightly: what ought we to ſay
and feele now, when God by his grace hath deliuered vs frõ theſe
Deut.15.4. darkneſſes, & dayly doeth lighten vs by his pure word, the which
Eſay.58.7. is brought vnto vs by theſe lightes, not only by Solomon, but by
Luke.12.33. Moſes, and by his Prophets by this great light Ieſus Chriſt, and
&.16.9. by his Apoſtles. And as the man which wil not ſuffer his waters
to runne ouer, but laboureth to hold and locke them in perforce,
.Cor.8.7. doeth put himſelf in danger that the waters ſhould riſe and ſwel ſo
&.9.5. much that they ſhould deſtroy & drowne his houſe, & he to periſh
1.Iohn.3.17 therwith: euẽ ſo the couetous rich mã which feareth that the
Iam.2.13. earth ſhuld faile him, & encloſeth al to himſelf, therby doth periſh:
for iudgemẽt without mercy ſhalbe to him that ſheweth no mer-

by. And as the waters ſtopt vp, are vnprofitable, euen ſo are riches hidden. It is not then without cauſe that Solomon ſaith, *Let thy fountaines &c.* And ſith he compareth the riches and wealth of this worlde, vnto the fountaines of water, he teacheth vs that we may not ſet our heartes vpon them: neither that wee muſt ſpare them towardes them that haue need, nor feare to want them. But as the fountaines are ours, though the waters runne ouer, ſo the proprietie of that which we enioy, is ours, albeit that wee muſt deale the fruites that come thereof, liberally and largely, yea euen to the bottome, if neceſſitie ſo require: but whiles the fruites are ſufficient, Solomon would that we ſhoulde be lordes & maiſters of the bottome, when he ſaith:

2.Cor.9.8.
Gal.6.9.

17 *But let them be thine.* Although Solomon is not ſatisfied to haue ſaide, *Thine*, but repeateth againe, *Thine*, adding therevnto an excluſiue worde, that is to ſay, *Onely*, for hee ſaith, *Euen thine onely:* yet let vs not thinke that he would exclude the poore members of Ieſus Chriſt, which not only are our brethren, but alſo bones of our bones, and fleſhe of our fleſh, for wee all are one body in Ieſus Chriſt, & euery one of vs one anothers mẽbers. And as Ieſus Chriſt with al that is his, is ours through grace, euẽ ſo amongſt Chriſtiãs and the faithful, there ought to be ſuch fellowſhip, that none ſhold ſay that any thing were his, but that he ſhold be ready to beſtowe it to the profite of his neigbours, as need ſhal require, as they of the primitiue Churche haue giuen vs example thereof. And that according to the woorde, *Sell* that which yee poſſeſſe, &c. And Saint Paul would haue vs to buy, as though we poſſeſſed not. He excludeth none but ſtrangers, as he himſelfe declareth, ſaying, *And not the ſtrangers with thee.* Nowe by *Strangers*, as wee may gather by the words that Solomon vſeth, are ment knaues and whores, the prophane & infidels, with whõ we ought to haue nothing to doe, neither is it needefull that wee ſhoulde giue them our ſtrength and our labours, much leſſe the bottome & al, the which alſo doth not ſo belong vnto our faithful neighbours with vs, that we ought to ſell the ſame for them, and defraude one family thereof, except the neceſſitie be great: Neither is it that other men ſhould be eaſed, and you greeued. Wherfore we may vnderſtand that the faithful may poſſeſſe landes of their

Rom.12.5.
Act.4.34
Luke.12.33
1.Cor.7.30
Act.5.4
2.Cor.8.13.

their owne, and to keepe themſelues from begging : againſt the Anabaptiſtes, which ſay, that the Chriſtians ought to take their 1. Tim. 6. 17. poſſeſſions, and make them common. Saint Paule doeth not commaunde the riche to leaue their goodes : but that the ſhoulde not put their truſt in them, and to beſtowe part of them to them which ſhal neede.

18 *Let thy fountaine be bleſſed, and reioyce with the wife of thy youth.*

19 *Let her be as the louing Hinde, and pleaſant Roe: Let her breaſtes ſatisfie thee at all times.*

That wee giue not our honour to the ſtrangers, nor lament for the waſting of our fleſh, and our ſtrength, it is not enough that we drinke of our Ceſternes, and that they be our owne : but alſo we muſt beget lawful children, as Solomon doth commaunde vs, when he ſaith, *Let thy fountaine bee bleſſed.* And truely this is a great bleſſing of God, when by lawful marriage we haue a multitude of children, as is ſhewed vs in the Scripture. *Gen.* 1. 12. &. 9. 1. &. 12. &. 22. 17. *Pſal.* 128 But ſith that in lawful mariage there is Gods bleſſing, it foloweth that in whoredome there is nothing but curſedneſſe : wherefore we are greatly deceiued, if we finde ſauour in the droppes of the honnycombe of ſtrange women, if we delight to baſt and annoint our ſelues with the oile of her pallace. Solomon hath wel ſhewed it vs in the 3. 4. 5. 6. verſes of this Chapter. Wee muſt not then delight in whoredome, but rather abhorre it, ſeing that therin is nothing but curſedneſſe and euill ſucceſſe : but with marriage there goeth a bleſſing : and therefore we ſhoulde reioyce in the ſame, as Solomon exhorteth vs, ſaying, *Reioyce with the wife of thy youth, &c.* The reioycing that Solomon meaneth, is not, that the married folkes ſhoulde together with al greedineſſe followe the deſires of their fleſhe and their ſenſualitie,, taking their pleaſures and luſtes, after their inordinate concupiſcenſes : but the ioy that the faithful married folkes ought to haue, is, that they ſhoulde confeſſe *Gen.* 2. 33. *Mt.* 19. 5. that it is God that hath knit them together, for to bee vnited in ſuch wiſe that the one ſhoulde not deſire to bee ſeparated from the other : but that in this vnion man ſhoulde knowe that it is

not good for him to liue alone: and therfore ſhould loue his wife,
whom God hath giuen vnto him to be with him, & to help him:
The wife alſo to know that ſhee hath bin taken out of the ſide of *Ephe.5.22.*
man, & therof made a woman, that ſhe might be an helper to mã:
& therſore ſhould giue her ſelfe wholy to obey her huſband, That *Heb.13.4.*
they ſhould cõfeſſe that they are in a very honorable ſtate, as the *Iohn.2.2.*
Sonne of God hath wel declared, and that it commeth not from *Gen.1.27.*
the inuention of mans braine, but from the moſt ancient inſtitu-
tion of God. Alſo that God hath made thẽ partakers of mariage,
to the end that they ſhould poſſeſſe their veſſels in honor & ſan- *1.Theſ.4.3.*
ctification, & not in vncleannes & filthines. Likewiſe if they haue
linage, that they ſhould acknowledge that they are the organes &
inſtrumẽts wherby God doth encreaſe his word: & by how much
as they haue a greater nũber of children, let them reioyce ſo much
the more, confeſsing that the bleſsing of God is the more vpon
them, & that God doth greatly honor them when they are made
fathers & mothers of a great ſtock. They that want his knowledge
& vnderſtanding, & which do not ſo reioyce, though they be ma-
ried, & that they come not neere the gate of the whoremongers
& harlots houſe, & that they haue a number of laweful children,
neuertheles yet as touching them, their fountaine is not bleſſed,
but nothing remaineth for them but a curſe and malediction: for
vnto the vncleane and infidels nothing is cleane. Therfore if wee *Tit.1.15.*
woulde haue our fountaine to bee bleſſed, we muſt delight in the
woorde of God: the ſame ſhal fil vs with ioy, and ſhal keepe vs
from vexing and tormenting vs in our houſholdes: but as Solo-
mon doth exhort vs, euery one ſhal reioyce with his wife, whome
he calleth *wife of our youth:* that is to ſay, Thy wife that is yong,
and whome thou haſt taken for thy ſpouſe in thy youth. Solo-
mon ſpeaketh thus, not but that it is lawefull for olde folkes to
marry and to reioyce with their yoake fellowe, as Abraham
with Ketura: but it is the moſt common and moſt meeteſt for *Gen.25.1.*
men to mary in the flowre of their age: for they loue more ten-
derly, and haue more deſire of greate ſtocke: and ſo the bleſ-
ſing of God is the more plentifully powred vpon them, where-
of they haue good cauſe to reioyce. Of theſe thinges aboue
ſaide wee gather what it is that doeth ingender troubles in the

houſhold,

houſholde, to wit, when we follow ſtrange men and ſtrange women, when we haue no ſounde vnderſtanding in the worde, and when we ioine not with our equal.

Gene.3.
1.Pet.3.7.
Col.3.13.

19 *Let her be as the louing hinde.* Now foraſmuch as the wife is the weaker veſſel, therfore ſhe ſhould eaſily be made wilde if the huſbande did not ſhew her a louing countenance, and delighted in her, as wee may vnderſtande by S. Paule, when hee ſaith, yee huſbands, loue your wiues, and be not bitter vnto them. Solomon is not ſatiſfied for to haue ſaide vnto vs, reioyce thee with the wife of thy youth: but to teache vs alſo to conſerue and mainteine holy mariage duetifully, hee woulde that wee ſhoulde ſhewe vnto our wiues ſuch gentlenes, familiaritie, fauour and friendſhip, that wee ſhoulde not giue them any occaſion to depart away from vs, and to bee afraide of our preſence: as doe diuers wilde heads, & raging beaſtes that handle their wiues as mad and cruel tyrantes. For to teache vs thus to tame our wiues, and to make them to loue our cõpanie, and to take pleaſure therein, Solomon vſeth a ſimilitude, takẽ of great Lords, which delight to tame wild beaſts, to folow thẽ, & to take meate at their hands: they play with them and ſporte with them, and doe what they cã to preſerue them, and to keepe them from hurt. Solomon woulde that as noble men behaue themſelues toward wild beaſts wherin they delight, euen ſo the huſbandes ſhoulde not delight to tame whoores and drabbes, but that they ſhoulde loue their wiues ſo wel, and be ſo wel pleaſed with them, that al their earthly pleaſure ſhould be to deale in al gentlenes & ſoftnes with them, leaſt they take occaſion to waxe wild and to followe knaues. He doeth declare this ſame vnto vs, when hee ſaith. *Let her bee as thy louing hinde*, and pleaſant roe: as if hee did ſay, If a man doe play, if men doe recreate themſelues, and paſſe the tyme with brute beaſtes which haue no wit nor reaſonable vnderſtanding, the taming whereof is not needeful, and bringeth vs no profit, it is good reaſon that men which cannot bee alone, but haue neede of like felowſhip, ſhoulde confeſſe the greate and excellent gift that God doeth graunt them, when God hath giuen them wiues to helpe them, and to reioice, and that euery one ſhould delight & take his recreatiõ with his own wife, as did the good Patriarkes. It is not to ſay that the wiues which the huſbands doe thus tenderly loue,

ſhould

ſhoulde liue idlely & doe nothing, but take their pleaſures and delights. Solomon doth ſomewhat ſignifie the ſame, when he heere cōpareth the wiſe vnto the Hinde and to the Roe, which are nimble beaſtes to runne. The wife then ought not to bee ſlouthful, but ready to execute the wil and pleaſure of her husband, and diligent to doe the houſholde buſineſſe, and to care for the familie. Likewiſe when Solomon compareth the wiſe vnto an *Hinde*, that is a moſt louing and kinde beaſt, hee ſheweth vnto women that they ought to be of a gentle & quiet ſpirite. Thus doing ther ſhal bee no fault in them, that their husbands ſhoulde not be ſatisfied with *their breaſtes* at all times, as Solomon woulde haue, that is to ſay, that their husbandes ſhould neuer giue themſelues to loue others, to ioyne with them, and to reioyce: but that they content thēſelues to loue their wiues, & that their wiues loue thē, & not others. Solomon himſelſe doeth ſo expounde it, when hee ſayth, *Delight continually in her loue*. Heerein, beſides that the married folkes ought to learne to be chaſt and ſhamefaſt, and to loue one another, and to loue peaceably and quietly togeather, they ought to beholde therein a great gentleneſſe and kindnes of God, which hath not onely ordeined marriage for neceſſitie: but alſo for ioy and comfort of the parties ioyned together in this holy eſtate, ſo that it is lawfull vnto the married folkes to receiue themſelues together with temperance and modeſtie, It is a parte of Gods bleſſing that hee ſendeth vnto them. Iſaac vſed this benediction.

Eph. 5. 22.
1. Tim. 5. 14
1. Tim. 2. 9
1 Pet. 3. 4.
Gen. 24. 67. & 26. 8
Deut. 24. 5

20 *For why ſhouldeſt thou delight, my ſonne, in a ſtrange woman, or imbrace the boſome of a ſtranger?*
21 *For the waies of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his pathes.*

There are many which are not content to reioyce with the yoke fellow that God hath giuen them: there are alſo that regard not to take a lawefull yoke fellowe in marriage, both theſe two kindes of people deſpiſe the holy ordinance of God, and make but a mecke at marriage, which is honourable amongeſt all men: for they ſeeke to haue their ſport and paſtime, to abuſe wiues and

Heb. 13. 14

maid ea

maides: that are vndiſcrete, or els to follow them that are alredy ſo vnſhamefaſt that they care not though they giue them ſelues to whoſoeuer wil. Solomon calleth them *Strange women*, or *Foreners*. For to ſhew that they belong not to thoſe which they follow by contept of marriage, and that they ought to haue acquaintance with them, nor deſire any knowledge of them: And for to ſhew vs that we muſt be very carefull to follow the former exhortations, he doth declare vnto vs that he is moued with the deſire of our profite, as the father is towardes the ſonne. And by that
Pro.1..2.3.8 that the greateſt part of the world doth eaſily beleue, that it is but
9.10. a paſtime & ſport for to communicate with ſtrangers and foreners, and that in hauing acquaintance with thẽ, we go not aſtray: Solomon inſiſteth mightily to mainteine the contrary, as hee hath doone heere before. It ſufficeth him not ſimply to haue affirmed that men goe out of the way to follow them, but to expreſſe with a more liuely vehemencie in what danger and ſorrow they run into, he asketh, *VVhy ſhouldeſt thou delite? &c.* As if he did ſay, the wayfaring men which trauell and walke, doe much feare to wander out of their way and path, although it be but for loſſe of worldly riches, or temporal life: by a more ſtrong reaſon the ſonnes of God which muſt walke vnto the heauenly inheritance, vnto eternal life, ſhould be careful to looke that they ſtray not, & that they bee not depriued of theſe great bleſſinges, of this happy life: the which they ſhould do, if they followed ſtrangers. Heere aboue hee hath ſaid that they following this trade, do tend vnto deſtruction. Wherfore for to keep vs frõ going aſtray, he forbiddeth vs to *imbrace the boſome of a forener*: by the which kind of ſpeaking, he forbiddeth al whordome, & in ſpeaking ſo modeſtly for to make
Ephe.5.12. vs fly far from al filthines and vnſhamefaſtnes, hee ſheweth vs in what abhomination whoremongers and adulterers are before God which follow with al greedines their carnal deſires & diſordinate affections, when he forbeareth to expreſſe the vncleannes that they commit. For as alſo S. Paul ſaith, It is a ſhame euen to ſpeake of the things which are doone of them in ſecret: but yet we may not ceaſſe to condemne them. Likewiſe when he forbiddeth vs to imbrace the boſome, he teacheth vs that al vnſhamefaſt touchings are to be condemned: and therfore that we ſhould not bee

deceiued with the ſcorners that take their pleaſures in ſuche vileneſſe: let the wiues and maidens which deſire to keep their honeſtie and honour, both before God and men, violently thruſt from them ſuch geſters & Diuels incarnate, wherſoeuer they ſhall finde thē. For, to be the true childrē of God, it is not enough to be aſhamed before men, & not to care though God ſee our filthines, as do many which wil appeare honeſt before the world, but ſecretly they care not what they doe, neither wil they once call to remembrance that God ſeeth them, or if they doe thinke thereof, they feare men more thē God, or els they are ſo much deceiued, that they iudge that wher mē doth not ſee thē, there god alſo beholdeth thē not: or els that they are ſo fooliſhe, ſo corrupted and degenerate, that they beleeue not that there is a God. They profeſſe they knowe God, but by their workes they denie him. The children of GOD ought to be far frō ſuch pernicious opinions, & ought to behaue thēſelues as holily & honeſtly in ſecrete, as before men, knowing that God is a witneſſe of all their thoughts, willes, purpoſes, and counſels of their hearts: by a more ſtrong reaſon then they ſhould not be ſo voide of vnderſtanding, but that they ſhould know how God ſeeth what they doe, and what others might ſee. Solomon doth wel teach vs this ſame, when he ſaith,

Tit. 1.16.

21 *For the waies of man, &c.* A man enterpriſeth and doth many things that are ſecrete and vnknowne to his neighbors, for he goeth away & hideth himſelfe frō them: but whatſoeuer he inuēteth, & how cloſely ſoeuer it be doone, yet can he not flie from the preſence of the Lord, he cānot ſo priuily go to work, but God muſt know his manners & liuing, his workes and operations, although he doth them in ſo deepe darknes, that he ſeeth not himſelfe. The darknes hideth not from thee: but the night ſhineth as the day: the darkeneſſe and light are both alike. We ought to acknowledge and confeſſe ſo: otherwiſe we are curſed. Woe vnto them that ſeeke deepe to hide their counſel from the Lorde: for their workes are in darkneſſe, and they ſay, Who ſeeth vs? & who knoweth vs? If we thus thinke, wee wel deſerue curſing: for wee which are but earth, do rebel againſt our maker. Your turning of deuiſes, ſhal it not be eſteemed as the potters clay? For ſhall the the woorke ſay of him that made it, hee made mee not?

Pſal. 139.12

Eſay. 29.15.

&.16.

or the thing formed, ſay of him that faſhioned it, hee had none vnderſtanding. But as there are many which ſhall ſee their neighbors liue holily & very vprightly, & ſhew foth good example vnto al, and yet wil they neuer marke to conſider their good life to follow it, and to amend their faultes: and contrarily, other ſome which ſhal ſee them doe euil, and doe both againſt God, and their neighbors, wil not once exhort or rebuke them: likewiſe although they confeſſe howe God ſeeth and knoweth all thinges, yet they iudge that God careth not what men doe, whether it bee good or euil: For in this worlde (ſay they) wee ſee not that hee dealeth better to the good, then to the wicked, neither that he puniſheth the euil liuers more then the other. For to take away this opinion, Solomon is not contented to ſay, that the wayes of man, are before the eyes of the Lorde: but hee addeth, and *hee pondereth all his pathes*: & yet following their complaint, they ſay againe, The Lorde doeth not ſee it, the God of Iacob doeth not vnderſtand it. Albeit that the Lord doth wincke at it, yet can he examine the factes and deedes of euery one, for to allow that which is good, and reiect that which is wicked: as wel as he that trieth and diſcerneth by the waightes and ballances whether the thing is good or euil, heauie or light. Hee did not foorthwith puniſhe Caine, and left Abell to remaine: but he abſtained not to conſider both the one and the other, with their doinges, for to giue in due ſeaſon to euery of them, according to their deedes. The ſame alſo is ſeene in the preſeruation of Noe, and in the deſtruction of the worlde by the vniuerſall fludde, by the ouerthrowing of Sodome and deliuerance of Lot, &c. Theſe ſame ought to teache vs, that God pondereth the paths of euery man, and that as he hath done to them, ſo alſo wil hee doe to others in due time, if not in this worlde, yet to the one in eternall life, and to the other, in death euerlaſting: as the one are for example of the one, and the ſecond of the other. Pſal. 94. 7.

22 *His owne iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelfe, & he ſhalbe holden with the cordes of his owne ſinne.*

23 *He ſhal die for fault of inſtruction, & ſhall goe aſtray through his great folly.*

It is not without cauſe that Solomon hath beene ſo careful to exhort vs, as the father the children: let vs not be ſo wicked as to go aſtray with the ſtrange woman: for although we think to be cloſely hidde: by wandring out of the right way, yet God ceaſeth not to ſee vs, and conſider our deuiſes, and wicked enterpriſes, for to puniſh vs at ſuch time as it ſhal pleaſe him. And let vs not thinke that by giuing our ſelues to euil, we can eſcape: For though it were ſo that God did not take heed vnto the wicked, yet neuertheles they could not be exempted from puniſhment, ſeeing they drawe their owne corde, the which they ſpinne and twiſt, and pul foorth by perſeuering to adde iniquitie vnto iniquitie, without remorce of conſcience, with greedineſſe of deſire: and in the ſame they proceed ſo vnaduiſedly and amaſedly, that they make readie the halter for thẽſelues, and therein are taken, ſo that they cannot vnlooſe thẽſelues, but muſt be a pray for the Deuil. This is that which Solomon would haue vs to vnderſtand, when he ſaith, *the iniquities of the wicked. &c.* Heere we ſee howe Solomon is very careful throughly for to aduertiſe vs, when one thing often ſaide, doth not content him, but vſeth repetition, for to helpe our ignorance and weakeneſſe, and to wake vp our negligence: and alſo to make the wicked leſſe excuſable, for contemning the aduertiſementes hee giueth them. And when he compareth their iniquities and ſinnes vnto *cordes*, he ſheweth them that they are more miſerable then the brute beaſtes. For the beaſtes doe not knitte the lines and nettes wherein they are taken, neither alſo doe they caſt themſelues into the net, if they perceiue it, but ſhunne it: but the wicked doe winde their owne halters, and alſo runne into the ſame to be taken. He ſheweth alſo that they which nothing eſteeme the admonitions, corrections and threates that is made vnto them, and become angry and doe defie thoſe which exhorte and rebuke them, as though they woulde keepe them in bondage, when they woulde aſmuch as lieth in them deliuer them out of the ſnares: and they contrarily, willing to deliuer themſelues by diſſoluteneſſe and falling away, doe further binde & yelde themſelues captiues. For as they which obey and beleeue the word, are vnbounde and deliuered from ſinne, from the Deuil, from death, and from hel: euen ſo the rebells are ſlaues vnto ſinne, pryſoners to the Deuil, holden vnder with the bondes of death and hel: and ſo are chained with the cordes of their iniquities. Hee ſheweth, I ſay, that ſuch people are much deceiued, and are in an euill way, not only when they goe out of the way with the ſtrange woman, but alſo in what euil ſoeuer they inuet with obſtinacy & hardnes of heart. He hath made a pitte, digged it: and is fallen into the pit that hee made. The wicked is ſnared in the woorke of his owne hands. To bee ſhorte, what euil ſoeuer the wicked doe commit, the ſame is their deſtruction and damnation: but they thinke not ſo, as they ſhewe it, when by how much as they commit more euil, by ſo much the more doe they thinke to bee out of danger, as Solomon doth wel ſignifie it, when he vſeth theſe woordes, *ſhalbe taken, and ſhalbe holden:* And in this they deceiue themſelues, as here wee ſee it: and S. Paul doth wel ſignifie it vnto vs, when he ſaith, For when they ſhal ſay peace, and ſafetie, then ſhal come vpon them ſodaine deſtruction, as the trauell vppon a woman with child, and they ſhal not eſcape. Beſides this, wee muſt learne in this aduertiſement not to bee giuen to haue care to feed the fleſh in his luſtes & pleaſures. For ſeing that the affection of the fleſh is enimitie againſt God, and cannot be made ſubiect vnto the law of God, wee cannot take the pleaſures of our fleſh, except we wil runne into al wickedneſſe: and in ſo doing we twiſte our owne ropes wherein wee are taken and holden, wherevppon foloweth our deſtruction: and thus, the pleaſures that the wicked take in ſinning, doe turne them to greate hurt: for they engender not onely temporal, but alſo euerlaſting death. Solomon doeth threaten them therwith, ſaying,

Pſal. 7. 16, & 9. 16.

1. Theſſa. 5. 3.

Rom. 8. 7.

23 *He ſhal dye for want of inſtruction, &c.* When the promiſe of eternal life is made vnto thoſe which receiue inſtructiō to gouerne themſelues by wiſdome and good diſcretion, in holines, righteouſnes, faithfulneſſe & truth: It foloweth wel that they which neglect, do wel deſerue eternal death: and ought alſo to vnderſtande that when the ſcripture blameth them for the contempt of inſtruction, and that it threateneth them with death, that then they cannot looke but for eternal death, except by true repētance they embrace inſtruction, which before they had deſpiſed. For the Lorde wil not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he ſhould conuert and liue. Solomon then ſaying that the wicked which is without inſtructiō *ſhal die*, ſpeaketh of euerlaſting death, the which the wicked do wel deſerue:

Eze. 18. 32.

ſerue. for being without inſtruction, hee is voide of wiſedome, and filled with fooliſhnes, by the which being caried about, he neither can, nor wil holde the pathe of life, but turneth another way out of the right way, folowing the luſtes of his fleſh, which is dead, wherof foloweth wel that he is worthy to periſh euerlaſtingly. Here we are taught, that if we wil eſchue death and obteine life, we muſt receiue the inſtruction that God giueth vs by his worde, by aſſuring vs of the goodnes and loue of God towardes vs in Ieſus Chriſt, and giuing our ſelues to the obedience of his lawes. Heerein ſtandeth the true wiſedome of the children of God, the which keepeth thē from going aſtray and wandring out of the path of life. Wee alſo doe learne that the greateſt part of the world muſt needs periſhe, ſeeing that it is without inſtruction: ſome, for that they are deceiued by ſuperſtition and idolatrie, other ſome for that they receiue leſinges for trueth. And which worſt is, there are many to whome godly inſtruction is offered, but becauſe they are without religion, they contemne the inſtruction, and doe nothing but ſkorne it, and ſo much as they can, doe perſecute it.

The ſixth Chapter.

1 *MY Sonne, if thou bee ſuretie for thy neighbour, and haſt ſtricken hands with the ſtranger:*

2 *Thou art ſnared with the words of thy mouth: thou art euen taken with the words of thine owne mouth.*

3 *Doe this now, my ſonne, and deliuer thy ſelfe: ſeeing thou arte come into the hand of thy neighbor, goe & humble thy ſelfe, and ſolicite thy friendes.*

4 *Giue no ſleepe to thine eyes, nor ſlumber to thine eye liddes.*

5 *Deliuer thy ſelfe, as a Doe from the hand of the hunter, & as the byrde from the hand of the fouler.*

IT ſeemeth at the firſt ſight, howe Solomon goeth about to diſwade vs from anſwering or to become pledge or ſurety for our neighbors. For there is none of vs that would be intangled, or in ſubiection and bondage to another, but al naturally deſire to be free, and to vſe the power that God hath giuen vs at our owne wil: but Solomon doth tel vs that we are captiues, if ſo be it wee become pledges and ſureties for our neighbour. But to the end that we ſhould not doe this iniurie vnto Solomon, to charge him that hee woulde diſwade vs from doing the workes of charitie, wee muſt diligently marke vpon what condition hee woulde not haue vs to giue our hande to bee pledge for the ſtraunger, and alſo to wit, why he woulde that wee ſhoulde not redeeme our neighbours. For the firſt parte, wee muſt not bee ignorant, that euery man, how ſtrange or vnknowne ſoeuer hee bee, is our neighbour. Nowe hee hath exhorted vs heere aboue, that our way ſhould be far vnlike to the ſame of the ſtrange womã, &c. That we ſhould not giue, &c. *Chapt.5.8.& 9.10.*

And it may happen, that if wee bee not diſcrete, wee ſhal be ſuretie for ſuch as borrowe, that they may mainteine whores: and in this manner wee ſhould giue our honour vnto ſtrangers, &c. and our fountaines ſhoulde not bee ours only, but the ſtrangers with vs. And therfore we muſt vnderſtand that Solomon doeth aduertiſe vs by theſe words, that we ſhould not be haſtie in pledging our neighbour, except we know him wel, and alſo know that it is needful, and that by ſo doing we ſhal not bring our familie into ſuch extremitie as it ſhould be compelled to begge their bread, & that we our ſelues ſhould not be troubled therby. For although that it be commanded vs to loue our neighbour as our ſelues, and to aſsiſt him with ours: yet it is not commanded vs to eaſe others to bring our ſelues in diſtreſſe. As touching the ſecond point, Solomon woulde not haue vs to be ſuretie for our neighbour, becauſe that they which are intangled & bound for an other, oftentimes are led with ſome vaine cõfidence, or pride and oſtentation. They put their truſt in him whom they pledge, or elſe they wil declare thẽſelues, that it may be knowen they haue the abilitie, and a noble and liberal hart, and that they are bold to venture the ſame. And alſo Solomon doth not allow vs one to be pledge for another, becauſe that moſt often the ſame commeth not of loue; for ſome labour to maintein their credite, and to make their profit with the rich and mighty, or els to ſet forth their parẽts, kindred, and familiars: but in the end they find themſelues more deceiued & beguiled then were to be wiſhed. And herein we may ſay that he hath an eye to that which is ſaid in the Pſalmes, It is better to truſt in the Lord, then to haue confidence in man. Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the ſonne of any man, for there is no helpe in him. Again, Though my father & mother ſhould forſake me, yet the Lord wil gather me vp. Ieremy alſo ſaith, Curſed be the mã, that truſteth in man, & maketh fleſh his arme, & withdraweth his hart frõ the Lord &c. Solomon would not keepe vs then from pledging our neighbor, when need is, & as our power is able: but to the end that we ſhould take good heed to become ſurety indifferently for al men that ſhal require vs, hee ſheweth vs into what danger we caſt our ſelues, ſaying, that we are *ſnared, that we are taken by the wordes of our mouth*, that is to ſay, that we are ſo ſtraightly bound & charged, that if they for whome we are ſuretie bee not able to pay, that

*Leui.*19.18.
2.*Cor.*8.13.
*Pſal.*118.8.& 146.3.&.27.10.
*Iere.*17.5.

we ſtande bounde both before God and men to ſatiſfie the parties to whome we haue giuen our hand, by anſwering for another. And ſo doing, we haue taken no ſmal matter vpon vs, as Solomon doeth ſhewe by the counſel he giueth vs for it, ſaying,

3 *Nowe do this,&c.* He doth counſel vs to get our ſelues deliuered from the power of our neighbor, in this that we are become ſuretie for another, and for to bring it to pas, wee ſhould not dwel quietly at home, without care, but with ſpeede to go towardes him, whoſe hande we haue ſtricken in being pledge to him for another: and humbly to proſtrate our ſelues before him, requiring him to haue patience, confeſſing our ſelues detters vnto him, and in the meane while that we ſhould not ſuffer him whome wee haue pledged to ſleepe as it is ſaid: but to preſſe him and cal vpon him to pay his dette with al diligence. When Solomon ſpeaketh after this ſort, he ſheweth wel the danger, and yet doth expreſſe it further, whē he would not in any wiſe haue vs to ſleepe, ſaying,

4 *Giue no ſleepe to thine eyes.* And yet for to expreſſe the neceſſitie more, he ſheweth that they which become ſureties, doe not only bring their goods in dāger, but their perſons alſo: for he ſaith,

5 *Deliuer thy ſelfe,&c.* When he cōpareth man vnto a Doe and a byrd, he ſheweth that if he become ſuretie or pledge for another, that it behoueth him to be diligent. And when hee, to whome they ſtand bound, is likened vnto an hunter and fouler, he ſheweth that the pledge ſtandeth not in ſafetie of his perſon, but eyther in ſatisfying of the dette, or ſauing himſelfe from his handes. And thus it is not without cauſe that Solomon laboureth to turne man away from being ſuretie. Hee endeuoureth to counſel him to prouide for his familie, and that he bring not himſelf into ſuch neceſſitie, that both he and his houſholde come to diſtreſſe, and to be conſtrained to come into bondage or periſh. Hee wil not keepe backe any man, (according to his abilitie) from dooing good to his needy neighbour, ſeing that he hath praiſed and commended woorkes of charitie, and heere after wil commende them, euen towardes our enemies. We may then learne to be prudent and diſcrete in the gouernement of our ſelues, of our familie, and of our goods, and yet without feare that the earth ſhoulde fayle vs: as the niggardes and couetous, which wil doe pleaſure to none, for feare their goods

ſhould diminiſh: and make themſelues beleeue that the goods they poſſeſſe, are ſo theirs, that they ought not to diſtribute any thing out of their houſe, Wee may learne againe not to be careful for to morowe, when without diſtruſting the prouidence of God, and without doing wrong to our neighbour, wee bee careful & diligent to keepe our ſelues from extremities, and from begging, or to come in harde bondage and captiuitie. When Solomon doth aduertiſe vs of this care and diligence, for to ſhew vs, that we muſt in no wiſe be ſlacke, he fordiddeth vs to giue ſleepe, &c. Not that hee woulde not haue vs ſleepe, after we haue watched and laboured in the day, ſeeing that the ſleepe is a part of this that we need in this preſent life. Only by this maner of ſpeeche he doth admoniſh vs that we ſhould not be ſluggiſh and negligent, there where need is of labouring, to deliuer our ſelues out of trouble. Nowe if for the keeping of our goods and bodies we be admoniſhed to haue ſuch care, wee ought wel to vnderſtand by a more ſtrong reaſon, that our diligence ought to bee great, when it toucheth the preſeruation of our ſoules, and of thoſe that are committed to our charge: as are the magiſtrates, which ought to take order that in their countrie and iuriſdiction the offences ſhould be taken away, &c. the fathers and mothers careful that their children ſhould be wel taught to liue in the feare of God, and to gouerne themſelues in good and honeſt maners: thoſe which bring and offer children to be baptized, to bee diligent to accompliſh that which they promiſe, chiefly when the children are fatherles, and want good guyding: but aboue al it belongeth vnto the miniſters of the woord to bee vigilant to gouerne themſelues ſo holily, that they offend no mã, that they ſhould be careful to preach the ſincere truth, to admoniſh, to reproue and correct, that by their miniſtery they may winne the ſoules of the people of God, ſo much as in them lieth, &c.

6 *Go to the piſmire, o ſluggard: behold her waies, & be wiſe.*
7 *For ſhe hauing no guide, gouernour, nor ruler:*
8 *Prepareth her meate in the ſommer, and gathereth her foode in the harueſt.*

Becauſe he hath admoniſhed him that doth become ſurety and pledge for another, to be diligẽt to deliuer himſelfe from the danger whereinto hee is brought: knowing that there are many negligent and ſlouthful, which haue no care to doe that which belongeth to the good prouiſion of the houſhold and familie, he hath taken occaſion to direct himſelfe generally to the ſlouthful, to counſel them what they ſhould do: he blameth and rebuketh them, & ſheweth them the miſerie that ſhal happen vnto them, except they forſake ſluggiſhnes, & apply thẽſelues to yeeld their duetie, & be quicke to do their office. Nowe this is the cuſtome to put thoſe that are not wel learned, (& whoſe profit and furtherance we deſire) vnto ſome good maiſter to be taught: their maiſters giue thẽ warning to marke wel what is ſaid vnto them, that afterwards they may gouerne thẽſelues wiſely in their houſholdes, according as they ſhal haue learned of their maiſters. So Solomon deſiring the profit of the slouthful, ſendeth him vnto a Maiſter, ſaying, *Go to the Piſmire, o ſluggard.* He exhorteth vs to regarde that which we haue ſeene done of the ante or piſmire, that he learne to gouerne himſelfe wiſely in his affaires: for he ſaith, *and be wiſe.* The ſluggards ought to gaue great ſhame and baſhfulnes, when Solomon ſendeth them vnto a beaſt ſo litle and ſo weake, and would haue them to learne of her: & herein he maketh them as it were ſubiect vnto this litle beaſt, the which not only ought to be ſubiect vnto them, but alſo al the beaſts of the world, though they were neuer ſo wild and cruel, as the woorde of God doth teache vs. But the Image of God hath bin blotted out in vs by ſinne: alſo we haue not ſuch lordſhip & rule ouer the beaſtes as was giuen vnto vs at the beginning: for there are that ryſe vp againſt man as the great wild beaſts: there are alſo very ſmal that do trouble man both in his body and goods. Though there were no other thing but that the ſluggards are made after the ymage of God, & that the piſmire is a litle feeble beaſt, they ought to bee aſhamed that the wiſe man ſendeth them to conſider his workemanſhip, to learne wiſdome and wel to gouerne their houſes and families: but foraſmuch as this weake beaſt doth his buſines without conſtraint, and without guide of other, & maketh prouiſion for that which is neceſſarie for him, folowing this natural inclination and this feeling that it hath of God, and by the ſame of her ſelfe laboureth & worketh with al diligence: & the ſluggiſh, beſides the natural ſight that they haue receiued of God, wherby they ought to bee gouerned of themſelues to work and to ſet themſelues to labour, haue their parents and neighbours, whoſe example and counſel they ſhoulde folow: they haue maiſter workmen & labourers, of whome they may learne to do the neceſſarie woorks of this life. Beſides this, there are the lawes of the Magiſtrates for to compel their ſubiects to labour. The piſmire hath no ſuch gouernement, (as is ſaid) *For ſhe hauing no guide, &c.* This ought to giue occaſion vnto the ſlouthful to bee greatly confoũded & to yeld with ſhame, & to be voide of boldnes to appeare before men: for though they haue ſo many kindes of guides, yet they folow none of thẽ. And albeit that this litle beaſt & piſmire hath no maner of guide, yet doth ſhe folow her natural inclination.

8 *Prepareth her meate, &c.* But what ſhame ſoeuer the ſlouthful ought to haue (foraſmuch as it is better to haue ſhame then to haue loſſe,) yet to make their profit, they muſt folowe the counſel of Solomon, that they ſuffer not their goods to be loſt, for want of labouring, & to come in danger of begging or to die with hunger for want of gathering and locking vp of their goods in ſeaſon and time conuenient. Labouring is a thing ordeined of God from the beginning, and the tymes for the ſame appointed. They then that labour, and beſtow their trauail and paine, do fulfil the commandement of God, and thoſe that reape after they haue ſowne, and doe lock them vp for to ſpend them, when & where as need ſhal require, do wiſely and pleaſe God, not deſpiſing his bleſſing. Contrarily, the ſluggardes are rebelles and diſobedient vnto God, they doe fooliſhly, not acknowledging the bleſsing of God. They that woorke according to the time, are worthy to eate their dayly bread: but the ſlouthful deſerue to dye with hunger, and if they doe eate, they liue of ſtealth: for they eate the bread of others. And therefore it is not without cauſe that Solomon doeth reprooue them, and laboureth to awake them vp, ſaying,

Gen.2.15. & 8.22.

9 *Howe long wilt thou ſleepe, O ſluggarde? when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleepe?*

10 *Yet a litle ſleepe, a litle ſlumber, a litle folding of the handes to ſleepe.*

11 *Therfore thy pouertie cometh on, as one that traueyleth by the way, & thy neceſſitie like an armed man.*

When a man lyeth not long, but is quicke to riſe vp, at a due & conueniēt houre, after his reaſonable ſleepe: then is he coūted careful and diligent. Contrarily, he which deſireth to lye and ſleepe out of meaſure, & willingly ſtandeth not vp, when it is time thertoo, is eſteemed careles and ſluggiſh; and alſo the bed & too much ſleepe, make a man heauie & dul witted: and this is the cauſe why Solomō noteth expreſly a ſluggard, by his lying downe and exceſsiue ſleepe. And this vpon good cauſe, for the ſluggiſh not onely are vnprofitable vnto their neighbours, as experience teacheth: but alſo they bring hurt vnto themſelues, by not taking heede and preuenting of the miſeries which are at hand to catche them. Solomon doeth wel declare it vnto them, when in mocking at their maner of dealings & opinions, he ſaith,

10 *Yet a litle ſleepe, &c.* Foraſmuch as it is lawful to take our reſt, and ſleepe, for better to be diſpoſed afterwardes to folowe our calling; Solomon ſpeaketh not to them that ſleepe a litle, and as neede requireth: but to them which ſleepe too much, and yet he ſpeaketh but of a *litle ſleepe, and of a litle ſlumber:* and in this maner hee expreſſeth the ſaying and opinion of the ſlouthful: for albeit they are too much giuē to ſleepe, and that they fold their hands longer then were needful, yet as though they had greate deſire to watche and to labour, they wil ſay, let mee ſleepe yet a litle, let mee lye yet a litle while, and ſo make themſelues beleeue they ſleepe not long. But thus doing, they deceiue themſelues, and take their hurte. As Solomon telleth them,

11 *Therfore thy pouertie commeth on &c.* No man knoweth what time the man wil come to his inne that is on the way: euen ſo is pouertie which hapneth to the ſlouthful. If wee ſhal meete a theefe on the way which is wel armed, which ſhal not very eaſily put him backe, but rather he wil reſiſt, and alſo wil with ſuch violence & fiercenes aſſault vs, that we ſhal not eſcape without leeſing our purſe, or without beeing wounded to death: In this ſorte the ſlouthful are aſſaulted with pouertie. Beholde howe Solomon exhorteth the ſluggards, howe he doth rebuke them, and aduertiſe them of the euil that they deſerue. But vpon the admonition wherby hee woulde haue them to bee like vnto the piſmire that gathereth &c. It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that hee is contrarie vnto Ie-

ſus Chriſt, who ſaieth vnto vs, Bee not careful for your life, what ye ſhal eate, or what yee ſhal drinke: nor yet for your bodies, what yee ſhal put on, &c. Beholde the ſoules of the ayre, &c. I anſwere, That Solomon laboureth not by his doctrine to make vs careful: for albeeit the piſmire doeth labour, yet is hee not carefull: but hee woulde that wee ſhoulde occupie our perſons about that whereunto they are ordeined of God, and that wee ſuffer not the goods to bee loſt that hee hath giuen vs. Alſo our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doeth not forbid vs to bee careful, diligent, and laborious, for he doth not teache vs that we ſhould waſte the goods that hee hath giuen vs, and that wee ſhoulde neglect to gather them & locke them vp: but hee laboureth to take from vs niggardlines and diſtruſt of Gods prouidence, whereunto wee muſt wholy referre the goods that God hath ſent vs by labouring and faſt keeping. For if God do not bleſſe our labour, it cannot proſper. And if we muſt not bee ſlouthful to labour, to reape and locking vp of our goods for to mainteine this life: by a more ſtrong reaſon wee muſt bee careful to labour for our ſoules, and to gather the ſpiritual harueſt. Likewiſe when Solomon ſaieth, *hee hath no felowe, &c.* Hee admoniſheth al Magiſtrates not to ſuffer their ſubiectes to bee negligent, and to eate their bread with ydleneſſe, albeeit they haue riches, and that after the iudgement of the fleſh, they haue no neede to labour. Furthermore if the ſluggards be reproued and blamed, becauſe that by their trade of liuing they are in danger to fal into pouertie: by a ſtronger reaſon wee may blame the pilferers and ſtealers and couetous, and vſurers and bribetakers, and they which wil not declare the right caſe for feare of diſpleaſure. For no thank to them though the poore periſh not: but they themſelues ſhal fal into ſuch pouertie that they ſhal not haue a droppe of water.

Mat.66.25.

Pſa.127.1.

12 *The vnthriftie man and the wicked man walketh with a frowarde mouth.*

13 *He maketh a ſigne with his eyes, hee ſignifieth with his feete: he inſtructeth with his fingers:*

14 *Lewde thinges are in his hart hee imagineth euil at all times, and raiſeth vp contentions.*

15 *Therfore ſhal his deſtruction come ſpeedily: hee ſhalbe deſtroyed ſodainly without recouery.*

For to make vs haue the ſlouthful and ſlouthfulneſſe in horror and deteſtation which he hath blamed and threatened with pouertie and ſodaine wante, he ſheweth vs the wickednes whereunto the negligent are giuen, to the end that we ſhould know that not onely they hurt themſelues, but alſo hurt their neighbours: for often the man which ſpendeth not the tyme to doe any good woorke, is a *ſonge creux* a diuiſer of malice, and doeth change and diſguiſe himſelfe into diuers manners, in deuiſing euil againſt his neigbours. Albeit neuertheleſſe becauſe of the greate number of the ſlouthful, which are froward, it might be ſaid that Solomō taketh occaſion to deſcribe the wickednes of the froward & their ſodain deſtructiō in theſe 12. 13. 14. & 15. verſes: Yet the matter that hee ſpeaketh of here, may be applied vnto the ſlouthful, at the leſt to the moſt parte. For when the ſpirit of man cānot be ydle, but wil be occupied about ſomething, ſeeing that the ſlouthful doe nothing that is any thing woorth, and bringeth no profit vnto their neighbors, it muſt needs folowe that they giue themſelues vnto euil and to doe hurte. Wee may then ſay that whome hee calleth ſlouthful, hee calleth nowe an *vnthriftie and wicked man:* the which appellations and names agree right wel with the ſlouthful: for ſith he doeth nothing that is any thing woorth, it muſt needs followe hee is wicked. For eyther make the tree good, and his frute good: or elſe make the tree euil, and his frute euil. &c. Thus it is yll ſpoken, when we ſay of an vnprofitable man, that hee is woorth a good morow, when wee ſee not openly that hee hurteth: ſeeing that it is neceſſary that a man muſt profite if hee bee good. Likewiſe the twoo woordes which Solomon vſeth heere in his Hebrue tongue is very meete for the ſlouthful. For *Beliiaall*, is a woorde compounded, which ſignifieth as much as without profit or vnprofitable: and the other woorde that is, *Auen*, ſignifieth ſometimes vanitie, lying and a thing of nothing. Theſe titles heere, as wee knowe, are very meete for the ſlouthful. For can a man finde any thing more vnprofitable, more vaine, and leſſe woorth then ſluggardes? But whetherſoeuer we apply theſe words, either to the ſlouthful, or gene-

Math. 12. 33

generally vnto al frowarde and wicked, Solomon doeth wel ſhew it that they are very dangerous, when hee declareth vnto vs their malice, their corrupt manners, their wicked and vngodly kinde of life. Hee beginneth with the mouth, and doth attribute feete vnto the ſame, not that they go right, neither whereas they ought, neither that they haſt to doe wel and to helpe their neighbours, but feete that go cleane contrary to that which they ſhoulde: for hee ſaith, that the wicked and frowarde doeth walke with *a frowarde mouth*, the which hee hath forbidden to the children of God. Thus the ſlouthful and other wicked doe not keepe the path of wel ſpeaking vnto the honour and praiſe of God: but as they are vnprofitable and vaine, ſo doe they giue their mouthes to take the name of God in vaine. For beeing ydle, they labour to take ſome recreations according vnto their deſire, the which are ful of vanitie. Wherefore, out of the abundance of their vaine hartes, they ſpeake vanitie in al diſſoluteneſſe and abhomination, in mingling the name of GOD in their ieſtes, in blaſpheming him, in ſinging diſhoneſt ſonges, and ſpeaking wantonly. Alſo they hold not the way of well ſpeaking of their neighbours: but as they are frowarde and wicked, euen ſo by their words they labour not but maliciouſly, and wickedly to hurte, and to hinder their neighbours by ſlandering, by bearing falſe witneſſe againſt them, and in ſwearing to their loſſe. This is more prooued then is needeful, that the ydle and ſlouthful do gouerne themſelues thus ſimplie, euen in al eſtates. &c.

13 *Hee maketh a ſigne, &c.* Becauſe that the frowarde and wicked man would not bee knowne nor counted ſuch, it is needful for him that hee often holde his peace: for ſeeing that hee is euil, he cannot continue ſpeaking wel: and ſo his malice ſhoulde bee too much ſeene againſt his wil: and for this cauſe ſomewhat to hyde himſelfe, he diſguiſeth and vſeth diſſimulation and fainedneſſe, hee conterfaiteth and turneth himſelfe nowe on this ſorte, and then of another. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame by the ſigne of the eyes, by the ſpeaking of the feete, and by the token of the fingers. The froward & the wicked do thus counterfaite themſelues in diuers ſorts, byting in their woordes: for albeeit they haue no deſire, but to

ſpeake wickedly, yet doe they ſpare to ſpeake, becauſe they woulde not bee knowen, and yet notwithſtanding cannot keepe in, but that they giue ſome ſignification of their malice vnto their fellowes, or els diſſemble ſomewhat to deceiue thoſe which they wil drawe vnto their wickedneſſe. If they would in no wiſe bee knowne, Solomon woulde not expreſſe their fictions and coulorings by ſigne, woorde, and token. For they which doe ſigne, ſpeake, and ſhew, do not ſeeke to be vnderſtood: but the wicked giueth the watchword (as it is ſayde) they haue their tokens and manners of doinges whereby one of them may be knowen to another, & what is to bee done, that they may catche and beguile them which are none of their companie, or winne others to conſent vnto them.

14 *Lewde things are in his harte, &c.* Wee muſt not maruell though the frowarde and wicked haue ſuch manners and cuſtomes: for there cannot come any other thing out of the ſacke, then that which is within: The frowarde, as Solomon ſaieth, are ſtuffed at the hart, not with one malice alone, but with diuers: for lewde things are in their heartes: and albeeit that no man ſeeketh to doo them hurte, yet is their hearte ſo poyſoned and embrued with lewde thinges, that they can neuer ceaſe from thinking and ſeeking meanes howe they may execute their diſpleaſure, for to hurte them which doe them no wrong. Solomon doeth wel expreſſe it, when hee ſaieth that hee *ymagineth euil at all tymes*. Nowe the euil that they ymagine, is to ſet al in troubles and confuſion by diſſention that they ſtirre vp through the frowardneſſe of their mouthes, by their diſſimulations, and by the lewdeneſſe of their heartes. Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, *That they rayſe vp contentions*. But as they deuiſe the deſtruction of their neighbours, euen ſo, alſo ſooner then they thinke of, they ſhalbee deſtroyed without remedie, as he ſaith,

Pſa.7.&.37.
Pro.1.26.

15 *Therfore ſhal his, &c.* Howe the wicked after a litle time of proſperitie, at the laſt fal into deſtruction, is in other places very wel deſcribed.

16 ***Theſe ſixe thinges doeth the Lord hate: yea his ſoule abhorreth ſeuen:***

17 *The hautie eyes, a lying tongue, and the hands that ſhed innocent blood,*
18 *An heart that ymagineth wicked enterpriſes, feete that be ſwift in running to miſchiefe,*
19 *A falſe witnes that ſpeaketh lies, & him that rayſeth vp contentions amongſt brethren.*

It is a thing that wee ought not to doute of, that the thing which pleaſeth not God, cannot long endure. Wherfore we muſt not wonder though the deſtruction of the froward and wicked ſhal ſodenly fall without any helpe. Hee pleaſeth not God; therefore hee doeth abhominable things. Solomon hath ſomething touched it before: hee ſaide that hee ſhoulde bee deſtroied, that hee ſhoulde bee ſodenly ſtrocken: but for to ſhewe that it cannot otherwiſe bee done, hee declareth vnto vs more amply what are the manners and cuſtomes of the frowarde and wicked, and doeth affirme vnto vs that they are much diſpleaſing vnto God. And for to begin this declaration, hee ſaieth, *There are ſixe things that God abhorreth:* & as if he had not expreſſed a number ſufficient, he correcteth himſelfe, ſaying that there are ſeuen: and as if the hatred were not ynough for to ſhew that the frowarde and wicked deſerueth wel to be deſtroied, and that his liuing is not acceptable vnto God, hee addeth, *that God abhorreth them.* And foraſmuch as in God we liue and haue our beeing, it is neceſſary that what hee hateth and abhorreth muſt come to decay, verſe, 12. Nowe as heere before hee hath noted the frowarde and the wicked by his mouth, eyes, feete, and handes or fingers, and by his heart, and by the contentions: euen ſo nowe for to ſhewe that it is neceſſarie hee periſh, hee declareth that God hateth and deteſteth theſe thinges, not that God is ledde with troubled affections, as men which are often ledde as their affections doe carrie them, GOD neuer changeth, but in all thinges hee woorketh according as hee hath determined from euerlaſting and before the foundation of the worlde was laide. Hee proceedeth not then by hatred and anger to deſtroy the wicked: but becauſe that they which he deſtroieth and ouerthroweth according as they haue deſerued, doe feele him as if hee hated them, the Scripture doeth attribute hatred vnto him, as the tranſ-

Acts. 17. 28.

greſſor wil deeme of the iudge that ſendeth him vnto the gallowes. Alſo albeeit that God hath not a ſoule diſtinct from the reſt of his ſubſtance and eſſence (for there is nothing in him that can be parted nor diuided, as the man which is compounded of a ſoule and a body, the which may bee ſeparated by temporall death) yet the ſcripture doeth attribure a ſoule vnto him, wherewith hee loueth the righteous, and hateth and deteſteth the wicked, that the good may learne that the promiſes of life are not made vntoo them faynedly and coulorably: and the wicked ſhoulde knowe that is is no play nor paſtime, when they are threatened with death and damnation. &c.

17 *The hautie eyes, &c.* The firſt thing of the ſeuen that the Lord hateth and abhorreth are the hautie eyes, the which are proude, the which not onely praiſe themſelues, ſo much til they diſdaine & contemne others: but alſo do ſo aſſure themſelues in their wickedneſſe, that they haue no feare of God, nor reuerence to his word. The Zodomites were thus high minded. The Lord hath wel ſhewed that he abhorred their pride, whē he ouerthrew thē. He declareth the ſame in Eſay. Alſo our Lord declareth the ſame in Luke: for that which is highly eſteemed among men, is abhomination in the ſight of God. The riche glutton likewiſe which was cloathed in purple and ſilke, &c. doeth ſhewe vs right wel that the proude are much hated with God, and are of him abhorred, when hee was throwne headlong into hel into ſuch extremitie that hee coulde not obteine a drop of water, &c. God did wel ſhewe vnto Nabuchadnezar that hee deteſted pride, &c.

Gene. 13. 13. *&*. 18 20.
Eze. 16. 49.
Gene. 19. 24.
Eſay. 2. 11. *&* 3 15. *&*. 5. 21.
Luk. 16. 15. 24

But nowe albeeit that GOD doeth not dayly ſhewe vnto vs ſuch examples of his hatred againſt the high minded and proude perſons, it is not therefore to ſay, that GOD doeth not alwaies hate and abhorre them, and that they ſhoulde feele the ſame at the time appointed, as the examples and threatninges are conteined in the ſcripture. Hee condemned the Citties of Sodome and Gomorrha to vtter ouerthrowe. The Lorde knoweth howe to deliuer the faithful out of temptation. The Lorde is not ſlacke concerning his promiſe: and though the Lorde doeth puniſhe the proude immediatly: let vs not waxe obſtinate in our ſinnes by contemning of his threateninges.

Dan. 4. 28.
2. *Pet.* 2. 6. *&* 9. *&* 3. 9.

Let vs not be like vnto theſe ſcorners now, now, I ſay, that wee are *2.Pet.3.4.* come to the laſt times, which ſay, Where is the promiſe of his comming? For ſince the fathers died, al things cōtinue alike frō the beginning. Thoſe which ſpeake & think ſo, ſhall at the laſt feele that they ſtroue againſt god, that they haue opened their mouths againſt the holy one of Iſrael, and haue blaſphemed. And ſeeing that God doeth declare vs theſe thinges by his worde, if in ſteede of fearing that wee bee in his diſpleaſure, wee woulde bee aſſured of his loue, and fauour towardes vs: if in ſteede of fearing that hee abhorreth vs, wee woulde bee aſcertained that wee pleaſe him, and are acceptable vnto him, let vs humblie caſt downe our eyes in fearing to offende him, in trembling at his worde, and not ſeeking after high thinges, &c. Thus doing wee may proteſt with Dauid, Lord, my *Pſal.131.1.* heart is not hautie, neither are mine eies loftie, neither haue I wal- *Rom.12.16.* ked in great matters, and hid from mee. And ſo farre of ſhall our deſtruction bee, and that wee ſhoulde be ſtricken downe, that wee ſhal rather bee exalted, and preſerued ſafe and ſounde: for whoſoeuer humbleth himſelfe, ſhalbe exalted: For the Lorde is nigh vnto thē that are contrite and deſolate, &c: Not that we deſerue it, but it is his good pleaſure to giue vs this grace, Submit your ſelues one vn *1.Pet.5.5.* to another: Deck your ſelues inwardly with lowlineſſe of minde: for God reſiſteth the proud, and giueth grace to the humble. Secōdly, he hateth and abhorreth a *Lying tongue*, a falſe and vnfaithfull tongue, a tongue that ſpeaketh deceitfully and craftily, & not without cauſe: for ſith that he is faithfull and true, euen trueth it ſelfe, we ought to vnderſtand that he cannot abide lying, but wil puniſhe it, moſt ſeuerely and ſharpely, in the time that hee ſhal thinke conuenient. The Lorde ſhal deſtroy them that ſpeake lyes. When GOD *Pſal.5.6.* is ſo much mooued and offended with falſeneſſe and lying, that hee threatneth the deceiptful and liers with ſo ſharp a puniſhment, they which haue the charge to leade the people vnto ſaluation, and to keepe the ſame from periſhing, ſo much as lyeth in them, ought to bee greeuouſly tormented in their mindes, ſeeing that falſeneſſe and vnfaithfulneſſe, deceit and lying, are ſo commonly vſed in the *Pſal.12.1.* world, not onely amongeſt them which want the worde of God. but alſo amongeſt them which dare well bragge that they are refourmed according to the Goſpell. For them chiefly ſhoulde the

Iere.9.2. Miniſters bee moſt greeued according too the example of Ieremie.
Beſides this cauſe, wee may marke others, whereof the leaſt being
conſidered ſhal ſuffice, for to iudge and diſcerne that GOD hath
good cauſe to hate a falſe tongue and to abhorre it. The tongue
1.Cor.12.18 is one of the higheſt members of the body, & not of it ſelfe, for the
Lorde hath placed euery mēber in the body, as it hath pleaſed him.
The tongue then as the reſt of the members ought too bee applied
for a weapon of righteouſneſſe vnto God: and if it bee falſe and lying,
it is a weapon of iniquitie vnto ſinne: and ſo it is a rebel againſt
his maker. Wherefore hee rightly hateth it and abhorreth
Pſal.34.1.&. it. But to make our tongues to bee weapons of righteouſneſſe vnto
35.28.&.5.4 God, wee muſt applie them to that which the Pſalmiſt promiſeth,
I will alwaies giue thankes vnto the Lorde: his praiſe ſhal bee in
my mouth continually: And my tongue ſhal vtter thy righteouſnes
and thy prayſe euery day. Contrarily, if we apply them vnto deceit
and lying, then are they weapons of iniquitie, the which pleaſeth
not God, for thou art not a God which loueſt wickedneſſe: neither
ſhal euil dwel with thee. And this is vpon good right, for ſuch people
are not onely rebelles againſt men, but againſt God alſo: for in
Pſal.50.14. them there is no righteouſneſſe. If then wee wil vſe our tongues
wel, wee muſt giue them to praiſe God: as wee are taught, Offer
vnto God praiſe, &c. And for to do this wel, wee muſt abſtaine frō
offending our neighbours either in deede or in wordes: For God
&. hath ſaide vnto the wicked, What haſt thou to doe to declare mine
ordinãces, that thou ſhouldeſt take my couenant in thy mouth, ſeeing
thou hateſt to be refourmed? Now as touching our ſelues, and
the corruption of our nature, we are all ſuch, we muſt therfore pray
that God woulde haue mercy vppon vs, and open our lippes, and
therewith let vs followe the exhortation of S. Paule, Wherſore caſt
Pſal.51.17. away lying, and ſpeake euery man trueth vnto his neigbour. Heereby
Ephe.4.24. we may vnderſtand, that if wee haue a falſe tongue, firſt of all, we
are vnthankefull vnto God, not confeſſing that hee hath giuen vs
a wel ſpoken tongue, and not a dumbe, as vnto beaſtes. Secondly,
that wee are more vnreaſonable then the beaſtes, when we vſe our
tongues againſt the ordinance of GOD, the which beaſtes
wil not doe: and ſo wee are rebelles and vnfaithful vnto GOD.

Thirdly, that we are traitours vnto our brethren. Theſe three reaſons wel conſidered, wee muſt not maruell though God abhorre a falſe tongue. For hee hath well ſhewed it vnto his people of Iſrael. In Ioſua, wee may ſee that Balaam was ſlaine for hauing ſolde his tongue to curſe the people of God: The Prophetes of Baal were ſlaine, Iudas Iſcarioth (of whome it was ſpoken. The mouth of the wicked, and the mouth ful of deceit are opened vpon me) hath tried that God hateth a falſe tongue, when he hanged himſelfe. Likewiſe haue Ananias and Sapphira. And foraſmuche as there is no exception of perſons before God, all falſe tongues muſt looke for deſtruction and damnation.

Num. 11.1. & 14.27. & 16 32.
Ioſua. 13.22
1. Kin. 18.40
Pſal. 109. 2.
Mat. 27.5
Act. 5.5

Nowe in the third place, the Lorde hateth and abhorreth, *the handes that ſhead innocent blood:* that is to ſay, them which doe wrong and extortion vnto their neighbours, either in their perſons or goods, cauſeleſſe, and that their neighbours haue not offended them, nor done any wrong: ſuch kinde of people are murtherers and menſleaers, theeues & robbers, ſtealers, and rauiſhers, the couetous and vſurers, graſiers, and engroſſers of corne and vittaile, to make the ſame deere, and they which by vnlawful meanes doe drawe vnto them ſelues the ſubſtance of their neighbours: in ſuche wiſe, that there is no thankes due to them, though their neighbours doe not miſerablie periſhe. The Lorde God hath wel ſhewed the ſame to Caine, to Pharao, to Saule which perſecuted Dauid, and cauſed the prieſtes to be ſlaine, when hee ſlue himſelfe: vnto Dauid alſo which had rauiſhed the wife of his faithful ſeruãt, and committed execrable murther. For the which it was ſaide vnto him, nowe therfore the ſworde ſhal neuer depart from thine houſe. Vnto Achab: But it is not without cauſe that God doeth abhorre the murtherers: for this ſentence was pronounced therof long agoe, Who ſo ſheadeth mans blood, by man ſhal his blood bee ſhed. As touching rauiſhings, by what meanes & in what ſort ſoeuer they be done, the Lord ſheweth wel that he doth abhorre thẽ, whẽ he counteth thẽ murtherers & manquellers. And to the ende that wee deceiue not our ſelues, in condẽning ſuch people, & iuſtifie our ſelues for that wee be no poulers, and yet, for al that wee care nothing for the poore: let vs knowe that ſuch as haue the riches of this world,

Gen. 4.9.
Exo. 12.12.29. & 14.24.
1. Sam. 22.17. & 31.4.
2. Sam. 11.4. 15. & 12.10.
1. King. 21.19.
Gene. 9.7.
Eſay. 1.15. & 3.13. 14. & 59.3.
Mat. 3.2.3. 10. & 7.2.

and doe not diſtribute them vntoo the poore needy, are counted
1.Ioh.3.19 in the number of murtherers.

18 *An heart that imagineth wicked enterpriſes.* This
ſame is the fourth thing that God hateth and abhorreth. Now
foraſmuch as it is not without cauſe that the Lorde hateth and deteſteth
theſe three things aforeſaid, it is no meruaile though he haue
this fourth in abhomination alſo: for out of this ſpring doth al euil
proceede. Wee may partly knowe the ſame, by that that Adam
Gen.3.17.& was rebuked, firſt for obeing his wife, and for eating of the fruite,
6.5. forbidden. But it is more plainely ſhewed, where as GOD complaineth
of the imagination of mans hearte: and when Ieſus
Chriſt ſayeth, Out of the heart come euil thoughts, murthers, adulteries,
Mat.15.19. fornications, thefts, falſe teſtimonies and ſlaunders: and
Ephe.4.17. Saint Paule ſayeth, This I ſay therefore, and teſtifie in the Lorde,
that yee hencefoorth walke not as other Gentiles walke, in vanities
of their mindes, &c. Many men wil hate and abhorre the foreſaide
three thinges, becauſe they ſee and knowe that they are hurtfull
vnto them: but fewe wil hate and abhorre the hearte: for
they ſee no further then the face, and cannot pearce vnto the heart,
nor iudge no further therof then they ſee the fruites, which are the
1.Sam.16.7. wordes and workes: But God who created al thinges, knoweth his
Pſal.7.10. creatures aſwel within, as without, hee pearceth euen vnto the bottome
Ier.17.10. of the heartes, wherin there is nothing conteined but he ſeeth
it. And ſeeing hee is the God, who is pleaſed with equitie and vprightneſſe,
goodneſſe and true dealing, nowe if the heart of man is
giuen to any thing contrarily, and that hee wil not bee conuerted,
and apply the ſame vnto goodneſſe, it is vnpoſsible but
GOD muſt hate him, and abhorre him: whereof foloweth the
deſtruction of man. I ſay expreſſely, which is giuen, &c. Becauſe
that albeeit euery man hath an euil harte, yet is hee not hated of
GOD, neither of him abhorred, when he is diſpleaſed with his
Pſa.51.19. wickedneſſe.

Eſay.66.2. We may here iudge that there are many people which thinke very
much of themſelues, but their eſtimation doth profit thẽ but a litle:
for they are hated of God: and contrarily that many are deſpiſed, to
whome their contempt bringeth no hurt, becauſe they are beloued
of GOD and doe pleaſe him. In the fiſt place, *The feete,*
that

that be ſwift in running to miſchiefe: That is to ſay, the raging &
boyling affections which carry away a man in ſuch wiſe that he careth
not what he doeth, ſo that he may bring to paſſe for to hurte
his neighbours, and to worke the miſchiefe that he deſireth. And
herein he compareth ſuch affectiõs vnto a furious madde man, that
hath nothing in him but haſt to execute his anger. Hee will forget
all other neceſſary and profitable affaires for to followe his wicked
enterpriſe, and will bee content to ſuffer great loſſe, & to take great
hurt on euery ſide,, that he may execute his fooliſh fantaſie: Likewiſe
the froward and wicked haue none other thing in their minde,
but onely their diſpleaſures, their wicked enterpriſes, but no minde
on the feare of God, no deſire to renerence his worde, no feeling of
the heauenly kingdome, nor hope of euerlaſting life. In this ſorte
they haue a great loſſe, for to purſue a thing of nothing, and hurtful.
Nowe although that all men, how righteous ſoeuer they bee, haue
euill motions tending to euill, as may be gathered when our Lorde
Ieſus Chriſt, ſaith, He that is waſhed, needeth not, ſaue to waſhe *Iohn.* 13.10.
his feete: wee ought not to vnderſtande that Solomon woulde encloſe
the affections of them that are waſhed vnder the hatred & abhorring
of the Lord. For albeit the carnall affecti ons tend to euil *Rom.*7.14.
yet doe they not ſuffer them to poſt and to runne vnto miſchiefe, 2.*Cor.*10.3
but doe drawe backe, and re tire themſelues ſo much as is poſſible: *Rom.*13.14.
and albeit that they are carnal, and ſold vnder ſinne, yet they do not
allowe that which they doe, and walking in the fleſh, they fight not
fleſhly, for they haue not their pleaſures in theſe luſtes. If then
we would take heed that our affections ſhould not make poſt haſt,
and run ſwiftly, If we would auoid the hatred of our Lord & God,
we muſt bridle them, and keep that ſinne do not raigne in our mortall
bodies.

19 *A falſe witneſſe that ſpeaketh lies, &c.* In the ſixth place
he ſetteth the falſe witneſſe bearer: and this is not without cauſe,
for it hath an expreſſe commandement againſt it, Thou ſhalt not *Exo.*20.16.
beare falſe witneſſe againſt thy neighbour, and ſo the falſe witneſſe
knoweth not that there is a God which is his Maiſter and Lorde,
whome hee ought to obey, where he laboureth to deſpite him. For
man hauing any knowledge of God, (if he make himſelfe a falſe witneſſe)
hee knoweth that hee prouoketh the wrath of God againſt

himſelf,and ſeeing that God is the trueth,it cannot bee but he muſt needes haue a falſe witneſſe in horrible execration. But that wee may know who it is that is a falſe witneſſe,and that we may labour to auoide the diſpleaſure of God,and not to bee abhorred of him, Solomon telleth vs that hee is one, *that ſpeaketh lies*. Hee ſaith not that it is the periurer,albeit that al periurers are lyers, and doe ſpeake lyes: but to yoke in all lyers,hee ſaith ſimply,hee that ſpeaketh lies. Wherefore when wee are asked an anſwere of trueth, we are falſe witneſſes,if we ſhal ſpeake otherwiſe then the matter ſtandeth,though we be not asked vpon our othe. Euen ſo thoſe which lie in iudgement,or otherwiſe,are hated of God,and are of him abhorred,for the which they ought to looke ſhortly to bee deſtroied. By a more ſtrong reaſon then, they which doe periure themſelues, ought wel to be eſteemed falſe witneſſes, and when by their falſe othe they cal God vnto witneſſe of their lies, they would ſpoile him of his trueth,and conſequently,that he ſhoulde be no GOD: for ſeeing he is the trueth,he cannot ſtand without it,they well deſerue of God to be hated,& to be of him deteſted,and bicauſe there is no thanks due to them why the worlde doth not ſodenly periſh, ſeeing they ſeeke to ouerthrow God,without whome nothing can remaine,they deſerue wel,ſpeedily to be beaten downe: the which ſhalbe doone without remedie ſooner then they thinke for. In the ſeuenth place he ſetteth the ſeditious, which *raiſe vp contentions amongſt neighbours*,which the Scripture calleth brethren: not only by this that we are all children of Adam and Eue, but that wee ought all to haue one heauenly father, and alſo to ſhewe, that as it is a good thing to be wiſhed for,that brethren ſhoulde dwel al together,ſo alſo that is an euill thing,that neighbours which ought to be vnited together as brethren, ſhoulde bee diuided, and that the common peace ſhoulde be broken,whereby friendſhip is mainteined,and helpe is miniſtred one to another. They which are the cauſe of the breach of this vnitie,are hated of the Lord, and are not without cauſe abhorred of him. For firſt of all, it is no thanks to thē that God is not ſpoiled of his delight,which he taketh in the vnitie and concorde of brethren: The which pleaſure ought not to bee eſteemed of ſmal importance,when the lawe of GOD ſtretcheth wholy to maintaine the vnitie of religion,the which is commanded,

Pſal. 133.1.

vnto vs by the firſt table, and in coniunction of mutuall loue, the which is commanded vnto vs by the ſecond Table, the which loue cannot bee mainteined without vnitie in religion. And therefore the Prophetes were very carefull to crie againſt the ſuperſtitions & idolatries, and againſt the falſe Prophetes and the Prieſtes of *Baal*. Alſo our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt exhorteteth men to take heede of falſe Prophetes, aduertiſing that many ſhould come in his name, ſaying, I am the Chriſt, and ſhould deceiue many: And Saint Paul in diuers places. And foraſmuche as there is none that deſireth that GOD ſhoulde hate his manners and dealinges, and to abhorre them, but woulde, if wee haue neuer ſo little ſparke of good wit, that hee ſhoulde allowe them, and that hee ſhoulde accept of them: it is neceſſary therefore that we delight to giue our ſelues to doe contrarily to that which God hateth and abhorreth, and that in ſteede of hawtie eyes, wee become humble and lowly in heart after the example of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte. Secondly, no thanke to them that he is not depriued of his paternitie, no thanke to them that the children doe not deny their father, and to take the Diuell for their father. For as God is the God of peace, ſo are alſo the peacemakers and peace followers his ſonnes, & contrarily the ſeditious, tumult raiſers, and brawlers are the ſonnes of the Deuil. Thus they which make debates, labour to encreaſe the kingdom of the Diuel. And if God doe abhorre thoſe which ſo offende againſt the ſecond Table of Moſes, by a more forcible reaſon doth he deteſt thẽ which tranſgreſſe the firſt through obſtinacie and wilfulneſſe.

Mat. 7. 15. & 24. 5.

Mat. 5. 9.

20 *My ſonne, keepe thy fathers commandement, and forſake not thy mothers inſtruction.*

21 *Binde them alway vpon thine heart, and tie them about thy necke.*

Becauſe the fathers and mothers, which truely and tenderly loue their children will not commaunde nor teache them any thing but that which is pleaſing and acceptable vnto GOD, that the young folkes may learne to flie from the former things which God hateth & abhoreth, Solomõ would that children ſhould obey their fathers and mothers,and that according to the lawe.

21 *Binde them alway vpon thine hearte,&c.* When he maketh
Exo.20.21. this exhortation,he ſheweth wel that he ſpake not but of fathers
Deu:.5.16. and mothers which doe labour to gouerne their children in
that which is acceptable and pleaſing vnto God,in that which is according
vnto his commandements. For there is nothing whereunto
we ought to be ſo faſt linked,as vnto the cõmandements of God,
there is no yoke whereunto we ought to ſubmit our ſelues,but vnto
the law of God the Lorde.Moſes alſo willing to induce the children
of Iſrael vnto a continual obedience of the worde of the Lord
Deut.6.6.&. ſayth,And theſe wordes which I commande thee this day,ſhalbe in
11.18. thine hart,lay vp then theſe words in your heart.Now ſith that this
preſẽt admonitiõ ſerueth for the whole word of god,it might be ſaid,
that when Solomõ ſaid, *My ſonne,keepe the commandement of
thy father, &c.* that he ſpeaketh of God, and of the miniſtery of
his Church, in the which there is nothing taught vs but the pure
worde of God,and whoſe children we are,if we ſubmit our ſelues
vnto his worde,ſuffering to be begetten thereby into pure faith, &
true repentance.

22 *It ſhall leade thee,when thou walkeſt: it ſhal watch for*
thee,when thou ſleepeſt: and when thou wakeſt,it
ſhall talke with thee.

Albeit that this promiſe agreeth very wel with this ſame heere,
That thy dayes may be long vpon the earth,&c: yet the ſame hindereth
not but that it ſhould regard to aſſure the goodnes of God,
vnto thoſe which willingly and gladly do giue themſelues vnto the
obedience of the worde generally: for alſo to them is long life promiſed,
Dent.11.8. Therfore ſhal ye keep al the commandements, which I commande
you this day,that yee may be ſtrong and goe in, and poſſeſſe
the lande whither yee goe to poſſeſſe it: Alſo that it may prolong
your dayes in the lande, &c. Nowe that theſe wordes of Solomon
doe agree with this promiſe, it is manifeſt: for wee thinke
not to haue life, if wee bee depriued of theſe preſente commodities:
it ſeeemeth not vnto vs that we liue, except our buſineſſe
doe proſper well: it ſeemeth vnto vs that wee are in death,

except wee bee at libertie, and may haue company with whome wee may talke familiarly. When Solomon then doeth promiſe that the commandement of the Father, & the inſtruction of the mother ſhal keepe vs from going aſtray, and ſhal make vs to ſleepe in ſafetie, and that in the day it ſhal talke with vs: he doeth ſhew vs that they which obey the Word, haue a bleſſed life, and conſequently, long enough: for the length of dayes ſtandeth not in the multitude of yeares, but in that wee liue godly, and that wee content our ſelues with the number of yeares which it ſhal pleaſe the Lord to giue, cōfeſſing, that he maketh his to liue in this world ſo long as it pleaſeth him, and is expedient for their ſpiritual health. Notwithſtanding, there ſhalbe no inconuenience, if for that, which wee cal promiſe here, we take to be admonition: as if Solomon did exhort vs to cleue ſo faſt vnto the Commandements, that we ſhould neuer ſtray from them, but that in al times and in al places wee ſhoulde gouerne our ſelues by them, in doing that which they commaund, being aſſured that by them wee ſhalbe preſerued from al dangers: then ſhoulde they be ſo wel grauen in our heartes, & we ſhould ſo greatly delight in them, that we woulde not deſire any prophane or vaine communication, but if we ſpeake, to ſpeake as the wordes of God. To bee ſhort, let it be whether we take this for a promiſe, or that we take it for an admonition, Solomon doeth ſhewe vs that wee muſt take good heede from turning any thing at al from the Word, if ſo be it we deſire to doe wel, and ſay wel, and to walke ſafely. We may vnderſtand this ſame by the reaſon which foloweth, when he ſayeth, 1.Pet.4.11.

23 *For the commaundement is a Lanterne, and inſtruction, a light: and corrections for inſtructions are the wayes of life.*

In this reaſon he ſheweth, that he ſpeaketh of the Commaundements, and inſtructions, and corrections, which are made by the Worde of God: for to it onely belongeth theſe titles of *Lanterne, light, and life*. For the lawe of the Lord is a perfit lawe. Thy Word is a Lanterne vnto my feete, and a light vnto my path And we haue alſo a moſt ſure Worde of the Prophets, to the which ye doe well that ye take heede, as vnto a light that ſhineth in a darke place, vntil Eſai.2.5. & 119.105. 2.Pet.2.19. Pſal.19.8.

Eſai.2.5. the day dawne, and the day ſtarre ariſe in your heartes. O houſe of Iacob, come ye, and let vs walke in the light of the Lorde. And that they are the wayes of life, the Scripture not only in one or two places, but in diuers doeth teſtifie: and amongſt others, our Lord Ieſus doeth wel ſhewe it, when he ſayeth, that God ſo loued the worlde, *Ioh.3.16.* that he gaue his only Sonne, to the ende, that whoſoeuer beleeueth *Mar.16. 15.* in him, ſhould not periſh, but haue euerlaſting life. And when hee commaundeth the Goſpel to be preached through al the worlde to euery creature. And though the Scripture ſhould not witneſſe it, there is none of ſound iudgement, but wil confeſſe that they which receiue the word of God, are in the true way of life. We haue therfore firſt of al to note, that they which are diſobedient vnto fathers and mothers, and to them which haue the power to commaund, are in darkeneſſe, and know not whether they goe: for they are blinde, though according as the world iudgeth, they are in a good way, and that they know wiſely to gouerne them ſelues, and to do their buſines wel. Secondly, that they which refuſe or deſpiſe the reprehenſions by which men labour to inſtruct them to change their euil life, doe ſeeke their owne deſtruction and damnation, they flie life, and deſire death. Thirdly, what trouble, torment, and affliction ſoeuer the children of God haue, they can not goe aſtray, nor periſhe: for they haue the light of the Word, the which guides them right vnto life.

24 *To keepe thee from the wicked woman, & from the flatterie of the tongue of a ſtrange woman.*

After that Solomon hath attributed life & light vnto the Word generally, hee bringeth an example for to ſhewe, that without it no man can take heede from wandring, and periſhing. They which yelde not obedience vnto the Word, neuer make cõſcience to commit whoredome, ſo blinde are they and dull of wit, making of vice vertue. Contrarily, they which delight to yelde obedience vnto the commandements of God, do ſee how they ſhould guide themſelues by the light of the Worde, and thereby knowing that the whoremongers and adulterers doe goe out of the right way, and walke through darke wayes which lead vnto death, they take heede of the harlot, whom Solomon calleth heere the *wicked woman*: that is to ſay, the woman that ſerueth for nothing els but to worke wickedneſſe, and to intice others vnto euil. This inticing is ment by the *flatterie of the tongue of the ſtrange woman.* For wel to keepe our ſelues from whordome and adulterie, it is not enough to keepe the bodie cleane from whordom, & the tongue from wanton words & filthie ſonges: but alſo we muſt haue both heartes and eyes chaſt, as Solomon exhorteth.

25 *Deſire not her beautie in thine heart, neither let her take thee with her eye liddes.*

26 *For becauſe of the whoriſh woman, a man is brought vnto a morſel of bread, & a *woman wil hunt for the precious life of a man.*

* or, the vviſe of a man hunteth after the precious ſoule.

Our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt declareth vnto vs the like, I ſay vnto you, That whoſoeuer looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her alreadie in his heart. The lawe giuer is ſpiritual, and therefore let vs not thinke to fulfil it, if wee ſhewe our ſelues only outwardly obedient vnto his Worde, doing the wordes that he commandeth, and abſteining from them which hee forbiddeth, and in the meane whiles our heartes ſhal be rebellious, and delight in filthie luſtes and vnſhamefaſt lookes: By ſuch inwarde rebellions, by ſuche luſtes and lookes, wee are eaſily drawne to commit whoredome: the firſt worlde is a witneſſe thereof: Wee may ſee it in Dina: Dauid alſo hath tried it. Neuertheleſſe, when Solomon ſayth, *Deſire not her beauty,* he regardeth not only that it is eaſie, to come from the rebellion of the heart, to ſhewe an outward diſobedience: but alſo by vnſhamefaſt life men come vnto great pouertie, and danger of life: he ſheweth it, when he ſayeth,

Mat. 5. 28.

Gen. 6. 2. & 34. 1. 2. Sam. 11. 2.

26 *For becauſe of the whoriſh woman, &c.* He doeth ſhewe vs that the harlots are vnſatiable, and care not though their companions conſume all their ſubſtaunce vppon them, and come to beggerie: and which worſt is, they pitie no whit their deſtruction: but as an hunter doeth not willingly leaue the wild beaſt, when hee hath once ſeene her, but doeth hunt her vnto death: euen ſo the

harlot neuer ceaſſeth to ſolicite him to euil, which hath once conſented vnto her : and in this ſort ſhe not only maketh him to begge his bread, but bringeth him to deſtruction both of bodie and ſoule, the which is called *precious*, not for the vertues wherewith it is adorned, nor for any goodneſſe whereunto the ſame is giuen (for the ſoule of ſuche a man is voide of al vertue, and is corrupted through wickednes) but it is precious, becauſe God doeth eſteeme it ſo, as he hath ſhewed in creating man after his Image and likeneſſe, and giuing him an immortal ſoule. *Gen.1.27.* Euen ſo the harlot,, ſo muche as in them lieth, doe labour to deſtroy the image of God, and cauſe that the precious blood of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt to bee in vaine, and without fruite, the which hath beene ſhed for the ſaluation of the whole worlde. And this is the principal, wherein God hath wel ſhewed that man his ſoule is very deare vnto him, when he would that his Sonne ſhould paye ſuche a deare price. Or els if we ſhal ſay, that the ſoule of man is ſaide to bee precious, becauſe that the diſcreete man, doeth keepe it carefully, there is no abſurditie therein. Such a poore eſtate and deſtruction ought wel to feare the whoremongers and adulterers : but for further to feare the whoremongers, and to ſhewe them that their maners and cuſtomes are abhominable both before God & men, and that they ſhal not eſcape without puniſhment, Solomon compareth the lawe which condemneth the adulterers vnto the fire, which ſpareth nothing that is put vnto it, or that it can catch, but conſumeth it: for this to doe, he ſayeth,

27 *Can a man take fire in his boſome, and not his clothes be burnt?*

28 *Or can a man goe vpon coales, and his feete not bee burnt?*

29 *So he that goeth into his neighbours wife, ſhal not be innocent, whoſoeuer toucheth her.*

If we reuerence the word of Solomon, not his, but Gods, which is declared vnto vs by him, as wee may ſee it, wee ought to haue whoredome in great abhomination, and to be greatly abaſhed and aſtoniſhed at the whoredomes that are commited through all the worlde : for it is but ſo much fire kindled. And in this wee ſee the *Deut.22.21* conſumption of theſe miſerable adulterers, the which is more horrible and more intollerable, then if al the world burned with fire, & were conſumed viſibly: for their fire ſhal neuer be quenched, nor their worme neuer die: but they ſhal burne, and ſhalbe bitten euerlaſtingly. For the Lord wil condemne al fornicatours and adulterers. Notwithſtanding, the Scripture cōdeſcending vnto our rudeneſſe, doeth giue and ſet before vs the inuiſible thinges, by the viſible, for to turne vs away from euil, & to cauſe vs to deſire the good, and that the wicked may be touched in their conſciences & minds, and that they may not excuſe them ſelues, that they haue not beene warned of the euil which is prepared for them. For this cauſe Solomon compareth the lawe which condemneth the adulterers, vnto fire that is caried about, or otherwiſe is touched then ought to be: it can not be auoided, but it wil hurt, and burne that which it toucheth: and herein hee ſheweth, that by whorehunting they themſelues beare their owne deſtruction, from the which they can not eſcape. And this compariſon that Solomō maketh, is very fitly done: for wee muſt vnderſtande that the lawe foloweth the nature of the lawe giuer. For he ſayeth, The Lorde thy God is a conſuming fire. The Lawe therefore burneth, as alſo Moyſes doeth ſhewe. And the Lorde came with ten thouſande of Saintes, and at his right hand a firie Lawe for them. Wee ſee then, that whorekeepers and adulterers doe conſume and deſtroy them ſelues, although they loue and praiſe them ſelues. Secondly, that God knoweth wel howe to puniſh them as wicked and ful of iniquitie. But by looking that God ſhould execute his vengeance, and make the adulterers feele it, hee hath other roddes, wherewith he ſtriketh the adulterers, the which to declare, Solomon ſetteth the Thieſe in oppoſite of adulterie, whē hee ſayeth,

Hebr. 13. 4.

Deut. 4. 24.
Hebr. 12. 29.
Deut. 33. 2.

30 *Men doe not deſpiſe a thieſe, when he ſtealeth, to ſatiſfie his ſoule, becauſe he is hungrie.*

31 *But if he be found, he ſhal reſtore ſeuen fold, or hee ſhal giue al the ſubſtance of his houſe.*

There is no man wil take it in good parte, if any take away his goods without his leaue, for men deſire rather to increaſe in riches, then to decreaſe, Wherefore theeues are hated, and are purſued euen to death. Yet when we knowe that the thiefe hath ſtolen but for neede, he is excuſed, and is not iudged to be wicked: but he is borne withal, if he make ſatisfaction, or that there can be ſo much founde in his houſe for to recompence it. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying,

Exo. 22. 1, 4. 4 *But if he be founde, &c.* Solomon requireth here no more of the thiefe then the lawe: but he ſheweth that the thiefe ſhal rather giue more then he ought, that he may eſcape if he be apprehended, & that his offer ſhalbe takē, & he accepted & allowed of again, when he hath done what he can. Albeit, then that Solomon doeth not here condemne the thiefe to death, yet hee excludeth him not from ſinne, otherwiſe he ſhould gaineſay the Lawe, Thou ſhalt not ſteale. Only for to ſhew how abhominable and miſerable the whoremongers are, he ſetteth the thiefe againſt the adulterer: and ſheweth that the thiefe may be redeemed, and that after his ſatisfaction, hee is not marked by ciuilitie of infamie, but that it is not ſo with adulterie.

32 *But he that committeth adulterie with a woman, hee is deſtitute of vnderſtanding: he that doeth it, deſtroyeth his owne ſoule.*

33 *He ſhal finde a wounde and diſhonour, and his reproche ſhal neuer be put away.*

34 *For iealouſie is the rage of a man: therefore hee wil not ſpare in the day of vengeance.*

35 *He can not beare the ſight of any ranſome: neither will he conſent, though thou augment the gifts.*

He ſheweth here that the adulterer deſerueth wel to be deſpiſed, in that hee is not led to this filthines but by wickednes, and not by neceſſitie: as he ſignifieth, ſaying, *he is deſtitute of vnderſtanding:* and ſo he noteth him of infamie, from the which he exempteth the thiefe. He marketh alſo this miſerie, ſaying, *That he deſtroyeth his ſoule:* the which he hath not laide to the theeues charge. Wherein we may ſee that the worlde is much voide of ſound iudgement. For a thiefe nowe ſhalbe purſued with al diligence, to be puniſhed, euen to death; but the adulterer ſhalbe pardoned, & there ſhalbe nothing els but laughing at the horrible abhomination that he ſhal commit, as were at a maygame or puppet play.

In ſpeaking thus, wee doe not quit the theeues, & ſaue thē from puniſhment, for we know what is written: but wee would ſay that they which puniſhe the theefe more grieuouſly then the adulterer, do iniurie vnto God, who hath appointed a more grieuous pain for the adulterer then for the theefe. & thus they doe wickedly, for the which, they ſhal not go vnpuniſhed: they are wicked iudges, fauouring the wicked, but they ſhal appeare before the righteous iudge, who wil not fauour their vngodlines, but wil puniſh them with al ſeueritie, & without any forgiuenes. Although wee ſpeake according to truth, wherunto al ought to agree & graunt without gaine ſaying: yet it ſhal ſeeme good vnto the fauourers of whoredom & adultery, that we ſhal be ouercome & they ſhal winne the victory, if they ſhould alledge vnto vs, that Ieſus ſaid vnto the woman takē in adultery, Neither do I condemne thee, go & ſinne no more: but we anſwere that it belongeth vnto the Magiſtrates to execute the iudgement that God declareth in his law, againſt the euil doers, & that to them only appertaineth to take vengeance of thē that commit euil, and not vnto others. But our Lord Ieſus Chriſt was not ſent into this world by God his Father, for to exerciſe the office of the magiſtrate, but to ſhew himſelf the Sauiour of the world. Wherfore his office was rather to abſolue, then to condemne: notwithſtanding he hindred not the Magiſtrate neither tooke his office vpon him, but it was lawful for the iudge to haue condemned this woman of adultery to be ſtoned to death according to the lawe. Hee alſo ſaued the theefe which was hanged with him, and yet hee reprooued not the iudge for puniſhing him, & reſpected not but that the theefe ſhould ſuffer & feele the paines that he had deſerued before men. But they which fauour whoredome & adulteries, wil reply that we are vnder the lawe of grace, & that the ſharpeneſſe of the law is aboliſhed. I anſwere, that God neuer did withdrawe his grace from his elect, but that they haue felt the ſame alwaies at neede, albeeit that nowe it is more plainly manifeſted by the comming of our Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt, and by the preaching of his Goſpel: And alſo hee is not ſo pitiful and merciful, but that he is alſo iuſt, and doeth commande the iudges to do iuſtice and iudgement in al times. Moreouer, if Ieſus Chriſt by the forgiuenes that he pronounced, vnto the adulterers, did put away the lawe, that doeth condemne the adulterers vnto bodily paynes, euen vntoo death, ſeeing that

Rom.13.[illegible]

Iohn.8.11.

vnder the lawe of ſeueritie (as they cal it) the theefe is not ſo ſore to be puniſhed as the adulterer, it ſhould folowe that vnder the law of grace (as they cal it) the theefe ought not to be ſo grieuouſly puniſhed as the adulterer: otherwiſe, the lawe of grace ſhoulde bring fauour vnto the moſt wicked, and ſhoulde ſhewe ſeueritie that was not wont to bee vſed vnto them which are not ſo wicked: & thus the law of grace ſhould deale ſharply with them that were wont to be more gently entred vnder the lawe of ſeueritie. But it wilbe anſwered, That it is expedient ſo to do, becauſe the theeues are more hurtful to the common wealth then adulterers. I anſwere, that mãs wiſedom doth ſo iudge it: for men voide of the holy Ghoſt, do make no great account of adultery, in compariſon of theft: but God iudgeth otherwiſe, as we may vnderſtande by the lawe that he hath giuen, and by the vengeances and puniſhements that he hath ſent becauſe of whoredomes and adulteries. After this, Solomon doth declare vnto vs what happeneth vnto the adulterer for the ſmalnes of his vnderſtanding, when he ſaith,

He ſhal find a wounde, &c. Solomon doeth not heere ſpeake of that which we ſee commonly done vnto the adulterers: for they are ſuffred to liue at their eaſe, they are feaſted, and are not put backe as infamous and wicked. He ſpeaketh of that which ought to be done: for if there were ſuch gouernement in the world as there ought to be, then the adulterers ſhoulde not eſcape grieuous puniſhmentes, they ſhould be more deſpiſed then the myre in the ſtreet, we would fly further from them, than from the moſt ſtinking dounghil of the world, we would abhorre them more then the moſt dangerous Peſtilẽce, we would euermore haue them in execration, and we would neuer name them but to their great ſhame and diſhonor. For as Solomon ſaith, his reproche ought not to be put out. And hee giueth the reaſon heereof, in this verſe folowing, when he ſaith:

For ielouſie, &c. If the huſband of the wife with whome adultery hath bin committed, did truly loue his wife before ſhe had cõmitted adultery, and that he had his hart right, his ielouſie ſhould be ſo kindled with anger and wrath againſt the adulterous man, that he would withal diligẽce purſue him that he might be puniſhed, as he hath deſerued, and would haue no compaſsion of him, but woulde craue vengeance to be done of him, as behoueth, there ſhoulde no prayers of freendes,nor preſentes, nor giftes, although they were great and precious,which would moue him to turne from his anger: as Solomon doth declare it by that which foloweth.

Hee can not beare the ſight,&c. If then at the purſute of the husbande, iuſtice be done, the adulterer, ſhal finde a wounde, and ſhal be diſhonoured for euer. And if the Gouernours,and ſuche as beare the ſworde,had the zeale of God,as they ought to haue,they woulde not tarie til the adulterers were purſued : but when there were any diſcouered, they ſhould make diligent information to folowe them with al ſeueritie. They woulde folowe the zeale of Phineas. But in ſteade to haue ſuch a zeale, the greateſt parte of Iudges be like vnto Elie. The chiefe cauſe for the which men paſſe not to commit adulterie and whoredome, and alſo that Iudges doe not puniſh whoremongers and adulterers as they deſerue,is,for that euery man deſireth to haue his carnal pleaſure, and therefore muſt beare with his Goſſeps: & al commeth from the contempt of Gods worde. Solomon hath wel ſhewed it heere aboue in the twentieth verſe: when to deteſt whoredome and adulterie,hee admoniſheth the children to obey their fathers and mothers. He doeth wel ſhew it conſequently,in the beginning of the next Chapter.

*Num.*25.7.
*Pſal.*106.30.
1.*Sam.*2,22.

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The ſeuenth Chapter.

1 *My Sonne, keepe my wordes, and hide my Commaundements with thee.*

Here wee ſee the fatherly care that God hath of vs, when hee doeth ſo often admoniſh vs by Solomon, that we ſhould keepe his Word, not onely without works, as hypocrites do, but that we ſhould haue our hearts truely garniſhed. It goeth wel for vs that he hath the care when he doeth thus admoniſh vs: for hee hath no neede of our ſeruice, but wee haue great neede of his, yea we can not wel miſſe it, for to obey him. We haue ſeene it heretofore in diuers places, where Solomon hath declared vnto vs the profite that commeth of obeying the Word, and the hurt of the diſobedience. Solomon doeth ſhew it vs again, when he ſayeth,

2 *Keepe my Commandements, and thou ſhalt liue, & mine inſtruction, as the apple of thine eye.*

3 *Binde them vpon thy fingers, and write them vpon the table of thine heart.*

For as by the keeping of the Commandements, and by the great care that we haue to folow the doctrine of God with al our hearts, life is giuen vnto vs: Euen ſo it may be truely inferred, that the adulterers by contemning of the Word, are depriued thereof, for the which they muſt needes periſh and deſtroy their owne ſoules, and are not ſpared in the day of vengeance. Solomon doeth wel ſignifie it, when hee asketh ſo great a care: and therewith hee ſignifieth a great fatherly gentlenes, when hee ſheweth that God is contented with vs, if we haue ſuch care of his moſt precious Word, as we haue of

Pſal. 19. 11.

of the apples of our eyes, which is no great thing, ſeeing the body is not much worth. If wee wil auoide whoredome and adulterie, & haue life, we muſt haue this great care that Solomon requireth, not onely for a certaine time, but that we ſhould be ſo giuen vnto his holie commandements and inſtructions, that wee ſhoulde continually worke thereafter, and haue our heartes alwayes fixed vppon them. Solomon doeth ſo wiſhe it, when he ſayeth,

Binde them vpon thy fingers, &c. Hee craueth this, folowing that which is ſaide, Laye vp theſe my wordes in your heart and in your ſoule, and binde them for a ſigne vpon your hande, that they be as a frontlet before your eyes. And for to ſhewe vs further that we muſt haue our heartes giuen vnto the commandements, & that we ſhould loue them, in taking our ioye and pleaſure in them, hee ſayeth,

Deut.11.18

4 *Say vnto wiſedome, Thou art my ſiſter: & cal vnderſtanding thy kinſwoman:*

5 *That they may keepe thee from the ſtrange woman, euen from the ſtranger that is ſmooth in her wordes.*

For as much as we haue neither wiſedome nor knowledge, but ſo much as the Word of God doeth print in our heartes, and that it pleaſeth him to giue vs: we ought to vnderſtād that Solomō would haue vs like vnto the bleſſed mā: ſo doing, wiſdom ſhould be as our ſiſter, & vnderſtāding ſhould be familiar vnto vs, & we ſhalbe contented to loue wiſedome, and vnderſtanding ſhal keepe vs continual company, and ſo ſhal wee not be giuen to ſeeke diſhoneſt company, nor wil not ſuffer our ſelues to be deceiued with the flattering ſpeeches of whores. Solomon doth ſignifie it by that which foloweth, ſaying,

Pſal.1.1.

5 *That they may keepe thee, &c.* It is by wiſedome and vnderſtanding then that we obteine life: and by the vſe of the Word, that we eſchue whoredome and adulterie, and not by mans wiſedome, nor by our free will.

6 *As I was in the windowe of mine houſe, I looked through my windowe.*

7 *And I ſawe among the fooles, and conſidered amongeſt the children, a young man deſtitute of vnderſtanding.*

8 *Who paſſed through the ſtreete by her corner, & went toward her houſe,*

9 *In the twilight in the euening, when the night beganne to be blacke and darke.*

10 *And behold, there met him a woman, with an harlottes behauiour, and ſuttle in heart.*

11 *Shee is babling and loude: whoſe feete can not abide in her houſe.*

12 *Nowe ſhee is without, nowe in the ſtreetes, and lyeth in wayte at euery corner.*

13 *So ſhee caught him and kiſſed him, and with an impudent face ſaide vnto him,*

14 *I haue peace offeringes: this day haue I payde my vowes.*

15 *Therfore came I foorth to meet thee, that I might ſeeke thy face: and I haue found thee.*

16 *I haue deckt my bed with ornaments, carpets and laces of Egypt.*

17 *I haue perfumed my bedde with Myrrhe, Aloes, & Cynamon.*

18 *Come, let vs take our fil of loue, vntil the morning: let vs take our pleaſure in daliance.*

19 *For my husband is not at home: he is gon a iourney farre of.*

20 *He hath taken with him a bagge of ſiluer, and wil come home at the day appointed.*

21 *Thus with her great craft ſhe made him to yeelde: and with her flattering lippes ſhe intiſed him.*

22 *And he folowed her ſtraight wayes, as an Oxe that goeth to the ſlaughter, and as a Foale to the flockes for correction.*

23 *Til a dart ſtricke through his liuer, as a byrd haſteth to the ſnare, not knowing that hee is in danger.*

For to turne vs away from whoredome and adulterie, hee vſeth a parable, in the which he ſheweth the fooliſhnes of them that ſuffer them ſelues to be deceiued, wherein they are not ſo much ignorant, but that they knowe wel they doe euil: and therefore wil not be ſeene. Hee ſheweth alſo the ſuttleties and craftines, the flatteries and ſweete wordes of them, or thoſe which labour to drawe others to agree vnto their wicked concupiſcences. When hee attributeth the ſuttleties and craftie dealings, the flattering ſpeeches, and ſweete wordes of the adulterous woman, hee ſpeaketh according to that which is moſt commonly done: for if there were no women that ſold them ſelues, and woulde bragge, there ſhoulde not be ſo many open adulteries, nor whoredomes. For to beginne this parable, hee ſpeaketh of him ſelfe, as of a man which marketh and taketh heede what others do: and yet he wil not haue it knowne, that he might take them in the deede doing, if they doe euil. Hee ſignifieth this, when he ſayeth, He did not put his head out of the window, for to looke with an open face, and to ſhewe him ſelfe openly, but he *looked through the windowe*. And herein he teacheth that it is needful to vſe ſuttletie, for to diſcouer whoredome, that the ſame may bee puniſhed and corrected, and to the ende alſo that when we ſhal ſee the wickedneſſes that were thought to be ſecrete, to be manifeſted, men might bee turned from euil, and to take heede of giuing offence and ſlaunder, and that they might learne to feare God by the corrections and puniſhments that they ſhal ſee executed vppon others. Hee alſo after a ſort, ſignifieth that the adulterers and whoremongers doe feare men more then God, when they dare doe that before God, which they wil not doe before men, though God doe ſee al things in al places, how ſecret & hid ſoeuer they be.

7 *And I ſawe among the fooles, &c.* When we priuily looke and narowly take heede vnto the vices and wickedneſſes, we diſcouer them the more eaſily. Then are the ſcorners and contemners of God & of his law made manifeſt, the which Solomõ calleth fooles, becauſe they are ignorant, but yet willingly; they are dull of vnderſtanding, but yet of mallice; they are bare of vnderſtanding, but yet through contempte of the Worde. Nowe although that ſuche people bee out of order, yet amongeſt them there are ſome which are more willingly wicked, and doe paſſe the reſt in wickednes and diſſoluteneſſe. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee ſayeth,

that he ſawe among the fooles, & conſidered amongſt the children, that is to ſay, which were fooles, a young man deſtitute of *vnderſtanding:* wherein he teacheth vs, that it is verie neceſſarie to take diligent heede vnto young people, and not to ſuffer them to liue as they liſt, after their ſenſualitie, otherwiſe that they ſhal looſe vnderſtanding. It ſeemeth them good, and alſo they like, that they are verie bold, when they giue them ſelues vnto wickedneſſe, & that they ſpare neither bodie nor goods for to enioy their deſires: but before God, and before men of ſounde iudgement, they want vnderſtanding or courage: for by getting vertue, they folowe vice: leauing that which is neceſſarie, they giue thẽſelues vnto vanitie: reiecting that which is profitable, they embrace that which is vnprofitable and hurtful. Chaſtitie is a thing of great vertue, profitable, and neceſſarie: hee then that doeth folowe it, is verie ſtrong: and contrarily, he which runneth vnto vnſhamefaſtnes, is a very cowheard, and wanteth vnderſtanding: for by forſaking his office, hee paſſeth his time in folowing of whores and adultereſſes, and yet hee thinketh that it is not ſeene. Solomon doeth declare it, when he ſayeth,

8 *VVho paſſed through the ſtreete, &c.* And becauſe hee is ouercome in his conſcience that he doeth wickedly, hee wil not bee ſeene: & therfore he paſſeth by the lane, and entreth into the houſe of the whore.

9 *In the twilight, &c.* When Solomon doeth aſſemble ſo many wordes together and not vainely, the which doe ſignifie darknes: we ought firſt of al to learne that they which haue the charge to watch ouer the ſlanders, diſſolutions & inſolences, & to gouern the youth, ought to bee ſo watchful, that they might take the euil doers, howe cloſe and hid ſoeuer they be, that they may bee corrected and brought againe vnto the right way, & ſeuerely to puniſhe the vnrepentant. Secondly, that they which giue themſelues vnto euil, and chiefly vnto whordome & adulterie, are diligent to ſeeke holes and corners: but that there is nothing ſo darke nor hid, but in time God wil reueale it. Solomon doth wel note it, when he ſaith, that he ſaw in the *twilight, &c.* If the youth & others of ſmal vnderſtanding, did read this text as it behoioueth, they would not commit ſo many whordomes & adulteries. For firſt of al, they would haue the feare of God by reuerence of his Word, the which is greatly contemned:

ſecondly, they would haue feare, leſt ſuch filthines ſhould come to the knowledge of men, and ſhould be offended thereat.

10 *And behold there met him, &c.* It is a common thing for him to finde euil, that ſeeketh euil, and finde her hee ſhal: wee haue here an example thereof. For as wee haue ſeene, the young man taketh his way right vnto the houſe of the harlot, & behold an whore commeth out to meete him, as Solomon ſaieth now. She is craftie, not to deceiue thoſe which are of a good minde and loue chaſtitie. Solomon hath alreadie noted it, by that which hee hath ſaide of the pathe, of the houſe, and alſo of the twilight or myſtie morning: Hee ſheweth it wel againe, when hee ſaieth, with an harlots behauiour. She is not hid then, but ſhe ſhewes her ſelfe. One part of her behauiour whereby ſhe declares her ſelfe to be ſuche, is that ſhe is mette early in the myſtie morning, and that by ſuch early walking, we may gather that ſhe meaneth no goodneſſe. For it is an vnmeete time, for women chiefly, and if they be honeſt women, they wil not walke in darke night, but vpon great neceſſitie. Solomon doeth expounde this whoriſh behauiour more amplie, when he ſayeth,

11 *Shee is babling and loud.* If women then wil not be found in harlots behauiour, they muſt ſtriue againſt their nature, which is to ſpeake much. This ſame proceedeth from them, for want of doing their duetie, as we may vnderſtand it, when Saint Paule ſayeth, that there are young widowes, the which are idle, and learne to goe from houſe to houſe, yea they are not onely idle, but alſo pratlers and buſie bodies, ſpeaking things which are not comely. They muſt alſo take heede to be ouercome and caried away.

1.Tim.5.13.

Nowe although that wee knowe wel howe they are bablers and naughtie packes, and that the ſame is prooued before vs more then were needful, yet Solomon, for their great confuſion, and to aduertiſe the fooles and ignorant, doeth firſt of al declare vnto vs, her inticements ſaying, *That her feete can not abide in the houſe*, but that,

Nowe ſhe is without, now in the ſtreetes, &c. Solomon heere ſheweth vnto women, that they ought to be careful to do the buſines at home in the houſe, & to go abroad as ſeldom as they may: otherwiſe, if they loue to runne hither & thither, without there bee great neceſſitie knowne, they are in harlots behauiour, and are ſuſpected of whoredome, Wherefore the wiues that deſire to be wel named and counted of, and would be eſteemed indeede for honeſt women, let them abſtain from pratling, and from gadding about. For though it were ſo, that they mēt no euil, yet ſhal they not ceaſe to be counted whores. They may alledge that they can not abide to be Nunnes and ſhut vp, but they muſt haue their recreatiō, & that they care not though it be ſpoken of, and men offended at it: but curſed is that recreation which is taken with the offence of the neighbour. Saint Paule is *1.Theſ.5.22.* not ſatiſfied with this, that we ſhould doe no euil, but hee woulde that we ſhould abſtaine from al appearance of euil. When wee once looſe ſhame in any matter, we eaſily abound in whordome, we take leaue to doe actes, and to ſpeake wordes which ſhewe manifeſtly what the perſon is. Solomon doeth ſhew it, ſaying,

13 *So ſhee caught him and kiſſed him, &c.* An honeſt woman wil not come neere vnto a man that is not her husbād, to kiſſe him: but if a ſtrange man, how honeſt ſo euer hee bee, doe offer to kiſſe her, ſhee can not receiue it, without ſome ſhame for it. Contrarily, an harlot is vnſhamefaſt, and without ſhame kiſſeth al that ſhee deſireth to doe wickedly withal. True it is, that to counterfait an honeſt woman, ſhee wil not be ſeene of al men: as Solomon hath wel noted it, by the darke morning. After that he hath ſhewed the harlots inticement in deedes, he commeth to ſhew her inticement in talke, the which he hath here before briefly touched: and to begin, he ſaith that the whore ſpeaketh thus vnto the young man:

14 *I haue peace offrings, &c.* For better to deceiue the vndiſcreet man, ſhe laboureth to make him beleeue that ſhe wil entice him vnto none euil. For when ſhe maketh mention of the peaceable offringes that ſhee hath made, and of the vowes that ſhee hath payde the ſame day, ſhee braggeth of her deuotion and holineſſe, the which is as much as if ſhee did ſay, that ſhee is pure and cleane, and that the young man ſhould not thinke that ſhee woulde allure him to filthines and vncleannes: now ſith ſhe hath paid ſo wel her dutie, that it was lawfull for him to giue himſelfe vnto wickednes, and that for it no euil ſhould come to him. Behold howe we abuſe holie things, that is, that vnder the ſhadow of thē what euilſoeuer we cōmit, yet wil be eſteemed for honeſt men. And alſo becauſe of thē, lycence is taken to do euil, without fear of puniſhmēt. And thus holie

things through mallice of hypocrits are applied vnto bawdry,& do ſerue for a cloke vnto the wicked,that they may not be ſo eaſily taken,and that we cannot take heede of them. But what corners ſoeuer they ſeeke,God ſeeth them,and can, and will, when hee ſeeth time, puniſh it. Alſo this mercy hee ſheweth vnto his faithful ſeruants which doe loue his worde,that they iudge them thereby. Beſides this,the wicked doe blaſpheme and ſpeake wickedly of the ſeruice of God, when they attribute that hee is the cauſe they come to ende of their deſire,albeit they are diſſolute and wanton. Solomon heere bringeth in the whore thus blaſpheming.

13 *Therefore came I foorth,&c.* The harlot thus blaſphemeth,making the ſeruice of God the cauſe of the finding of that ſhe ſought for, & thinketh herſelf happy,as it is noted by the *fit or good time*. In this ſort al wicked reioyce, and iudge themſelues happy, when they come vnto the ende of their enterpriſes, though they be wicked: they prayſe God with their mouth, and thanke him: but it is not the true God,for they haue him not in their heart, but the Diuel whome they ſerue: and thus it is in an euil houre that they meete with that they ſeeke for: for they fal into death though they feele nothing: they are like vnto leprous men which feele nothing when they are pricked: but ſodenly ſhall their deſtruction come,wherewith they ſhalbe beaten downe, then ſhall they feele, that it was in no good time that they tooke their deſire. And in that the young man tooke the way to the harlots houſe, and that ſhee meeteth with him, firſt wee ſee that the wicked are all of one mind & conſent,but not in God. Wherfore their agreement is curſed,and is eſteemed for a wicked conſpiracie and rebellion againſt God. If wee woulde that our agreements ſhould be good and pleaſant vnto God,wee muſt then ſerue God and our neighbours in them,as the holy Scripture doth teach vs. Secondly, that the wicked doe ſeeke one for another, but it is to fulfill theyr wicked luſt.

16 *I haue decked my bed,&c.* After that the wicked haue ſerued God,or els that they haue made but a ſemblance,they thinke it is lawfull to haue care of their fleſhe to fulfil their cõcupiſcences, to take their eaſe and their pleaſures. Theſe ornaments and perfumes doe wel ſhew it. And alſo in the rehearſing of them wee

may ſee a point of Arte, & knack of flatterie, & ſweet words of the whore: for in ſpeaking ſo, ſhee fanneth and draweth the vndiſcrete man by thinges pleaſant vnto the eies, and that liketh the fleſhe. Although then that the ornaments of themſelues are not euil, & that it is lawfull to vſe ſweete ſmels and arromatical ſauours, not onely for neceſſitie, but alſo for recreation: yet muſt wee take heede to be too curious, otherwiſe wee may giue occaſion to bee iudged that we are too delicate and carnal, and that wee loue oſtentation. Wee muſt be ſober and temperate in the vſe of things that are not neceſſary: & alſo we muſt not be ſo ſtreight and ſcrupulous, that we dare in no wiſe handle them, and that wee iudge and condemne them which vſe them. Such things are creatures of God, the which are cleane vnto the faithful, which can vſe thẽ reaſonably: but vnto thẽ they are defiled, which vntemperately vſe them, as doe the infidels, which defile all that they handle. And ſo, whatſoeuer faire and goodly thing the whoremongers and adulterers, and other wicked ones haue, is but filthineſſe; their ſweete ſauours, is but ſtinch; their good meates, is but poyſon. Al things are cleane to them them that are cleane: but to them that are polluted and infidels nothing is cleane, &c. Wee muſt then beware to enuie the delightes, eaſes and pleaſures of the wicked: otherwiſe wee are in danger to defile al thing, and to be giuen vnto filthineſſe and ſhameful thinges: for alſo wee ſee that the harlot maketh mention of her ornaments and perfumes, to the end to entice and allure the young vndiſcrete man to commit whoredome and adulterie. Shee wel ſheweth that ſhee tendeth to this ende, when ſhee keepeth not backe from declaring what ſhe would, ſaying,

Titus.1.15.

Come let vs take our fill, &c. Heere ſhee openly calleth the young man to giue ouer himſelf vnto vncleanneſſe, to cōmit whoredome with al greedineſſe: ſhe calleth him as though ſhee woulde make him great cheere, and drinke wholy his fil, euen till he be ready to burſt and ſpue againe. As the drunkardes doe delight in wine and doe not ceaſſe gladly drinking, til they bee dunken, and can no more: euen ſo the whoremongers and adulterers doe reioyce themſelues in their filthines, & do caſt themſelues therin with an vnbrideled deſire. Vnto ſuch a plūging the harlot calleth the young man, but it is in ſpeaking vnproperly of loue, as doe all they which ſpeake of the loue of the fleſhe, and after the worlde: for ſhee calleth the deſire that men haue to commit whoredome, and euen the very act it ſelfe, Loue. The Lorde hath created loue betweene man and wife, making her an helper vnto man, and making two in one fleſhe: hee hath alſo commanded that euery man ſhoulde loue his neighbour as himſelfe; and contrarily, hee hateth whoredome as it may be ſeene by the puniſhments he hath made thereof: hee hath alſo expreſly forbidden whoredome in his lawe. It is then ſpoken deceitfully, when wee ſay, that knaues and harlottes doe loue together: for there is no manner of loue betweene them, but as there is among ſuche as ſeeke to deſtroy one another, &c. Alſo if there were among ſuch people true loue, it ſhould remaine what affliction ſoeuer came, and thereby they ſhould be ſtirred vp for to gouerne themſelues wel and honeſtly. For loue is pacient, &c.

Gen.2.22.

Leu.19.18

1. *Cor.* 13.4.

19 *For mine husband, &c.* Albeit that the harlot hath alledged her ſacrifices and vowes that ſhee hath perfourmed and paide, for to ſhew that it was lawful for him to giue ouer himſelfe, yet ſhe knoweth well that ſhe doth euil: euen ſo doth the young man, as it appeared by the twilight or miſtie morning, &c. It appeareth nowe againe in the abſence of her husband: the farre iourney and the day appointed are heere alledged: for it is as much as if hee did ſay, that ſhe knowes well that ſhe will commit wickedneſſe, that ſhe durſt not do, her husband being preſent: and yet though he is abſent, that ſhe woulde not be ſo bolde, but that ſhe knowes that hee is gone a farre iourney, and hath matters of waight in his mind, as it is noted by the bagge of money: and alſo that hee had tolde her the day of his returne againe: for otherwiſe ſhe would be afraid to be taken in the act doing. And in the holding her ſelf aſſured, ſhe laboureth to aſſure the young man, that hee ſhoulde not feare to bee hurt or haue ſhame on her husbandes parte: the which were not needeful, except the whoremonger knewe wel that hee doeth euil in committing ſuch filthineſſe. But beſides this we doe firſt learne, that the married man ought not to abſent himſelf far of frõ his houſe, & chiefly if he haue a daintie dame: for he leaueth her in danger: and if he himſelfe be not very chaſt, is aſſaulted of many luſtes, from the which he ſhould be exempted being at home with his wife. Secondly, that it is not the greateſt bleſſing that can happen vnto a woman to be richly married, and chiefly whẽ to encreaſe the goods, the huſband muſt trauel abrode. It happeneth alſo that the riche man for to

take his paſtime, and to recreate him ſelfe, taketh in hande long voyages which are not neceſſary, but hurtful both to his family and to the poore, for whoſe helpe in their neceſſitie he ſhoulde ſtay himſelfe, &c.

21 *Thus with her great craft, &c.* By ſuche perſuaſions the vndiſcrete doth feele that the lips of the ſtrange womẽ drop as an honny combe: but after ſweeteneſſe commeth bitterneſſe, and it commeth before that a man thinke of it, and without looking for it: Solomon doth ſhew it, when he ſaith,

22 *And hee followed her, &c.* Hee vſeth foure ſimilitudes, for to ſhewe that there is great bitterneſſe in whoredome, & that the whoremongers are ſo dul witted, that they perceiue nothing: wherein the Prouerbe is verified, *A foole neuer beleeueth ſo long as he receiueth.* The ſimilitudes are manifeſt, and they are dayly prooued, and thereby wee ſhoulde bee ſufficiently aduertiſed to beware of whordome and adulterie, Notwithſtanding Solomon ceaſſeth not to exhort vs ſtil as his children:

24 *Heare me nowe therefore, O children, and hearken vnto the wordes of my mouth.*
25 *Let not thine hearte decline to her wayes: wander thou not in her pathes.*
26 *For ſhee hath cauſed many to fall downe wounded, and the ſtrong men are all ſlaine by her.*
27 *Her houſe is the way vnto the graue, which goeth down vnto the chambers of death.*

By this admotion wee may ſee wherunto hee tended by the former ſimilitudes, that is to ſay, to teach vs to take good heede that wee giue not our heartes vnto ſtraunge women, and to followe whoredome and adulterie. Alſo hee teacheth vs, that the chiefe remedie for to auoyde ſuche vncleanneſſe, is to heare the worde of GOD, and therevnto, too applie our vnderſtanding. They then which make no count of this holy worde, are very worthy to be forſaken of God, and giuen vp to a reprobate ſenſe, for to commit filthineſſe with all greedineſſe of minde.

26 *For ſhee hath cauſed many to fall, &c.* Becauſe there are ſome which iudge that it is but a trifling matter, to keepe company with knaues and whores; and doe thinke them ſelues ſo wiſe, that they haue no neede to bee diſwaded from ſuche company, and that whatſoeuer acquaintance they haue with ſuch people, that they wil keepe themſelues wel enough from defiling, and wil take no hurte thereby: Solomon ſheweth heere that his exhortation is neceſſary for al men, when he ſaith that the harlot maketh many to fall, &c. The vniuerſal flood is an example thereof: Sampſon, Dauid and Solomon haue prooued it to be true for a time. And for to ſhewe that hee ſpeaketh not of the corporall nature, but of the loſſe of the ſoules of thoſe which wil not abſtaine, he addeth,

27 *Her houſe is the way, &c.* This is the ſame that hee hath ſaid in the 2. Chapter 18.19. verſes: and Chap. 5. verſes 4.5. Wherſore it ſhall not neede to repeate the ſame againe.

The

The viii. Chapter.

1 DOth not wiſedome crie? and vnderſtanding vtter her voice?

2 She ſtandeth in the top of high places by the way in the place of the pathes.

3 She crieth beſides the gates before the citie at the entrie of the doores.

4 O men, I cal vnto you, and vtter my voice to the children of men.

5 O yee fooliſh men, vnderſtand wiſedome, and ye, O fooles, be wiſe in hearte.

6 Giue eare, for I wil ſpeake of excellent things, & the opening of my lippes ſhall teache thinges that be right.

7 For my mouth ſhal ſpeake the trueth, & my lippes abhorre wickedneſſe.

8 All the wordes of my mouth are righteous: there is no lewdneſſe, nor frowardneſſe in them.

9 They are al plaine to him that wil vnderſtand, & ſtraight to them that would vnderſtand.

10 Receiue mine inſtruction, and not ſiluer, and knowledge rather then fine golde.

11 For wiſedome is better then precious ſtones: and al pleaſures are not to be compared vnto her.

12 I wiſedome dwell with prudence, and I finde foorth knowledge and counſels.

FOr to ſhewe vnto the fooliſhe and vndiſcreete that they cannot bee excuſed, for hauing followed and obeyed the deſires and *luſtes of their fleſh*, although they haue been tempted after diuers ſorts: Solomon doth here pronounce vnto vs by an interrogation, that if the fooliſhe and vndiſcreete haue yelded to enticement by temptation, following their vntamed luſtes, that it hath not bin for want of doctrine, exhortation, & correctiō, but by contempt of wiſdome & vnderſtanding, wherby by they care not to giue their heartes and mindes vnto the holy ſermons,which are made by the Paſtours of the Church,both publikely and priuately : by whome wiſedome crieth , and vnderſtanding lifteth vp, & thundereth with her voyce,when they purely handle the Scripture,ſeeking the glory of GOD, and the edifiyng of their neighbours.And to the ende that none ſhoulde alledge that he hath not hearde this proclamation,nor vnderſtoode this calling : Solomon doth ſhew vs,that God hath not imparted his wiſdome vnto his miniſters for to hide themſelues,and to ſtoppe their mouthes : ſo haue they openly ſhewed it,and preached it plainely : and yet ſtil as this day they continue,Solomon doth ſhew it,when he ſaith,

2 *She ſtandeth in the top,&c.* This is the ſame that hath bin ſaide before in the firſt Chapter,verſes,20.& 21. But beſides that which was there ſaid,we muſt note that Solomon vſeth both there and heere a Verbe that ſignifieth to crie aloude,either for ioy or for ſorrow. Nowe when hee crieth after men,and that it is not for any vertue they haue,but rather to reproue them for their ſinnes , then it followeth that the crye is made for griefe and ſorrow. That it is after men, he expreſſeth:

4 *O men,&c.* And that it is not for their vertues,he ſheweth, when he calleth them ignorant and fooles,ſaying,

5 *O yee fooliſh men,vnderſtande wiſedome, &c.* But although reſpecting them with whom he hath to doe, hee is minded to crie for ſorrow,pitie and compaſſiō that he hath to ſee thē without vnderſtanding and without hart: yet he crieth chiefly for an other reſpect,to wit,becauſe it is his duetie to crie, and alſo that hee crieth not by pronoūcing vaine & friuolous things,as he declareth:

6 *Giue eare,for I wil ſpeake,&c.* When Solomon in the perſon of wiſdome is not greeued with much ſpeaking, but vſeth copy, and is plentifull in wordes,ſaying,*I call you*,my voyce crieth,vnderſtande,be learned, hearken : hee ſheweth vs the great compaſſion that hee hath of the fooliſhneſſe of men, and therewith ſpeaketh cheerefully : and doth ſhewe vs,that albeit that after the outwarde apparance wee thinke not to profite by preaching, by exhortations and corrections,that yet we muſt not be greeued too doe our office of teaching , exhorting , correcting , reproouing and threatning, by following Moſes, the Prophetes, Ieſus Chriſte and his Apoſtles.

And alſo albeit that the ignorant and fooliſh, that wil not yeeld vnto the trueth, but followe wickedneſſe and lying, doe wel deſerue to be deceiued by lyes, and be left in a reprobate ſenſe, that yet our office is to ſpeake of excellent thinges, worthy to be proclaimed, and which are ſo cleare and manifeſt, that none can bee deceiued in hearing them, ſo that any man cannot be turned from righteouſneſſe and equitie, but that they ſhew the right way of them rather. Solomon doth giue vs well to vnderſtande this ſame, when after hauing promiſed notable, excellent or cleare thinges, hee promiſeth to teach thinges that are right, by the opening of his lippes. Wherevpon the reaſon followeth.

1.*Cor*.1.2.4
Col.2.8.

7 *For my mouth ſhall ſpeake the trueth, &c.* When Solomon ſetteth trueth in his mouth that ſpeaketh notable things, hee ſheweth that the Miniſter for to declare excellent thinges, muſt not come with highneſſe of wordes or wiſedome, neither muſt his preaching ſtand in inticing words of mans wiſdome, but in pure trueth, & alſo that the people ſhould take heed to be ouertakē by Philoſophie and vaine deception, according to the tradition of men, and inſtitutions of the worlde. Moreouer, when Solomon placeth trueth againſt wickedneſſe, we ought to vnderdande, that the trueth ſtandeth not onely in wordes, but in ſinceritie of hearte, in vprightneſſe of conſcience, in holy thoughtes, in good deſires, and in a ſtrong and liuely faith, the which worketh by loue not fained, doing good and righteous vnto the glory of God, and profite, and edifiyng of our neighbour: thus doing, wee may truely ſay with Solomon, *My mouth ſhall ſpeake the trueth.* We muſt alſo vnderſtand, that whatſoeuer is contrary vnto the trueth, is wickedneſſe, and wee muſt abhorre and deteſt it, though it haue an external faire appearance, and that the wiſe men of the worlde doe praiſe it: neuertheleſſe Solomon ſpeaketh heere chiefly of the doctrine of trueth, the which is pronounced for to turne man away from his wickedneſſe, and to guide him vnto iuſtice and equitie: the which he ſheweth when he ſaith:

8 *Al the words of my mouth, &c.* If thē we would be preſerued from frowardneſſe and diſſolution, we muſt followe the ſayinges of wiſedome, which teacheth vs by Solomon, and by the Miniſters of trueth, whoſe doctrine tendeth to none other end, then that al wic-

kedneſſe being forſaken,we ſhoulde giue our ſelues vnto righteouſneſſe,by deniyng all ſuperſtition and idolatrie,all infidelitie and diſtruſt,all filthineſſe and diſhoneſtie,all iniurie and wrong, al deceipt and vnfaithfulneſſe : and that wee ſhoulde ſerue one onely God by faith,in ſpirite and trueth : and our neighbours in loue,ſeeking that which is for their profite in al honeſtie & chaſtitie. It is the righteouſnes that is taught vs by the ſayings of wiſdom,to the which we muſt be very attentiue,if we would eaſily attaine therto : and not to remain in ignorance,if we wil find them plaine,he declareth, ſaying.

9 *They are all plaine,&c.* Alſo none but the careleſſe, ignorant,and contemners doe finde the worde of GOD troubleſome,hard,ſharpe,and ſeuere,It behoueth vs then to be learned,& to be diligent to get knowledge,and to preferre it before al thinges that can be deſired in the worlde,how precious ſoeuer they be. Solomon doth cal vs therevnto when,he ſaith:

10 *Receiue mine inſtruction,&c.* Then ſhall we haue true knowledge,Chap.2.verſes 1.2.3.4.&.5. It is not without cauſe that he doth thus admoniſh vs:as he doth ſhew,ſaying,

11 *For wiſedome is better then precious ſtones,&c.* This is the ſame that he hath ſaide in the 3.Chapter,& in the 13.14.& 15. verſes:and alſo againe in the ſame Chapt.in the 16,17.18.19.& 20. verſes,he hath ſhewed in what ſort it is better.The reaſons that he hath giuen vs heeretofore,ought to be ſufficient to make vs careful to followe wiſedome,and to be diligent hearers of his ſayings: but for to ſtirre vs vp furthermore,Solomon doth ſhewe vs here againe how wiſdome is better,when he ſaith:

12 *I wiſdome dwell with prudence,&c.* What abundance of wealth,and what eaſe, and pleaſures ſoeuer man can haue, yet hee is neither the wiſer nor diſcreter,thẽ if he were poore & miſerable: but in what ſtate and condition ſoeuer we be, yet if we haue wiſedome,wee are diſcrete and wel aduiſed,and gouerned. Better is the poore and wiſe childe, than an olde and fooliſh king, which wil be no more admoniſhed. And there was founde therein a poore and wiſe man,and he deliuered the citie by his wiſedome. And becauſe there is none of ſounde iudgement which doth not much more deſire to haue diſcretion and counſell for to be able to gouerne him ſelſe, and to keepe himſelfe from hurt and danger, rather then to

Eccle.4.13. & 9.15.

haue great riches, and therewith to be ignorant and fooliſhe, it followeth thereof that wiſedome is beſt. I ſay expreſly of ſound iudgement: for we muſt not make cõpariſon of things after the opiniõ & fantaſie of people which are of a frowarde or corrupted iudgement: as are al they which haue their minde on this worlde: they care not what they be, nor what they doe, ſo that they may haue riches: they thinke themſelues wiſe enough, ſeeing they haue riches: but for all that, before God they are fooles, as appeareth by the rich man wherof Luke ſpeaketh, O foole, this night will they fetch away thy ſoule from thee: then whoſe ſhal thoſe thinges be which thou haſt prouided? They are alſo enimies of GOD: for they are gouerned after the affection of the fleſhe, which is enimitie againſt God.

Luke.12.20

Rom.8.7.

13 *The feare of the Lorde is to hate euill, as pride and arrogancie, and the euil way: and a mouth that ſpeaketh lewd things, I doe hate.*

14 *I haue counſel and wiſedome: I am vnderſtanding, and I haue ſtrength.*

Pro.3.14.
Pro.1.7.

Pro.3.7

Becauſe that Solomon hath heere before much praiſed wiſdome the which alſo he continueth in the beginning of this eight Chapter: and to attaine therto that we muſt haue the feare of the Lord. For the feare of the Lorde is the beginning of knowledge, and alſo he doth much praiſe wiſedome vnto vs, to the ende that we ſhoulde aſpire thereunto: for this cauſe nowe hee teacheth vs what it is to feare of the Lorde, that wee may knowe what wee haue to doe for to obteine wiſedome. Heere before he hath briefly ſhewed vs it, when hee hath ſaide, Feare the Lorde, and withdraw thy ſelfe from euil. In this verſe, hee ſaith the very ſame vnder diuerſe wordes, and more at large. For hauing ſaide that the feare of the Lorde is to hate euill: he ſheweth what kinde of euill he meaneth, when in the perſon of Wiſedome he ſaith, *I hate, &c.* Wherevpon wee muſt note, that the euil whereof hee ſpeaketh, is not the miſeries and calamities which happẽ vnto vs in this preſent life, nor that the torments that the wicked do & ſhall ſuffer after the temporall death. Wherefore thoſe which feare God for the regarde of ſuche euils, haue not truely the feare of God, but as the diuelles haue, doe they feare the tormentes: they feare God as a theefe feareth the Iudge. Euen ſo they deſerue that God ſhould ſhew himſelf ſuch towards them, as the iuſt and ſharpe iudge doeth ſhewe himſelfe towardes the theeues, that is, after the inditement and condemnation hee ſendeth them to the gallowes, there too ende their dayes: the which ſhall happen vnto them, except they chaunge their manners, and that in ſteede of fearing the tormentes, they hate their wicked life, which is the euil whereof Solomon ſpeaketh in this place: hee himſelfe doeth declare it, ſaying immediately, *I hate pride, &c.* Amongſt the euilles that wee muſt hate, there is pride and arrogancie, which are euilles cleane contrary to the feare of the Lord: for he that feareth God, truely ſubmitteth himſelfe with al humilitie to bee ordeined by his worde. Contrarily, the proude and arrogant doeth contemne both GOD and his worde, and thinke themſelues wiſe enough to gouerne & rule them ſelues, and cannot ſuffer any correction, nor exhortation, but doe ſcoffe thereat: and as they ſcorne, ſo are they againe ſcorned of God.

Wherefore wee muſt vnderſtand that it is not without cauſe that Solomon admoniſheth vs ſaying, *Bee not wiſe in thine owne eyes:* but feare the Lord, and come backe from euil. Secondly, the euil conuerſation, the which is contrary alſo vnto the feare of the Lorde. For euill companies, wicked manners, and froward conditions cãnot be followed without falling away, euen to the forgetting of God, and making no conſcience to offend him, and to doe wrong to our neighbours: and in ſo doing wee caſt away the feare of the Lorde: they are of the number of them which forſake the right path to walke by darke wayes. From the which if wee will bee deliuered, and not bee like vnto them, let vs hold faſt the feare of God, which *Pro.2.13* is the beginning of wiſedome. Then ſhall we vnderſtand righteouſneſſe, and iudgement, and equitie, and euery good path. Thirdly, *Pro.2.9* a frowarde mouth, the which ſheweth plainely that a man hath not the feare of God, but is wicked and vngodly. It is not without cauſe *Pro.6.12* that ſuch frowardneſſe of mouth is hated of wiſdome, & that they which loue wiſdome, do abhor this frowardnes: for he that is wiſe, loueth the honor & glory of God, he greatly eſteemeth the ſincere trueth and ſounde doctrine: hee reioyceth at the good name of his neighbours: he reuerenceth the lawe of God: and ſo he taketh not the name of God in vaine, neither ſpeaketh falſe witneſſe againſt his neighbour: he obeieth this commandement, Put frō thee a froward mouth, and put wicked lippes farre from thee. If then we wil bee wiſe, the feare of God is needeful for vs to make vs to turne away from euill, which diſpleaſeth God, and all men of good conſcience.

14 *I haue counſell, &c.* For aſmuch as there is none but deſireth to be wel counſelled, and directed in his affaires, to the ende that they may be duely and rightly guided, that he may profit therby, and take no hurt: foraſmuch alſo as we are very glad to know, and be able to perfourme, and execute our thoughtes, willes, purpoſes, and enterpriſes, wee muſt be very carefull to haue wiſdome: for *Eccle.9.14.15* it is ſhe that counſelleth thoſe which take her, which doeth direct them, which giueth them vnderſtanding and ſtrengtheneth thē. Solomon doeth declare it vs heere briefly, and Eccleſiaſtes doth likewiſe ſhewe the ſame. Heerein we may knowe that hee ſpeaketh not of humane wiſedome: for ſeeing it is fooliſh and vaine, & that *1.Cor.1.18 &.3.18.* it vaniſheth away eaſily, wee cannot attribute the vertues vnto it, whereof Saint Paule ſpeaketh. They apperteine onely to the ſpirite *Eſay.11.2.* of God. But we are not partakers of this ſpirite, except that wee receiue the worde of GOD, and that it bee deepely grauen in our heartes, in ſuch wiſe that it be our guide and directer, and that therby we may learne to walke manly, to beare all afflictions, and to re*Deut.4.6*ſiſt al temptations. Likewiſe this onely Worde is our wiſedome & knowledge. It is no wonder then, though the world be ſo euill gouerned, though there be ſo much ignorāce, and that ſo muche people fall, and are deſtroied, ſeeing this worde is ſo much deſpiſed as it is. We muſt alſo vnderſtande that the ſchoole diuines do greatly erre, when they doe attribute vnto men free will, and the power to gouerne and guide themſelues: for they blaſpheme againſt the holy Ghoſt, and are vnthankeful, or at leaſtwiſe endeuour to bring all the worlde to vnthankefulneſſe, and are arrogant, when, ſo much as in them lieth, they diſpoſſeſſe the holy Ghoſt of his benefites and giftes, and attribute them vnto men, and in this manner hee turneth them away from the true wiſedome. Wherefore eſchuing thē

is a deadly peſtilence, thruſting them away as doung and filthineſſe, let vs take heede wee ſmel not too much of them: but let vs harken vnto ſobrietie. The which wee ſhal doe, if with humblenes wee acknowledge our ſelues to be the graftes, and that wee truly confeſſe with Saint Paule, that we are not able of our ſelues, but our ſtrēgth commeth of God. Let vs not then be proude and arrogant: but by humilitie of mind, let vs occupie our ſelues about our ſaluatiō &c. This humilitie is very neceſſary for vs, when our eternal ſaluation lyeth vpon it, ſith, that in leſſe things we haue need of wiſedome to guide & gouerne our ſelues, without the which our temporal affaires, which are nothing in compariſon of our ſoules, cannot ſtand, but fal to decay. Solomon doeth well ſhewe it, when he ſayeth,

*Rom.*12.3.
*Iohn.*15.5.
2.*Cor.*3.5.
*Philip.*2.12.

15 *By me Kings raigne, and Princes decree iuſtice.*
16 *By me Princes rule, and the nobles, and al the iudges of the earth.*

When wiſedom ſpeaketh thus, ſhe wel ſheweth that counſel & wiſedome are hers, &c. For a king doeth not truly raigne, except he gouerne his people by good counſel and wiſedome, but rather is a tyrant, if hee woulde haue al goe after his fantazie, and that his wil muſt ſerue for al reaſon. Likewyſe a King doeth not reigne except hee can defende his ſubiectes againſt the violence of the wicked which trouble them, and ſeeke their deſtruction: but is an ydol. Likewiſe without ſuch vertues the magiſtrates which ſit in the iudgement ſeate, ſhal not bee able to yeelde vnto euery man his owne, but doe wrong vnto many, beeing led by their affections, and proceeding by accepting of perſons. To bee ſhorte, there are neither Princes, Lordes, nor iudges which can rule as they ought, except they bee indued with theſe vertues, but doe exerciſe tyrannie and crueltie. Al kings, counſellers, Princes, Lordes, and iudges muſt then learne wiſedome, and bee obedient thereunto, if they wil rule and reigne as they ought, and doe their office, acknowledging what place they holde, and that the Lorde of Lordes, to whome they owe homage and high ſeruice, is aboue them to deſtroy them and confounde them, except they doe their duety. For to be wel inſtructed, they muſt be ſuch as Iethro demandeth & coun-

*Pſal.*2.8.
*Exod.*18. 21.
2.*Chro.* 19.6.

ſelleth Moyſes to chooſe: and ſuch as Ioſaphat deſcribeth. If wee haue not ſuch Lords, we muſt impute the ſame vnto our ſinnes, and patiẽtly to beare the yoake, prouided alwaies that in obeying them, wee doe neither offende God nor our neighbours: for it is not lawful to rebel againſt them, though they bee wicked: for they are ordeined, not by men, but by the diuine prouidence, as Solomon doeth ſhewe it by the woordes aboue ſaide: and as S. Paule also treateth of it. *Rom.13.1.*

17 *I loue them that loue me: and they that ſeeke mee early, ſhal finde mee.*

18 *Riches and honour are with mee: euen durable riches and righteouſneſſe.*

19 *My frute is better then golde, euen then fine golde, and my reuenewes better then fine ſiluer.*

Wiſedome not only maketh account of the greate men of the worlde, for to cauſe them to walke duelie in their vocation, and to proſper them: but of what eſtate, or condition ſoeuer we be, if wee delight in wiſedome, and that wee bee careful to gouerne our ſelues thereafter, we ſhal not faile to bee wiſe. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when he introduceth wiſedome, which ſaith, *That ſhe loueth them that loue her.* Notwithſtanding we ought not to thinke that it is in our libertie or free wil to become wiſe of our ſelues, & compel God by his wiſedome to loue vs, and that wee ſhoulde finde him, except that hee himſelfe ſeeke vs firſt, and drawe vs to him and holde vs faſt. The which hee doeth, when he doeth offer vs his worde, and wee doe loue it, and ſeeke it early or diligently, if our delight bee in the ſame. Wee wil then take theſe woordes, as if wiſedome did ſay, when I offer my ſelfe by preaching and corrections, and that I am not deſpyſed, then doe I make men feele my ſweetneſſe and gentleneſſe, my helpe and gouernement. Nowe that wee are beloued before that wee doe loue, it is certaine, and alſo that we be ſought for, and drawne: the grace that Noe founde, doeth ſhewe it vs, and the departure of Abraham, and the deliuerance of the chil- of Iſrael out of the lande of Egipt, &c. And when God ſaieth by his Prophets, that he roſe vp early and ſent his ſeruantes the Prophetes

Iohn.3.16.
Rom.5.8.
1.Iohn.4.9.10
Ge.6.8.& 12.1
Exod.3.8.
Ier.7.24. & 25.3.4. & 35. 15.

And when Ieſus Chriſt ſaith, The ſonne of man is come to ſaue that which is loſt, &c. Whē then we ſhal loue wiſdome, let vs know that it is becauſe ſhe loueth vs, and when we ſhal finde her, it is becauſe ſhe draweth vs, making vs diligent to ſeeke her. Wee ought not to feare that we ſhoulde labour in vaine, and looſe our paine for to loue wiſedome, and to ſeeke the ſame: for ſhe loueth not in words, but in trueth: and they which ſeeke her, doe not finde her vnprouided. Solomon doth ſhew it, ſaying, *Mat.18.11.*

18 *Riches and honour, &c.* Wherevpon followeth alſo, that they which finde her, returne not backe emptie. For ſith that wiſedome doth loue them, ſhee cannot leaue thē comfortleſſe, but doth participate of al her riches vnto them, ſo farre as is expedient: for alſo that which ſhe poſſeſſeth, ſhe onely holdeth to beſtow vpō her friendes, and to lift them vp to honour and glory. If then wee deſire to be rich with the true riches, let vs loue wiſdome, and ſeeke her betimes in the morning with al diligence: ſo doing, wee ſhall not be rich onely for one time, but we ſhal haue *durable riches*. Wherfore we may conclude, That bleſſed is the man that findeth wiſedome, and the man that draweth knowledge vnto him. And alſo that her merchandize is better then the merchandize of ſiluer. Such things doe waſte and are tranſitorie, ſubiect vnto ſtealing and corruption. Theſe are not then the riches that we muſt loke for in ſeeking wiſedome, and appliyng thereto our heartes: But wee muſt lay vp our treaſures in heauen, &c. ſo doing we ſhall want no riches: and as our Lord doth giue vs good witnes therof, when he ſaith, Firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God & the righteouſnes therof, & al other things ſhalbe giuen vnto you: Neither is it vnto the deſire of tēporal goods that Solomō laboureth to draw vs, when he ſpeaketh of wiſdomes riches, he doth ſhew it whē he ſaith, that *wiſdome goeth with righteouſnes:* as if he did ſay, that if we wil be partakers of the riches & honours of wiſdome, & of this durable riches, wee muſt aſpire vnto righteouſnes, which wee ſhal attaine, if truſting in the goodneſſe of God, we abhorre al hypocriſie and deceit, al iniury & violence, and doe imploy our ſelues to giue vnto euery man his owne ſo farre as we can. It is then a good thing to loue wiſedome, and for to ſeeke it, yea it is moſt neceſſary: for ſeeing that theſe thinges belong vnto her, it foloweth that they which do deſpiſe and reiect thē, muſt remain in pouertie & diſhonor, albeit that for their wealthines they

Pro.3.13.14.

Mat.16.19.
33.

are honoured of the worlde for a very little time: for as their riches are of no continuance, euen ſo therewith they ſodenly fall into confuſion and ſhame, being deſtitute of al righteouſneſſe, they are placed in the rancke with infidels and vngodly. Al they which ſhal contemne the worde of God, which is the true wiſedome, are in great danger to become very poore and confounded, except that they conuert through true repentance and ſounde faith, and become louers of wiſedome, and do ſeeke her betimes in the morning. Pro.4.8. Contraly it is ſaide, that ſhe wil exhalt them that ſhal honour her, and that ſhe will imbrace them that doe glorifie her.

19 *My fruite is better, &c:* For that, that wiſedome hath ſaide that riches and honours, &c. ſhe inferreth moſt fitly that Pro.3.18 her fruite is better than golde, &c. For golde, ſtones, and ſiluer are of ſmal continuance, but this that wiſedome bringeth foorth, continueth for euer. It is the tree of life, to them that lay holde on her. For to giue vs a taſt of this fruite and reuenew, Solomon is not contented already to haue ſhewed vs this profite and vtilitie, but for to ſtirre vs vp moreouer, he repeateth the ſame wordes, ſaying, *My reuenewes is better &c.* This repetition is very needeful for to ſharpen our appetite: for of our nature we are ſo out of taſt, that we loue better the ſhadowe of thornes and reedes, and to eate of their ſharpe and ſowre fruite, then to reſt vnder the tree of life, and to be refreſhed with her ſweete and pleaſant fruite: wee are more careful of the goodes of this worlde, then of the worde of GOD. Heerein wee faile very fouly, and therefore are well worthie of great rebuke: for wee ſooner beleeue our ſenſual appetite, and doe more gladly follow the affection of our fleſh, then the wiſedome of God, the which doth offer her ſelfe vnto vs with al riches and glory, not as the worlde, which puffeth vp and maketh them proude, that haue this riches, and doeth turne them away from the right way for to commit all vnrighteouſnes, by ſpoyling al on ſides what they can lay handes vpon. Wiſedome which doeth communicate herſelfe vnto vs by the worde, doth not ſo deale with vs: but as ſhe ſaith,

20 *I cauſe to walke in the way of righteouſneſſe, in the mids of the pathes of iudgement.*

21 *That I may cauſe them that loue mee, to inherite ſubſtance, and I wil fil their treaſures.*

They which loue Wiſedome and doe ſeeke her in the Word, ſo that they finde her, are partakers of the giftes of the holy Ghoſt, which is the Spirite of Wiſdome and knowledge, &c. Thus he guideth the louers of Wiſedome in ſuch ſort, that the riches wherwith Wiſedome doth bleſſe them, doe ſerue to no other purpoſe then to lead them vnto al holines and innocencie, that being aſcerteined of the goodneſſe of God towards them, they ſhould loue & feare her, in ſuch wiſe that they ſhould be ſuch towards their neighbours, as they know that God is towards thẽ, that is to ſay, that they ſhoulde doe no wrong, nor iniurie vnto any man, but ſhoulde bee readie to ſerue euerie man in true brotherly charitie, yelding to al men the duetie according to their office: ſo doing they ſhal walke in the path of righteouſnes, the which requireth that wee ſhoulde aſſure our ſelues in God by Ieſus Chriſte, and that by his feare and reuerence wee ſhoulde loue our neighbours, ſo that wee ſhould doe wrong to none, but yeelde to euery man that which belongeth vnto him. If we be louers of Wiſedome, ſhe maketh vs ſuche, and therewith ſhe maketh vs to walk in the midſt of the paths of iudgement: that is to ſay, that ſhee cauſeth vs to become ſo gentle, and ful of ſuccour, that we can not abide any to doe wrong to our neighbours, but wil deliuer them ſo much as we can. In this ſenſe, muſt wee take iuſtice and iudgement, wherewith we muſt be armed, and alſo ſo muche as lyeth in vs, to arme others that are vnder our charge, as it is ſaide of Abraham, I knowe that hee wil commaund his children, and his familie after him, that they keepe the way of the Lorde to doe righteouſnes and iudgement. If we doe and teache ſo, wee ſhal not want: for this, that Wiſedome ſo maketh them which loue her, to walke, is, as ſhe ſayeth,

Eſai.2.11.

Gen.18.19.

21 *That I may cauſe them, &c.* This is no temporal poſſeſſion: for the riches of this worlde do not fil the treaſures. The more a man hath, the more he deſireth, ſo that they doe not ſatisfie and fil. The worldlinges then doe thinke that their treaſures are neuer full enough. This ſubſtance which is ſpoken of heere, is eternall. Solomon doeth ſhewe it by this worde to *inherite*. For as a father leaueth the heritage to his childrẽ, for to paſſe from one to another, from kindred to kindred, and cannot be voided thereof, but by euill

gouernment of their ſide, or of the violence of men: euen ſo the heauenly heretage can not be taken away from the children of wiſdome, but ſhal eternally poſſeſſe her: and in this ſorte their *treaſures ſhalbe filled.* Herein we may and ought to vnderſtand, that we haue nothing, except God giue it vs by his wiſedom, and that without it we are neuer contented. And ſeeing there is none of vs but deſireth to haue and to fil his treaſures, we ought wel to loue wiſdome. It is ſhee onely which giueth the heritage, and which filleth to the brimme.

22 *The Lord hath poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way:*
I was before his workes of olde.
23 *I was ſet vp from euerlaſting, from the beginning, and*
before the earth.
24 *When there was no depthes, was I begotten, when there*
were no fountaines, abounding with water.
25 *Before the mountaines were ſetled: and before the hils,*
was I begotten.
26 *He had not yet made the earth, nor the open places, nor*
the height of the duſt in the world.
27 *When he prepared the heauens, I was there: when he ſet*
the compaſſe vpon the deepe,
28 *When he eſtabliſhed the cloudes aboue, when hee confirmed the fountaines of the deepe,*
29 *When hee gaue his decree to the ſea, that the waters*
ſhoulde not paſſe his commandements: when hee appointed the foundations of the earth,
30 *Then was I with him as a nouriſher: and I was daily his*
delight, reioycing alway before him,
31 *And tooke my ſolace in the compaſſe of his earth: and*
my delight is with the children of men.

To the ende that we ſhoulde not thinke that wiſdome, which hath ſo much extolled herſelfe from the beginning of this Chapter, ſhoulde not be ſuch as ſhe hath declared of her ſelfe, & that it is not an imagination framed in the braine of man, that he hath yeelded of his owne goodneſſe, Solomon doeth deſcribe her eternal power:

and therefore he ſaith, *The Lorde hath poſſeſſed wiſedome in the beginning of his way*. Wherein he giueth vs to vnderſtande, that God hath neuer purpoſed any thing, and that he hath neuer ordeyned any thing in his eternal decree without wiſedome: that is to ſay, that this wiſedome was already, before that God had put in execution any of his purpoſes, and ordinances: as it was right neceſſary: for it followeth wel, that if it was in the beginning of the way of the Lorde, that it was before al things, conſequently, that it is no creature which hath takē his eſſence with the things created. Wherof we muſt conclude that his being is eternal, and likewiſe his power. And foraſmuch as there is no eternal being, nor eternal power, but onely in God: it foloweth therefore, that this wiſedome is in God, and that it is nothing diſtincted nor ſeparated from God, and conſequently, that the ſame is God: yet leaſt we ſhould confounde the perſons which are in God, we muſt beleeue and confeſſe, that in ſo much as God is Father, that his Wiſedome which is his eternall Sonne and his Word, is diſtinct from his fatherhood. That this wiſdome is the eternal Word, and the Sonne of God, Saint Iohn doth ſhewe in his Goſpel, when he doeth attribute vnto the Word, that which Solomon doeth attribute heere vnto Wiſedome: that is to wit, when he ſayeth, In the beginning was the Word. When then it is ſaid, *The Lord hath poſſeſſed me*, let vs know that it is the Sonne of God which ſpeaketh. *Ioh.1.1.* And ſo, when we haue ſaide, that our wiſedome is in the only Word of God. We haue not meant that it is in the woorde that ſoundeth in our corporal eares, but in the ſame that ſo penetrateth our hartes and mindes, that we are made newe creatures. Neuertheles the outward preaching is not vnfruitful, but profitable and neceſſarie: for it is the meanes and inſtrument wherwith God is ſerued to make the liuely woorde to pearce into vs: & for this cauſe S. Paule douteth not to ſay (when hee ſpeaketh of preaching) that the Goſpel is the power of GOD to ſaluation to euery one that beleeueth. *Rom.1.16. & 17,* Againe, Faith commeth by hearing, and hearing by the woorde of God. If then wee deſpiſe preaching, we do not deſpiſe men, but the Sonne of God: we refuſe our ſaluation, & make poſt haſt vnto our damnation: we ſkorne at the wiſedom of GOD, and reioyce in folly. Thus doing, wee walke, cleane contrary to that wee ſhoulde, yea againſt nature, the which teacheth vs to honour our elders. And ſith the Lorde hath poſſeſſed, &c. Wiſedome is very auncient. Wherefore wee muſte honour it when ſhe offereth herſelfe vnto vs by the mouth of her Miniſters.

23 *I was ſet vp from euerlaſting*. For to declare the eternitie of Wiſedome more largely and more particularly, Solomon bringeth her in, ſaying, that ſhe hath *bene ſet vp*. Nowe the worde which he vſeth, hath in his tongue diuers ſignifications, it ſignifieth to ordeine, it ſignifieth alſo to be king, and to beare the chiefe rule. Theſe two ſignifications agree verie wel with the wiſdome of God: but we muſt take heede that we imagine not, that as Kings & Princes doe ordeine Gouernours in their prouinces, which are their ſubiects and inferiours, that in this maner God hath ordeined wiſedome ouer his workes, as his inferiour. For wiſedome is equall vnto God, ſeeing it is of the ſame eſſence with him, and that in God there is neither ſuperiour nor inferiour, neither higher nor lower: but there is an equalitie exempte from al difference and diuerſitie. Therefore when wiſedome ſayeth, that ſhe hath bene ſet vp, or that ſhe hath had the kingdome or the principalitie, let vs vnderſtande none other thing, but that God hath decreed and ordeined al things by his wiſedome, and thereby hath made and ordered al his works, and thereby reigneth and ruleth ouer al the world. And when ſhe ſayeth, from euerlaſting; and from the beginning, we muſt not deuiſe that wiſedome began from the beginning, wee muſt not deuiſe that wiſedome began to bee ſet vp and to beare rule. For ſeing, that as it is ſaide, in the beginning God created heauen and earth, &c, And wiſedome hath beene ſet vp afore the earth, wee muſt vnderſtand that from euerlaſting, and from the beginning, and before all worldes, and before any beginning, that is to ſay: from euerlaſting, and before al things. For as the diuine wiſedome had no beginning of eſſence, ſo alſo it began not to be ordeined and to beare rule. And foraſmuch as wiſedome hath bene eternally ſet vp in the counſel of God, ſhe may wel ſay, I haue counſel, &c. And ſeeing that her gouernement is eternal, ſhee may well ſay, That by me Kinges raigne, &c. Furthermore, they that deſpyſe the preaching of the Word, by the which wiſedome doeth offer her ſelf for

to doe that wherevnto ſhe hath beene ordeined, doe enterpriſe an vnpoſſible thing,to wit,to breake the ordinance of God,and therein they ſhewe their fooliſhnes and arrogancie, riſing vp againſt an eternal gouernment,whervnto they ought to do homage,that they may obteine true and ſtrong being,and finally to reigne with Wiſedome for euer. They ſhewe alſo their ingratitude, not acknowledging that al riches proceede from wiſedome,and that without it nothing can ſtande. They are then greatly out of their wittes: for by contemning the Worde, ſo much as in them lyeth,they make wiſedome vaine,and ſeeke the deſtruction of the worlde,which can not ſtande without theirs. Contrarily,they that haue a reuerence vnto this Word,ſo much as in them is, doe mainteine the ordinance and eſtabliſh the gouernment of wiſedome : and as they deſire that ſhe ſhould reigne and rule, ſo much as they can helpe,they do make her to reigne : alſo they can not periſhe,for wiſedome loueth them, and openeth her ſelfe vnto them. Wherefore it is a ſure thing that they ſhal be partakers of this eternal gouernment. Theſe thinges are paſt the reach of mans wit,and therefore the worldly wiſe,can not comprehend them,there is nothing but Fayth that can vnderſtand thē.

24 *When there were no depthes.&c.* For to proceed in ſhewing the eternitie of wiſedome,he ſayeth,that ſhe was begotten before that the deepes were, &c. Wherein he ſeemeth that he ſpeaketh againſt that which hee hath ſaide here before, and that in willing to ſhewe the eternal being of wiſedome,he ſheweth that ſhe hath not beene alwayes : for ſhee ſayeth , that ſhee hath beene begotten : and by this it ſeemeth, that there hath beene a certaine time wherein ſhee was not, and that hee which begatte her, was before her. This argument might haue place in carnal generation: but here is a diuine generation ſpoken of, the which hindereth not that, which is begotten to bee eternall. Alſo the Father hath not begunne to beget his wiſedome,but hath begotten it eternally. The wiſe worldlings which woulde vnderſtand and know al things by natural reaſon, or by experience, wil deride the ſame, becauſe they can comprehende nothing : but we conſider it by Fayth. And for to doe this wel,let vs knowe that amongſt the properties & perſons which are in God,which is one,there is ſuch diſtinction, that to the Father we attribute the beginning of working and creating,

we hold him for the fountaine & ſpring of al things. To the Sonne, we attribute wiſedome, counſel, and the gouernment of things that are made. To the holy Ghoſt, we attribute the power and efficacie of working and executing. And albeit, that the eternitie of the Father, is alſo the eternitie of the Sonne and of the holy Ghoſt: (for God could neuer be without his wiſedome and power: and in the eternitie, there ought neither firſt nor laſt to bee ſought) yet is it not a vaine thing nor ſuperfluous to obſerue this order in the eternitie, to wit, that we ſet the Father firſt in order, and in the ſeconde place, the Sonne which commeth of him: and in the third place, the holy Ghoſt which proceedeth from them both. For alſo the minde of euery one inclineth to conſider firſt God, afterwardes his wiſedome which ſpringeth from him, and finally his power, whereby hee executeth the decrees and ordinances of his counſel. By this reaſon wee ſay that the Sonne commeth onely of the Father, but that the holy Ghoſt is of the Father and of the Sonne together. Albeit then that wee can not conſider the wiſedome of God, but as it proceedeth from the Father, and as it is engendered of him, yet we muſt take heede that in this generation we inuent nothing temporal, carnal, or humane: but rather let vs worſhip this generation, beholding it by Fayth, and let vs take heede from ſearching further then Scriptures doe teach vs thereof: otherwiſe wee ſhoulde deſerue to bee blinded, and puniſhed for our ouer great curioſitie. The generation then of wiſedome wil not forbid vs to beleeue his eternitie. For well to inculcate the ſame vnto vs, Solomon ſtandeth long to preferre wiſedome before thinges viſible, whereof man him ſelfe doeth not comprehend the beginning, but do ſeeme vnto him that they are from euerlaſting: but by Fayth wee vnderſtand that the worldes were made by the worde of God. For the inuiſible things of him, that is, his eternal power and Godhead, are ſeene by the creation of the worlde, &c. And for to beate into vs this eternitie, hee is not content briefly to ſay, that wiſedome was begotten before the earth, but he nameth *the deepes* (which are the deepe waters) *the fountaines*. He reciteth euery thing particularly, to the ende that in the leaſt thinges of the worlde, wee might learne to knowe the wiſedome of God: and alſo ſeeing it is firſt, let vs contemne theſe earthly thinges, if they doe hinder vs to aſpire after wiſedome.

Hebr. 11.3.
Rom. 1.20.

wiſedome. For although they be creatures of God, and that verie good, yet are they nothing, if wee compare them vnto wiſedome.

Moreouer, when ſituation and places are ſpoken of, we ought to vnderſtand that God in the creation of the worlde, hath ſet al things in good order by wiſdom, and hath ſet euery thing in his place, and that the inſenſible thinges doe keepe ſtil their ſituations and places: but the diuels and men are ſo miſerable and vnreaſonable, that they haue verie quickly left their place, and are fallen into extreeme confuſion: out of the which men can not riſe againe, except that wiſedome doeth communicate her ſelfe vnto them.

27 *When hee prepared, &c.* After that Solomon hath ſhewed the eternitie of wiſedome, becauſe it went before the inferiour earthly, and watry creatures, he proceedeth to prooue this eternitie, becauſe that it was before the heauens, and before the ordering of the ſuperiour waters, and before the ſea had his markes ſet, and that the earth was fully ſetled. And when the ſcripture ſheweth vs, that God hath ſaide, Let light be made, &c. By the worde of the Lorde were the heauens made: we muſt vnderſtande that the preparation, the conſtitution, the compaſſe, eſtabliſhment, fortification and ordinance, wherof here is mention made, is nothing but his wiſedome and eternal Worde, the which alſo as it is here tolde, was with God, when he ordered and ordeined his creatures. Furthermore, when we reade theſe things, we ought not only to thinke vpon the eternitie of wiſedome, but alſo vpon the goodneſſe and mercie of God, wherewith he was mooued towardes men, when hee made and ordered al theſe thinges: for hee prepared them for the vſe of men. The which hee hath wel ſhewed, when he made vs Lordes of al the world. *Gen.1.3. Pſal.33.6.*

Then was I with him. After that wiſedome hath ſaide, that ſhe was then there with God, when he prepared, &c. ſhee ſheweth that ſhe was not idle, but that ſhe wrought with him, not as inferiour, but as an equal felow: for ſhe ſaith not that ſhe was vnder him, but with him: not that ſhe was an hādmaid, or ſeruāt, or apprētice, but as a nouriſher or miſtreſſe of work. Wherin Solomō doth ſhew vs the eternal power & diuinitie of the ſonne of God. The which S.

Ioh.1.2. & 5.17. Iohn ſheweth,Shee was in the beginning,&c.Our Lorde him ſelfe alſo doth ſhew it,ſaying,My Father worketh hetherto, and I work. And to ſhewe that ſhee was ſo good a woorke miſtreſſe that there was no worke too harde for her, and alſo that ſhee was not grieued with his worke, but that ſhe delighted in the ſame,ſhe ſayeth, *And I was daily his delight*. Nowe looke what ſhee wrought in the time of the creation and ordering of the world, ſhe doeth yet ſtill, as we may ſee,when ſhe ſayeth,*reioycing* alway before him. Wee may alſo ſay that the Father hath taken pleaſure in that which hee hath wrought by his Sonne from the beginning, and yet ſtil at this preſent doeth delight in his woorkes, as in a moſt pleaſaunt recreation: but although that this ſentence bee true, and that it may be *Ioh.8.29.* grounded vpon the ſaying of our Lord, I doe alwayes thoſe things that pleaſe him: yet the firſt ſenſe is the moſt agreeable to the line of Solomons texte. Likewiſe the manner of a maiſter workeman (which is verie cunning in his arte,) is to take pleaſure in his work, and to doe his worke ſo eaſily and ſo handſomely,that it ſeemeth he worketh not,but playeth and paſſeth away the time ioyfully. And after this ſenſe we may gather hereof, that the goodneſſe and grace of the Lorde was bent from the beginning towardes men: for they had not deſerued that Wiſedome ſhould delight to doe her worke for their vſe: for euen without it, they had not bene.But although that man through pride and vnthankfulneſſe had deſerued to be reiected of wiſedome, and to be abhorred and deteſted of him,yet for al that,ſhe hath not left of from her work, or ceaſed from the ſame vpon the earth,which is giuen vnto man for his habitation & nouriſhment.This continuation is ſhewed vs,when he ſayeth,

31 *And tooke my ſolace, &c.* The great and wonderfull mercy of our Lorde God,is here ſet foorth vnto vs,when he ceaſeth not to take pleaſure in mainteining man on the earth,ſeeing that by his ſinne,and alſo by continuance therof from Father to Sonne, he had deſerued,and ſtil daily doth deſerue that the earth ſhould ſinke, and not to beare him any lõger,but that he ſhould miſerably periſh, and goe to eternal damnation. Nowe howe wiſedome hath continued and ſtil doeth continue to ſolace her ſelfe about the earth (which Solomon moſt fitly calleth the earth of God: for hee ſayeth not ſimplie,in the compaſſe of the earth, but in the compaſſe of his

earth for alſo it is his, and the contentes thereof, ſeeing hee hath created al thinges) howe is it I ſay, that ſhee taketh her pleaſure, &c. The ſcripture doeth teache vs howe: When ſhe is filled with ſo many louing promiſes, aduertiſements, exhortations, corrections, and threatnings. Immediatly after the fal of Adam, wiſedom began this ſolace, and continued the ſame vnto Seth, Enoch, Noe, Abraham, to the Patriarkes, to Moſes and to the Prophetes. But this ſolace was yet more plainly knowne when this wiſedome (which is the eternal worde,) was made fleſh, and dwelt amongſt vs, & that in his doctrine and miracles men behelde his glory, &c. This is the ſheepheard that ſeeketh his ſtrayed ſheepe, &c. This ioye & ſolace contineweth ſtil as we ſee it, when in ſpite of Sathan and al his mainteiners and miniſters, the Goſpel is purely preached, and that we haue the Sacramentes whole and in their perfection, and that the Lorde hath eſtabliſhed amongeſt vs the forme of a true Church. Heerein wee know what wiſedomes ſport is, which ſhalbe deerly ſold vnto the vnthankful, to whom God hath ſent his Goſpel, without being banniſhed, or hauing forſaken their coũtrie or goods to bee partakers of this ſolace. The Lorde hath alreadie begun to puniſh this vngratitude and contempt in ſome places: It is a ſure thing that hee wil finiſhe his woorke in tyme conuenient, and then ſcorners and contemners ſhal feele it.

*Gene.*1.1.
*Pſal.*24.1.& 50.12.
*Iohn.*1.14.
*Luke.*15.14.

Furthermore, ſeeing the Miniſters of the woorde are the inſtrumentes of wiſedome, they learne heere that they ought not to eſteeme their miniſtery as a burthen and painful thing, but as a ioyful and comfortable matter, and ſo much as they poſsibly can, they ſhoulde ſolace themſelues euery where with their brethren: I ſay, ſo much as they can, for they ought to exceede their vocation.

*Mat.*28.19.
*Marke.*16.15

32 *Therfore now harken, O children, vnto mee: for bleſſed are they that keepe my wayes.*

33 *Heare inſtruction, and bee yee wiſe, and refuſe it not: bleſſed is the man that heareth mee, watching dayly at my gaies, and giuing attendance at the poſtes of my dores.*

34 *For he that findeth mee, findeth life, & ſhal obteine fauour of the Lorde:*

35 *But he that ſinneth againſt me, hurteth his owne ſoule: and all that hate me, loue death.*

When wiſedome hath declared what manner of one ſhee is, to whome ſhee belongeth, what riches ſhee hath, and howe auncient ſhee is, ſhee concludeth that wee muſt heare her, if wee wil doe and followe what ſhee commandeth, and teacheth, promiſing felicitie to thoſe that ſhal folow her gouernement, and ſuffer themſelues to be ruled by her. Now ſhee calleth her *children to heare*. Wherein wee are taught to be aſſured, that if wee hearken vnto the Euangelical worde, which is the voice of the greate Paſtour, who is our wiſedome, we are children of wiſedome, and the ſheepe of Ieſus Chriſt, and are of God. Contrarily, they that deſpyſe this word, are children of follie and of the Deuil. As then wiſedome doeth ſport her ſelfe, and paſſe her tyme, and taketh her ſolace with vs in ſpeaking vnto vs by her miniſters, and calleth vs her children: euen ſo al our ioye and delight ought to bee in hearing this voyce: and that without any delay, without putting of til to morrow: for ſhee wil preſently bee hearde. And as without delay wee muſt heare, ſo muſt we alſo perſeuer to heare, euen as wiſedome doeth dayly continewe ſpeaking vnto her children: for ſo long as ſhe ſpeaketh, it is alwaies to day, and ſhal laſt vnto the laſt day. In looking for the which, as wiſedome doeth cal vs, ſo if we yeelde, ſhe doeth accept and heare vs to giue vs ſaluation. But wee muſt marke wel that wiſedome ſaieth not generally, *hearken*: as if it were laweful to lende our eares vnto doctrines and traditions of men (for it hath beene euer forbidden) But wiſedome ſayeth, heare mee, declaring vnto vs that it is ſhe onely that muſt bee hearde: whereof followeth that this wiſedome is the Sonne of GOD, of whome it is ſaide, This is my welbeloued Sonne in whome I haue taken my delight, heare him. Whome nowe if wee wil heare, wee muſt heare his miniſters which doe preache vnto vs his pure word. And for to heare them as wee ought, and as wiſedome demaundeth, it is not ynough to hearken vnto the doctrine, but the heart alſo is required theretoo, that out of that affection therof we might rule our

Iohn.8.47. & .10.27.

2.Cor.6.2.

Math.17.5.

life in al holines and honeſtie, in al iuſtice and innocency. We ought ſo to vnderſtand it, when for to intice vs to heare, it is not ſaid, that bleſſed are they which heare: but which keepe the waies of wiſedome. Our Lorde alſo, who is the true wiſedome, is not contented only to bee hearde.

33 *Heare inſtruction, &c.* Becauſe we are not onely negligent to goe whether wiſedome calleth vs, but alſo it is irkeſome to heare it, and in this wiſe wee ſeeke our deſtruction and damnation: for this cauſe wiſedome taketh pitie of vs, and deſiring our ioye and ſaluation, doeth againe admoniſh vs to heare inſtruction: and heerein ſhee ſheweth that it is ſhe which ſpeaketh, when wee are exhorted and admoniſhed, when we are corrected and reprooued by the woorde. And for to ſhewe vs to what ende tendeth inſtruction, ſhee addeth, and bee wiſe. And thus, without inſtruction wee are without wiſedome, and but fooles. Wherefore, foraſmuch as we cãnot abide to be counted fooles, but deſire that men ſhould eſteeme vs wiſe, let vs folow and embrace inſtruction, and not put her backe, as wiſedome doth admoniſh vs: otherwiſe ſhe wil refuſe vs. Contrarily, it is ſaid, *Bleſſed is the man, &c.* When we haue to do with any great Lord, we neuer ceaſe to keepe watche and warde at his gate, and to looke when hee ſhould come foorth, or that hee wil cal vs vnto him that tary and waite for him. So great deſire haue we to come to the end of that which wee deſire, that we continew ſtil looking. And if in worldly things we haue ſuch perſeuerance: by a more ſtrong reaſon we ought to be very watchful after wiſdom, & folowe her counſel and commandementes in much conſtancie & perſeuerance, and neuer to ceaſe, ſeing that wee haue alwaies neede of her: as ſhe doth wel ſignifie, when ſhee woulde haue vs alwayes to watch at her gates, & to keepe the poſtes of her houſe. Wherin againe we learne, that it is not ynough for vs to heare, but it behooueth vs alſo to be led with an earneſt affection to vnderſtand what belongeth to wiſedom, and to folow it: not for any litle time of our life, but continually, whiles wee are in this worlde. If wee doe thus, aſſuring our ſelues of the goodnes of GOD towards vs, wee ſhal not bee voide of wiſedome: for by aſking it in true faith, it ſhalbee giuen vs. *Mat.7.7.* *Ia.1.5.* Beeing thus indued with wiſedome. though wee were the moſt miſerable and curſed of al the Worlde,

after the ſenſe of the fleſhe, and outwarde apparance, wee ſhal neuer periſh.

34 For he that findeth me, &c. As S. Paule ſaith, The giftes
Rom.11.29. and callings of God are without repentance. Whereof foloweth that this life which commeth of wiſedome, is prolonged more and more: and that this fauour is not withdrawne, but rather encreaſeth. For vnto euery one that hath, ſhalbe giuen, & he ſhal aboūde.
Mat.25.29. And ſeeing that by wiſedome wee haue theſe riches, that is to ſay life, and the fauour from whence life proceedeth, it foloweth wel that by our woorkes we do not deſerue that God ſhoulde fauoure vs and holde vs in his grace: otherwiſe it ſhould bee no grace nor fauour, but recompence and reward that God did owe vs. Neither alſo doe we deſerue life, ſeing it commeth of fauour. Nowe that life commeth of fauour, the creation of man doeth witneſſe it: for hee had not deſerued that God ſhoulde place him in the worlde. Wee haue yet a more manifeſt witneſſe after the fal of man. For albeeit
Gen.2,17. hee had deſerued death, as God had threatened him, yet in ſteede of eternal death as hee had deſerued, hee receiueth promiſe of life. And ſith it is by promiſe, it commeth not by woorkes, otherwiſe the promiſe ſhoulde bee aboliſhed. Seeing alſo that of wiſedome wee haue life and fauour, it foloweth that wiſedom is not a qualitie gotten by the induſtrie and labour of men, but it commeth from the Sonne of God, by whome we haue life and fauour. The lawe was giuen by Moſes, but grace and trueth came by Ieſus Chriſt. As
Iohn.1.17.& 3.14.& 11.25. Moſes lifted vp the Serpent in the wilderneſſe, ſo muſt alſo the ſonne of man be lifted vp: That whoſoeuer beleeueth in him, ſhoulde not periſh, but haue eternal life. I am the reſurrection and the life ſaieth the Lord, &c. Now ſeeing that by finding wiſedom, we obtein ſuch riches, wee ought to bee very careful to ſeeke it, and to ſeeke her in trueth, and not as the Hipocrytes, vnto whome it is ſaide, What haue I to doe with the multitudes of your ſacrifices? (ſayth the Lorde.) &c. Wee muſt ſeeke it by fayth and repentance.
Eſay.1.11.& 55.6.

Mat.7.7. Seeke the Lorde whiles hee may be found: cal vpon him whiles hee is nye. Thus dooing, we ſhal finde and obteine that which wee ſeeke for. Aſke and yee ſhal haue, &c. If then wee wil ſinde wiſedome, and thereby obteine liſe and ſauour towards God, we muſt renounce the euil that diſpleaſeth wiſedome, taking heede that wee doe not offende her, and doe nothing, by hatred againſt her. In this maner we ſhal finde grace before the Lorde, wherby wee ſhal preſerue our ſoules from death.

35 *But he that ſinneth, &c.* We may inferre this ſame of that which hath bin attributed heeretofore to wiſedome & to her children. For it followeth, that hee which ſeeketh wiſedome reuerently and with ſuch loue as he ought, and findeth her, hee findeth fauour and liſe: and that they which deſire wiſedome, and doe not vouchſafe to ſeeke her, and ſo doe offend and hate her, that they ſeeke death, as a thing of them beloued and deſired. And ſo they do great wrong vnto their ſoules, for they do altogither deſtroy them. And ſith alſo that Solomon ſetteth to *offende*, againſt *to finde*, wee ought to vnderſtand that they which deſpiſe the woorde, whereby wiſedome doth offer her ſelfe vnto vs, to the ende that wee might finde her, and do ſkorne her, and refuſe her, and offende wiſedome, & ſinne againſt her: and ſith that wiſedom hath ſo much & ſo great riches (as it hath bin ſaide) wherof without her we cannot bee partakers, it foloweth that they which offende her, doe wittingly depriue themſelues, and ſo doe wrong to their ſoules, depryuing them of greate riches, without the which wee cannot but looke for all miſery. And whē in oppoſition of drawing fauour, he ſetteth *hate*: he ſheweth vs that the contemners of the grace of God doe hate wiſedome, and conſequently their life: and ſeeing there is no meane way betweene life and death, it is neceſſary, that if they hate wiſedome (the which only giueth life) that they loue death. Wherein, we may knowe that they are out of their wittes, and that they haue not ſo much vnderſtanding as brute beaſtes, the which can tel to fly from that which hurteth them, and to deſire and ſeeke that which is profitable for their liſe.

The nienth Chapter.

1 *Wiſedome hath built her houſe, and heawen out her ſeuen pillers.*

2 *She hath killed her victuals, drawen her wine, and prepared her table.*

3 *She hath ſent foorth maidens, and cryeth vpon the higheſt places of the Citie ſaying,*

4 *Who ſo is ſimple let him come hither: and to him that is deſtitute of wiſedome, ſhe ſaith,*

5 *Come and eate of my meate, and drinke of the wyne that I haue drawne.*

Albeit that a greate and mighty king of this worlde hath many Caſtells, Townes, Cities and Prouinces vnder his power, and that hee may abyde and dwel where it pleaſeth him: yet wil hee builde or chooſe ſome certaine place, the which hee will call his, becauſe hee will take there his moſt delight, and wil dwell there about more commonly then in any other place of his countrie. Euen ſo, although the iuriſdiction of wiſedome ſtretcheth farre, and that al the worlde doe appertaine vnto her, and that ſhe filleth both heauen and earth: notwithſtanding ſhee hath built her an houſe, the which ſhee calleth hers, becauſe ſhee hath built the ſame for to dwel, and therein to take her ſporte and paſtime, and to mainteine the ſame that it periſh not, nor go to decay. And ſith that wiſdome hath an houſe, wherein ſhee keepeth her continual and dayly reſidence, if wee wil finde her, wee muſt ſeeke for her at her houſe: there wil ſhee offer her ſelfe vnto vs, and beſtowe her riches vpon vs, ſo much as ſhalbe expedient. But to finde this houſe, wee muſt knowe where it

is builded, and of what matter, and howe it is placed. Firſt of
al, although that heere wee heare ſpoken of a houſe and of buyl-
ding, yet muſt wee not ymagine any thing that is earthly or car-
nal. For wiſedome is not like vnto the Princes of this worlde,
who as they are earthly, ſo doe they builde their houſes on earth,
and of earthly matter, and doe ſet and grounſel them vppon lyke
matter. Wiſedome is diuine, heauenly and ſpiritual. Likewiſe her
houſe ſtandeth in heauen, about the throne of GOD: there ſhee
hath layed the foundation on her ſelfe. If then wee wil finde wiſe- *Heb.13.14.*
dome, wee muſt aſpire vnto heauen. For alſo heere wee haue no
continuing Citie: but wee ſeeke one to come: And therefore our
conuerſation ſhoulde bee in heauen, ſo that wee ſhould not walke
after the fleſhe, but after the ſpirit. If we thus looke vp to hea-
uen, this houſe of wiſedome is made ours, not by merite, but
becauſe GOD hath prepared it for vs, if wee folowe the faith of
the holy patriarkes, of whome it is written, They al dyed accor-
ding to faith, &c. And therefore wee may ſay with S. Paule, For *Heb.11.13.*
we know that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle be deſtroyed,
wee haue a building giuen of God, that is, a houſe not made with *2.Cor.5.1.*
handes, but eternal in heauen. Now we muſt vnderſtand that as the
foundation is ſpiritual and heauenly, euen ſo is the building there-
vpon, whereof one part is of the Angels which kept ſtil their firſt
ſtate, and haue not forſaken their dwelling, nor country: for if they
had not bene grounded on this foundation, they could not, nor had
beene able to haue ſtandfaſt. Saint Paule doeth wel ſignifie it, when *Ephe.1.10.20*
he ſaith, that the Father in the diſpenſation of the fulnes of times
might gather togither in one al things both which are in heauen &
which are in earth, euen in Chriſt, &c. Hee is alſo the head of the
Angels, as immediatly thereafter hee ſheweth, ſaying, that the fa-
ther hath ſet him at his right hande in the heauenly places, &c. Hee *Col.1.15.*
is the firſt borne of euery creature. For by him were al thinges crea-
ted. The Angels then are a parte of wiſedoms familie. The other
parte of this houſe, are the elect and faithful called vnto the know-
ledge of the Goſpel, and regenerate by the holy Ghoſt. Our Lorde
doth ſo ſignifie it, when he ſaith, If any man loue mee, hee wil keepe *Iohn.14.23.*
my worde: and S. Paule ſaith, Know yee not that ye are the temple *1.Cor.3.16.*
of GOD? and, Yee are the Temple of the liuing GOD. *2.Cor.6.16.*

But ſome wil ſay,that if the elect are the habitation, of wiſedome,
that this houſe is diſtinguiſhed,and that it is not all ſpiritual and
heauenly: for men,though they bee elected, are earthly and carnall.
Rom.7.14. The complaint of Saint Paule doeth wel ſhew it: ſo doth alſo the
Gala.5.17. battaile betweene the fleſh and the ſpirit. I anſwere, that man in ſo
Iohn.3.6. much as hee is borne of the fleſhe, is fleſhly and doeth the woorkes
of the fleſhe: and ſo is not of the houſe of wiſedome, and can-
not poſſeſſe the kingdome of God. But inaſmuch as hee is re-
generate by the ſpirite, and walketh according theretoo, and
not after the fleſhe, hee is ſpiritual, and ſo is of the houſe of
wiſedome, and belongeth vnto the kingdome of GOD. Saint
Paule doeth ſo giue vs to vnderſtande it, when for to giue the rea-
ſon wherefore hee calleth the faithfull the temple of GOD, hee
1.Cor.3.16.& ſaieth, The ſpirit of GOD dwelleth in you, knowe yee not that
6.19. your bodies are the temples of the holy Ghoſt? To the end then
that wee may bee the ſpiritual houſe of wiſedome, wee muſt bee
renewed, that wee may put of our olde man, mortifying our
Col.3.9. earthly members. Saint Peter alſo doeth ſhew it, ſaying, Laying a-
1.Pet.2.1. ſide al maliciouſneſſe and all guyle, and diſſimulation, and en-
uie, and all euill ſpeaking, as newe borne babes deſire the ſincere
milke of the woorde, &c. In this manner wee are fellowes vn-
to the Angels. You are come to the companie of innumerable
Heb.12.22. Angels. And the Angel ſaieth, I am thy fellowe ſeruant and one of
Apo.19.10. thy brethren, which haue the teſtimony of Ieſus Chriſt. It is no
Heb.1.14. wonder thereof, ſeeing they are our miniſters. Nowe as touching
wee haue companions and miniſters ſo pure, wee muſt alſo ſtudie to
bee pure and cleane, that the houſe of wiſedome may be pure and
cleane. For to finde wiſedom then, it is not needeful for vs to runne
hither and thither, but only to clenſe our ſelues. Thus dooing,
2.Cor.7.1. though wee remaine on earth, our conuerſation ſhalbee in heauen.
Philip.3.20. Whereuppon followeth that our earthly manſion doth not hinder
but that the houſe of wiſedome ſhould be heauenly. For to ſhewe
how and whereon this houſe is ſet, hee ſaith, that wiſedome hath
heaven out her ſeauen pillers, that is to ſay, many: for the number
of ſeuen is taken for a great number vncertaine. Alſo we know not
the number of the pillers that wiſedome hath made and ordered
ſince the creation of the worlde to this preſent, & ſhal make and or-

deine vntil the laſt day for to mainteine, ſuſtaine and repaire his houſe. We know wel there hath bin & ſhalbe more then ſeuen: but how many more, we know not. For it lyeth not in vs to number the holy Patriarkes, Prophets, Apoſtles, Euangeliſtes, Paſtors, and Doctors that wiſdom hath placed and wil place in her houſe, which is the Church and houſhold of God. Thoſe are called pillers of the houſe and buylding of wiſedome, becauſe that through their holy conuerſation and pure doctrine of truth, by ſupplications, prayers, thanksgiuing, by warnings and corrections, by exhortations & reprehentions: to bee ſhorte, by the miniſtery wherein God hath ſet them, they haue borne vp, doe beare vp, & ſhal beare vp vnto the worlds end this houſe of wiſedom. Not that wiſedom, which is the true foundation, is not able and ſtrong ynough for to vpholde it, when alſo ſhe vpholdeth the pillers with al the reſt: but it ſo pleaſeth him to honor men, vſing their miniſterie without the which ſhe could worke wel ynough, vpholding and mainteining her houſe of her own ſelfe, yea al things in heauē & earth: but bearing with our rudenes, & applying her ſelfe vnto our ſmal capacitie, ſhee openeth her ſelf vnto vs, ſhe vpholdeth and keepeth vs in holines, righteouſnes, and truth by the meanes of our brethren like vnto vs. Otherwiſe we ſhould be confounded with his great glorie & maieſty. That by the *Pillers* the Paſtours are ſignified, is ſhewed vs in Ieremie, I haue made thee a defenſed Citie, and an yron piller, and walles of braſſe againſt the whole Lande. And in Saint Paule, And when Iames, and Cephas, and Iohn knewe of the grace that was giuen vnto mee, which are counted to bee pillers. But when the miniſters of the Churche haue this title of pillers, they ought thereby to learne diuers thinges. Firſt of al that they ought not to exempt themſelues from charge and care, nor flye labour and trauell, but ought to ſuſtaine and beare the Churche of God as vpon their ſhoulders, and ſhoulde not bee like the Pope which doth oppreſſe it, and doeth deuoure the ſame, as a rauening woolfe with his like, as it is written, They bind burthens, &c. Secondly, that they ought not to thruſt in themſelues. Thirdly that they cannot by their induſtrie and labour attaine vnto this honour, but wiſedome muſt heawe them out. The which ſhe doeth, when ſhe doth open her ſelfe vnto them by the worde, and that ſhe calleth them to this

Iere.1.18.
Gal.2.9.
Mat.23.4.
Heb.5.4.

Iohn.3.27. office, making them fit theretoo. A man can receiue nothing, except it bee giuen him from heauen. *2.Cor.3.5.* And not that wee are ſufficient of our ſelues to thinke any thing, as of our ſelues. Our Lorde alſo doth wel ſhewe it, when he ſaith vnto his diſciples, *Mat.9.37.* Truely the harueſt is great, but the labourers are fewe. *Luke.24.45.* He declareth the ſame alſo, when hee opened the vnderſtanding to his diſciples for to vnderſtande the ſcriptures. Albeeit then that the miniſters of the worde are the pillers of the Churche, yet haue they nothing whereon to glorie. For who ſeparateth thee? And what haſt thou that thou haſt *1.Cor.4.7.* not receiued? And, what is Paule then? and what is Apollo, but ſeruantes, by whome ye haue beleeued? But becauſe they acknowledge themſelues to bee pillers, they haue cauſe to humble themſelues, ſeing they coulde not prepare nor place themſelues where they are, and ſhould be voide of power and might, they coulde vpholde nothing, except the foundation did beare them and vpholde them, and that they did not beare and hold vp the whole building and houſe. Then there is nothing of theirs, but altogither of the foundatiō. S. *1.Cor.15.10.* Paule doeth wel ſhewe it, ſaying, By the grace of God I am that I am. By this we may knowe that the Pope and his mainteiners are in no wiſe pillers of the houſe of wiſedome, but are rather engines and inſtrumentes, beetels and hammers, for to deſtroy and ouerthrowe, if they coulde by any meanes: but the woorde is vnfallible true, Vpon this ſtone wil I build my Church. *Mat.16.18.* Foraſmuch as the Church is builded vpon the rocke, which is Chriſt, whereof the Miniſters are a portion: it foloweth that this which wee haue ſaide, is true, that is to ſay, that the foundation beareth vp the pillers, and that they vpholde not the houſe of wiſedom, but ſo far as the foundation doth mainteine them. Of al theſe foreſaid things foloweth, that albeit a miniſter be very diligent to exerciſe his office, and that hee mightily goe forewarde therein with conſtantneſſe, yet can hee deſerue nothing, but rather is thereby more bounde vnto GOD. The fryers then are very proude and arrogant, when by their trifles they thinke to merite, not only for themſelues, but alſo for their benefactours. Alſo this foloweth, that they which rebel and doe contemne the Miniſters of the Church, doe ſeeke their owne decay & deſtruction, for they doe ſeparate themſelues from the foundation and the pillers.

2 *She hath killed her victuall,&c.* We do prooue that there is nothing more delectable vnto man then to haue ynough to eate and to drinke, & to find a table ready dreſſed. Al other delightes of the world are nothing, except we haue to fil our bellies: we cannot ſuffer to be deceiued, ſo that to giue order that the belly may be filled, we wil apply our ſelues to any thing that we can: & we thinke well of that houſe, where the table is dreſſed for al commers, that they may eate and drinke their fill. And therefore Solomon accommodating himſelfe vnto our ignorance, willing to intice vs to deſire the houſe and table of wiſedome, ſaieth that ſhee hath *killed her victuall,* and drawne her wine, &c. Wherein after a ſorte hee compareth wiſedome vnto the greate Lordes of this worlde. For as for to ſhewe their magnificence, and to haue a greate traine, they keepe open houſe for al men, and their table well furniſhed, and deſire that al ſhoulde bee merie and make good cheere, that men might praiſe them for their liberalitie: euen ſo Wiſedome hauing a houſe wel furniſhed, is farre vnlike vnto the niggardes and couetous, who the more riche they are, the more loth are they to touche the ſame, leſt they ſhoulde diminiſhe them: they dare not vſe nor ſpende them, ſo much the leſſe woulde they ſpende them liberally amongeſt others: which is a very greate diſcommoditie. Wiſedome, I ſay is not like ſuch niggardes: but as ſhe hath aboundance of victual, ſo ſhe is not grieued, though al eate therof: ſhe ſpareth not the meates and drinkes that are in her houſe, but for to giue meate and drinke, ſhe killeth her victual, & draweth her wine, and filleth the glaſſes and cuppes to giue vnto al that deſire to taſt therof: they that reſort to the houſe of wiſdom do finde the table throughly furniſhed. The gluttons and dronkardes, the ſwilbowles & ſlugge bellies, haue no part at this table, neither can delite therin: for there is nothing that liketh thē, ſeing they aſke nothing but that which pleaſeth the fleſh: & ſo at this table al things theron are ſpiritual. For as wiſdom with her houſe is ſpiritual, euē ſo ſhe hath nothing, nor doth nothing, but is altogither ſpiritual. The belly and the teeth ſerue nothing theretoo, it is our heartes, ſoules, & our mindes, that we muſt giue and apply theretoo. Solomon willing to deſcribe the felicitie of the kingdome of GOD, and the delightes and pleaſures thereof, doeth ſpeake vnto vs figuratiuely. *Mat.22.4.*

Deut.8.3.

The victuall killed, then the drawing of the wine, and the table prepared, is nothing but the preaching of the woorde, and the adminiſtration of the Sacramentes, that is to ſay, of baptiſme, and of the ſupper, which are the meates and drinkes to preſerue vs from hunger and thirſt. For man liueth not onely by bread, but by euery woorde that proceedeth out of the mouth of GOD. And foraſmuch as it is ſo that there is nothing that we deſire more than life, wee ſhoulde fixe al our ioye, al our delightes and pleaſures in the victual, wine and table of wiſedome: in this maner we ſhoulde haue no care ouer our bellies, but we would aſpire vnto the kingdome of God, wherein we ſhal haue ful poſſeſſion of this table, whereof at this preſent wee doe taſte, when wee ſauour this woorde, and that for to haue more taſt wee communicate at the Sacramentes. The which thinges are truly compared vnto the killing of victuall, &c. For as the houſholde folkes of a place doe not eate quicke fleſhe, and doe not drinke the wyne with the Hoggeshead, neither ſit downe at the table, except it bee couered: euen ſo the houſholde people of Wiſedome doe not take taſt at this woorde and Sacramentes, except they bee communicated and broken vnto them particularly, as wee doe feede our bodies: for alſo it behooueth that they growe and increaſe by litle and litle, as therefore from day to day this meate and drinke are beſtowed vpon them. And albeeit that it is by the miniſterie of men, yet are they nothing, neither ought wee to attribute any thing vnto them, but al vnto wiſedome, as Solomon doeth wel ſignifie it, ſaying, *that ſhe hath killed, filled and made readie her table.* If then by the ſeruice of men wee are fedde with the woorde, and communicat at the Sacramentes, al the praiſe thereof is due only vnto the Sonne of God, who is the true diuine wiſedome: and yet wee may not deſpyſe men, that hee ſendeth vnto vs, except that wee wil deſpyſe him himſelfe, and chiefly when they apply themſelues faithfully to doe that which is enioyned them. And albeeit Solomon compareth heere the delightes of the woorde and the Sacramentes vnto victual & wine, & that there is an infinite diſtance betweene the one and the other (for the victual and the wine doe but ſerue the bodie for a litle time, but the woorde and the Sacramentes receiued in ſayth and obedience, doe quicken the ſoule euerlaſtingly, and wil rayſe the bodie vnto the reſurrection of life,) yet the compariſon agreeth very wel. For what operation as hath the victual and wyne towardes the body, ſuch hath the power of the woorde and ſacramentes towardes our ſoules for euer. If this were wel printed in our heartes we ſhoulde bee much more careful to folowe the doctrine of our Lord then we be. I ſay vnto you, bee not careful for your life, what yee ſhal eate, or what yee ſhal drinke: nor yet for your bodie what yee ſhal put Mat.6.25. on? But the cleane contrarie is put in practice: and therefore wee may wel complaine of our ſelues, or GOD of vs, They aſſemble themſelues for corne, and wine, and they rebel a- Hoſeas.7.14. gainſt mee.

3 *She hath ſent foorth her maydens, &c.* Wiſedome is not contented to haue killed, &c. She wil haue vs know what preparation ſhee hath made, for ſhee wil not eate her banket alone, but deſireth companie. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee ſaieth, *Shee ſendeth foorth her maydens*, that is to ſay, her damſells and ſeruantes, that by them ſhee may cal a multitude of people. Shee hath not ſent them to the caues and dennes vnder the earth, nor into the wilderneſſe where no man dwelleth but wild beaſtes: but to the end that they may be both heard and ſeene, and that al might know that the banket is prepared, ſhe hath ſent them forth to cry vpō the hyeſt places of the citie, &c. Theſe maidens, damſels, or ſeruāts, are the Patriarkes, Prophetes Apoſtles & Paſtors of the church, which as the maydens, & ſeruants of a Lady of honor and Princes, do ſtande before her to heare her commandementes, and are readie to execute them, and to ſerue and obey her in al things: euen ſo alſo they yeelde and become attentiue vnto the woorde of God, which is the worde of wiſedome, for to obey and execute that which is committed vnto them, & wherwith they are charged, &c. Amongſt other thinges, their duetie and office is to cal the bidden Mat.22.3. gueſtes vnto the mariage of the kings Sonne. Noe was one of thē, Gen.6.14. that did it, when he made the arke wherby he condēned the world, Heb.11.7. and was the herault and meſſenger of righteouſnes. Abraham did it, 2.Pet.2.5. when dwelling in the Lande of Canaan amongſt ydolaters and in- Gen.17.23. fidells, he made profeſſion of ſeruing and woorſhipping one onely 24.&.18.19.

God, and that folowing the commandement of God, hee circumciſed himſelfe, and al them of his houſhold. When alſo he did according as God giueth witnes of him: for I knowe him hee wil commande his ſonnes and his houſholde after him, that they keepe the way of the Lord. Moſes did the ſame in Egipt and in the wildernes, &c. The other Prophetes haue done the lyke, when ryſing vp early, they haue cried and laboured by the worde of God, to bring men to repentance and faith. The Apoſtles alſo haue done the ſame, when, *Math.10.27.* by folowing the ordinance of Chriſt, That which I tel you in darkenes, that ſpeake ye in light. They went through al the worlde and preached, &c. This calling and continual bidding, when the miniſters of the worde do daily admoniſh vs, teach, correct, threaten & comfort in the name of our Lorde, and that they ceaſe not to doe their office, though they haue greate reſiſtance and many gainſayers. Thus dooing, they are vppon the high towers of the citie, and do cal vnto wiſedome his banket. They then, which refuſe the preaching, and do perſecute the ſeruantes of God, do not know what it is truly to banket, neither know what are the true delites & pleaſures. They care for their belly which periſheth, & forſake and forget their ſoules, and doe deſtroy them, when they do forſake the true paſture which quickeneth euerlaſtingly, &c. But when it is ſaide, that wiſedome hath ſent her daughters, there is giuen vs to *Rom.20.15* vnderſtand that none ought to intrude himſelfe to beare the word, except he be ſent. Secondly, that if wee bee ſent, it is a certaine thing that wee are of the number of the daughters, maidens, and ſeruantes of wiſedome. Thirdly, if wee bee ſent, wee doe bid men vnto this table, and cannot holde our peace: contrarily, if wee *Mat.23.13.* thruſt in our ſelues, or that we are ſent by men, wee cal not, but turne aſide from this mariage (as our Lorde doeth reproche the Scribes and Phariſees,) or elſe wee holde our peace, with the Nicodemites, which in tyme of perſecution are dombe: and in this ſort we doe not aſcend vp into the higheſt places of the citie, but do ſeeke the holes and dennes. Then can it not be ſaide of vs, Howe *Eſay.52.7.* beautiful vpon the mountaines are the feete of him, that declareth and publiſheth peace? &c. Thus doing, wee are aſhamed of Chriſt *Luke.9.26.* and of his woorde, and therefore hee will bee aſhamed of vs alſo.

4 *Who ſo is ſimple, &c.* It is not the cuſtome to goe vnto the mariage, but when wee are called: If a man enter without calling, hee is in danger to bee thruſt out againe with ſhame. Therefore they which haue any honeſtie or ſhame, wil not preſume to enter in, except they knowe to bee bidden gueſtes. Nowe to the end that wee may knowe whether wee bee of the number of the bidden gueſtes to wiſedomes table, Solomon doth ſhewe vs what kind of people ſhee deſireth and commandeth to bee called. Hee ſaieth, ſhee deſireth that the ſimple men ſhoulde come vnto her, and ſit at her table, and by and by after ſhee expoundeth what theſe ſimple ones are, that is to ſay, they that are without wit. Wherein wee ſee there is none of vs that ought to doubt whether he be called or no vnto the table of wiſedome, ſeeing that of our nature wee are al ſimple and voide of wit. Inſomuch as wee loue vanitie, fooliſhnes and lying better, then conſtancie, wiſedome and truthe: wee rather giue our ſelues vnto wickednes, vnto lewdneſſe and vntemperancy, then vnto goodnes, modeſtie and ſobrietie: we are more ready vnto debates and ſtrifes, then vnto peace and charitie: wee rather folowe ſuperſtition and idolatry, then true religion and holines. If then wee conſider wel what we are, we ſhal know that we are of the number of thoſe to whome wiſedome ſaith, *come, eate, &c.* But ſhe doeth not make vs to bee called vnto her houſe and to her table after the manner of princes of the worlde, which are giuen vnto vanitie, and careth not but to paſſe the time in fooliſhnes: and therefore the fooliſhe deſire but to delight themſelues with their follie, and to become more fooliſhe if it bee poſſible. But wiſedom hath compaſſion on our vanitie and folly: and therefore maketh vs to bee called vnto her table, that thereat we may heare good talke, & that therby we might learne to becom wiſe & prudēt. This is the bread & the wine which are dealt at wiſdoms table. Here is no mention of any ſumptuous banket, but onely of bread and wyne, that wee might learne not to ſeeke by outwarde apparance, if wee will become wiſe, but lowe things vile and abiect before the world, and make our ſelues contemptible vnto it. For if wee bee called of God vnto this table, we muſt conſider that which is ſaide, You ſee your calling, how that not many wiſe mē after the fleſh, &c. Wiſdō alſo doth not cal vs vnto her houſe & to her table after the manner 1.*Cor*.1.26.

of the worldly wiſe, which woulde haue this reputation, that they cannot in any wiſe ſuffer the ſimple and fooles, and therefore deſire to bee accompanied with their like, amongſt the which notwithſtanding they deſire to haue the preferrement and chiefe place. Wiſedome doeth not refuſe the ſimple, and ſuch as are deſtitute of wit, but doeth cal them vnto her, not for to mainteine them in their ſimplicite and ignorance, for that were to leade them vnto death, and to make them periſhe miſerably: but ſhe calleth them for to deliuer them from it: for ſith that ſhe commandeth vs to reſorte vnto her, and there is no follie nor ignorance in her, neither doe they pleaſe her, it foloweth wel that if wee reſorte vnto her, wee cannot remaine in this follie and ignorance, and conſequently wee are deliuered from death, as ſhee giueth wel to vnderſtande it, when ſhee offreth bread and wyne, not which grewe in earthly fieldes and vineyardes: for the greateſt parte of them which eate thereof, are ſimple and ignorant, and ceaſe not to dye, but this bread and wyne are heauenly, al they which eate thereof, become wiſe: for wiſedome opening vnto vs her riches, doeth communicate her ſelfe vnto vs, ſeeing ſhe cannot bee ſeparated from her gifts and graces: and ſith it is the tree of life: it foloweth, that whoſoeuer reſorteth vnto her, and eateth of her bread and drinketh of her wine, ſhal not dye, but ſhal liue for euer: It ſerueth alſo to make thē wiſe, when ſhe calleth them to come vnto her, and to liue, by giuing them bread and wine. Now to attaine vnto this, ſhe ſheweth what wee muſt doe, when ſhe ſaith,

Pro.3.18.

6 *Forſake your way, ye fooliſh, & ye ſhal liue: & walke in the way of vnderſtanding.*

Foraſmuch as wee muſt forſake the fooliſh, and not cōmunicate with their folly, neither cōſent to their wickednes for to liue in the houſe & at the table of wiſedome, it foloweth that we muſt forſake our ſelues, reſiſting ſtrongly, & fighting againſt our nature, which is altogither fooliſh and wicked: & ſo, for to liue, wee muſt labour to put of the old man, to mortifie our fleſhe, and not to take any pleaſure or delight with the fooliſh, but to be careful to reproue them, and to bee ſory and grieued for their folly. And this if wee wil doe, wee muſt not liue in ignorance, as doe they which follow their ſenſualitie, and which proceede vppon a good intent and fantaſie which they frame without the woorde of God. Such kinde of people are not receiued into the houſe of wiſedome to liue at her table. Solomon doeth wel ſignifie it, hauing promiſed life, in ſaying, *and liue:* hee addeth, *And walke, &c.* By this woorde hee teacheth vs that we ſhal forſake the companie of fooles with their fooliſhnes, if we be inſtructed in the pure woorde of God, and that the ſame only bee our guide, without declyning from it either on the right hand or left, without either adding too or diminiſhing from. After this manner wee ſhal bee receiued for to liue in the houſe of wiſedome, and at her table: And not only wee ſhal bee the ſtones of the buylding, but alſo of the houſholde. *Ephe. 2. 19.*

7 *Hee that reprooueth a ſcorner, purchaſeth to himſelfe ſhame: and hee that rebuketh the wicked, getteth himſelfe a blotte.*

8 *Rebuke not a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee, but rebuke a wiſe man, and he wil loue thee.*

Howbeeit that if wee wil forſake the fooliſh and their follies, as wee ought, wee muſt bee diligent to reprooue and correct them (as wee haue ſeene that Noe, Lot, Moyſes, the Prophetes and Apoſtles haue done) ſo alſo our Lorde hath reprooued them, as wee may ſee in the Euangelical hiſtorie, and hath commanded to reprooue them. And Saint Paule ſaieth, doe not communicate with the vnfruiteful workes of darkeneſſe, but euen reprooue them rather, Them that ſinne rebuke openly, that the reſt alſo may feare: notwithſtanding there are ſuch ſo frowarde, and ſo much paſt correction that we can winne nothing by reproouing and correcting them, but al diſhoneſtie, and oftentimes wee are eſteemed like vnto them: for they which are of ſiniſter iudgement, and ledde by euill affection, will condemne the miniſters, iudging them to bee ſuch as thoſe with whome they are mingled and cannot attaine to bring them to the right way. Solomon knewe it wel, and therefore hee ſaith as by a complaint, *hee that reproo-*

Mat. 18. 15
Ephe. 5. 10.
1. Timo. 5. 20

ueth a ſcorner, &c. Not that it is euil of it ſelfe, nor that it is vncleane,but the ſcorner,ſo much as hee can,maketh him that reprooueth and correcteth him aſhamed,doeth ſlander and diſhonor him, and woorketh that the correctour ſhal bee no better eſteemed amongſt others then he:and thus not only wee looſe our tyme in correcting the ſcorner,but alſo we get blame and diſworſhip: and this is the cauſe why Solomon ſaith,

Mat.7.6.

8 *Rebuke not a ſcorner, &c.* The firſt parte of this ſentence agreeth with that which is ſaid, Giue not that which is holy, to dogges,&c. The ſcorners,are dogges and ſwine, to whome wee muſt notgiue holy things,nor perles. For as they are prophane, giuen vp vnto al filthineſſe, rooted in al euil, and hardned againſt al admonition and aduertiſement,euen ſo are they vnwoorthy of ſpiritual thinges, ordeined for the elect and faithful.The holy and precious thinges,which God hath ordeined vnto a pure vſage (as the doctrine of ſaluation,the admonitions,aduertiſements,corrections made by the worde and in the name of the Lorde) ſhoulde be defiled and profaned,if we did giue them ouer vnto ſuch wicked perſons.

Mat.13.47.
Mark.16.15
2.Cor.2.15.

But ſome wil aſke, whether the doctrine of ſaluation, vnder the which are conteined the rebukes, is not indifferently appointed aſwel for the good,as for the euil, ſeeing that the kingdome of heauen is compared vnto a net caſt into the ſea, and gathereth togither of al manner of fiſhes, and the Goſpel is commanded to bee preached vnto al creatures:and Paule ſaieth, Wee are a ſweete ſauour of Chriſt vnto God, in them which are ſaued, and in them that periſh,&c.For to anſwere,wee muſt note that we cannot diſcerne the dogges from the children of GOD, vntil that they be tryed by certaine experiences,and plaine tokens:and alſo we ought not immediatly to deſcende vnto a graue iudgement, that by one experience wee ſhoulde iudge any man to bee an hogge, and a dogge, a ſcorner, and a deſperate wicked one. But when by greate diligence wee ſhal haue tryed al remedies for to bring ſuch people to goodnes,& ſhal ſee no amendment in them,but rather ſhal ſee them to waxe woorſe, that then wee holde them for deſperate: and when wee haue iudged them ſuch, wee ought to declare vnto them the ſharpe iudgement of GOD, and not to ſet holie and precious things before them, no more then before dogges & hogges. Heretikes are of the number of ſuch people, as S. Paul doth ſhew, ſaying, Eſchewe an Heretike, &c. If we wil vſe the doctrine purely & wel, without prophaning it, we muſt feed the faithful and willing to learne therwith, as the meate that is proper vnto thẽ, and that ought not to be refuſed them, except that we would be vnfaithful ſeruants: yea wicked, & theeues: but the wicked, ſcorners, & obſtinate, ought to be feared with the horrible vengeance of God. Our Lord before vs hath done ſo: ſo hath S. Paul in diuers places of his Epiſtles. If ſo doing the ſcorners doe hate vs, and that they doe deſpight and blaſpheme againſt the doctrine, we doe not prophane the holie thinges, we giue not pearles vnto dogs, but by denouncing the iudgement, we pull them backe. In making ſuche declaration, we goe not againſt this admonition of Solomon, *Rebuke not, &c.* For it is not reprehenſion, but rather condemnation, the which we may pronounce, as Solomon hath alreadie done in diuers places, and verie plainly in the firſt Chapter. When then wee ſhal haue certaine knowledge of the wicked and ſcorners, we ſhould not ſpende the tyme about rebuking of them, but hauing feared them with the iudgement of God, wee ſhould leaue them as deſperate and vncorrigible, and imploy our time to exhort, to aduertiſe, correct, and rebuke them by wholeſome doctrine, which are apte to learne, and which wil yeelde them ſelues attentiue vnto the Worde, and haue their delectation and pleaſure to obey it, and beleeue it. Thoſe are they whome wee muſt reprooue, as Solomon doeth ſhewe vs, when he ſayeth, *Rebuke a wiſe man, &c.* Solomon doeth not heere ſay any thing, neither in the firſt nor ſeconde parte of this ſentence, which Achab and Ieſabel haue not prooued true, the which ſhewed them ſelues verie wicked and deſperat ſcorners, when not onely they woulde not heare the corrections of the Prophet Elias, but through anger and hatred did perſecute him. Contrarily, Dauid ſhewed him ſelfe verie wiſe, when hee receiued the correction from the Prophete Nathan, wherein hee ſhewed that hee did loue the Prophet.

Tit. 3.

Mat. 23.

1. *King.* 19. *&* 21.

2. *Sam.* 12.

Wee muſt labour to reſemble him therin, & not Achab & Iezabel. But ſome wil aske whether it be lawful for vs to abſtain from rebuking of ſcorners, that wee may auoide their hatred, ſeeing that our Lord ſayeth, Feare ye not them which can kil the bodie, but are not able to kil the ſoule: but rather feare him, which is able to deſtroy both ſoule and bodie in hell. Bleſſed are they which ſuffer perſecution for righteouſnes ſake: &, ye ſhalbe hated of al men for my name ſake. I anſwere, that Solomon doth not teach vs, (that by holding our peace at ſcorners, and not rebuking them,) wee ſhoulde labour to auoide their diſpleaſure: but he doeth ſhewe vs that we profite nothing at al to reprooue them, but get their hatred: he doeth not ſhewe vs the ende wherevnto wee muſt tende, in abſtaining from rebuking, but onely that which foloweth vppon our reprehenſion. Alſo albeit, that we muſt ſo much as in vs lieth, haue peace & friendſhip with al men, yet when wee rebuke wiſe men, our ende ought not to bee to winne their loue: for in this ſorte, wee ſhoulde ſeeke that which were ours, and not what belongeth vnto God, and our neighbours. But onely wee muſt vnderſtande, that if hee whome we rebuke, is wiſe, that he wil take in good worth and part, our reprehenſion, he wil take it wel and thanke vs for it, and ſo wil ſhewe that he loueth vs. Herevpon wee may gather, that except wee willingly heare the corrections, we are deſtitute of wiſdome, and voide of loue, and filled with hatred, and conſequently, that wee haue no acceſſe vnto God, as Ieſus Chriſt doeth teach vs it. Furthermore, we may gather, that though we be wiſe, yet it is not to ſay, but that we may commit thinges worthie of rebuke. Noe, Abraham, Iacob and others, are witneſſes thereof. And alſo, as there is no man iuſt on earth, which doeth good and ſinneth not: euen ſo, although we bee wiſe, yet is it not to ſay, that we doe not deſerue to haue our imperfections, vanities and follies ſhewed vnto vs, that wee confeſſing our ſelues ſuche as we are indeede, might learne to amende and growe in wiſedome: For as wee haue ſeene, the wiſe wil heare, and ſhal haue more learning. Euen ſo nowe Solomon doeth admoniſh vs:

Mat. 10.28. & 9.10. & 10.22.

Rom. 12.18.

Mat. 5.22. & 6.14. & 18.35.
Eccl. 7.11.

9 *Giue admonition to the wiſe, and he wilbe the wiſer: teach a righteous man, & he wil increaſe in learning.*

If we had no vanitie nor follie, if we had no ſinne nor malice we ſhould be perfectly wiſe and righteous, and ſhould not neede to receiue inſtruction, nor be taught: wee ſhould be filled enough, and ſhould haue abundance enough therof, without increaſing or growing. But the ſentence of Solomon agreeth verie wel with the ſame of our Lord, Vnto euery one that hath, ſhal be giuen, and hee ſhal abounde, but he that hath not, from him ſhal be taken that which he hath. When Solomon ſpeaketh thus, hee ſheweth that it is good reaſon that the wiſe man ſhoulde loue them, which inſtruct and rebuke him, ſeeing, that by ſo doing, they are ſo farre of from doing him hurt, or taking any thing of his, that they rather labour to profite him, and to make him grow and increaſe. We doe the ſame towardes the ſcorner, when wee reprooue him: but through fooliſhneſſe, malice, and vnthankfulneſſe, by pride, preſumption, and ſtifneckednes, hee contemneth and refuſeth his profite, and foloweth and ſeeketh his owne hurt. But although wee ſee many to bee of this miſerable ſtate, and that wee haue no proofe of their returning vnto goodneſſe, yet muſt we doe that which is enioyned vs, Preach the Worde: be inſtant, in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon. That wee muſt ſo doe, our Lorde doeth ſhewe vs, when hee ſayeth, I ſende you as ſheepe amongſt Wolnes. We neuer hope that Wolues ſhoulde become ſheepe: and yet our Lorde woulde that his Apoſtles ſhoulde thruſt them ſelues amongſt the midſt of them. But if we may haue a certificate that they are wholly frowarde, harde hearted, and not to be corrected, wee muſt leaue them, and not meddle to giue them any inſtruction, neither rebuke nor correct them, to bring them to amendement, but to pronounce vnto them their iudgement & condemnation. Saint Paule doeth thus teach vs to behaue our ſelues, ſaying, Alexander the Copperſmith hath wrought mee much euil: the Lorde reward him according to his workes.

Mat. 25. 29.

2. Tim. 4. 2.

Mat. 10. 16.

2. Tim. 4. 14.

10 *The beginning of wiſedome is the feare of the Lord, and the knowledge of holy things, is vnderſtanding.*

11 *For thy dayes ſhalbe multiplied by mee, and the yeares of thy life ſhalbe augmented.*

Becauſe that wiſedome hath bidden vs vnto her table, and hath ſet before vs bread & wine, to the ende that wee may knowe whe-

ther we be truely partakers, ſhee giueth vs a marke and token, ſaying,
The beginning of wiſdome,&c. The token and ſigne thē which
ſhal certifie vs whether we be refreſhed at the table of wiſedome, is
the feare of the Lorde,and the knowledge of holie thinges.Here Solomon
hath ſet the effect before the cauſe : for from the knowledge
of the worde of God, (which are holie things,proceedeth the feare
of the Lorde, if wee feare him and tremble at his commandements,
deſiring to ſerue him thereaſter,and to giue him true obedience : if
we beleeue in him,aſſuring our ſelues of his promiſes : if we cal vpon
him in al our neceſſities, and doe giue him heartie thanks for al
thinges : if wee be careful for his honour and glorie,the ſame commeth
from the knowledge of holie thinges, from the vnderſtanding
of the holie and pure worde of God, without the which wee contemne
al the foreſaide thinges,and doe runne into vanities and follies,
into ſuperſtitions and idolatries,into maliciouſnes,and wickednes.
But Solomon eſteemed not to keepe or folowe the order, neither
Pro.2.5. was it neceſſarie, becauſe that this feare and knowledge, are
thinges ſo knit together, that the one can not ſtande without the
1.Ioh.2.3. other:& therfore alſo he hath gathered them together.And S. Iohn
alſo doth gather them together,ſaying, And hereby we are ſure that
we know him,if we keepe his commandements. And whē we haue
Pſal.119.18 no knowledge of holy things of our ſelues,but onely ſo muche as it
pleaſeth God to reueale vnto vs,as it is written , Open mine eyes,
that I may behold the wonderful things of thy law:Make me to vnderſtande
the way of thy preceptes,& I wil meditate in thy wonderous
Mat.16.17. works.Bleſſed art thou,Simon,the ſonne of Ionas: for fleſh &
Luk.24.45. blood hath not reuealed it vnto thee,but my Father which is in heuen.
Then opened he their vnderſtāding, that they might vnderſtād
the Scriptures: It foloweth wel,that it commeth not of our free wil,
that we haue the feare of the Lord,the which is required of the ſeruants
Deut.10.12. of the Lord aboue al thinges. And now Iſrael,what doeth the
Lorde thy God require of thee, but to feare the Lorde thy God, to
walke in al his wayes,& to loue him,& to ſerue the Lorde thy God
with al thine heart,& with al thy ſoule? As we may then learne here,
the feare of the Lord comprehendeth vnder it al the ſeruice and honour
that we owe vnto God,wherin lieth al our wiſdom & knowledge.
Deut.4.6. Therfore whē Solomō ſaith, *the beginning &c.* He meaneth
not, that for to be wiſe wee haue neede of any other thing then the

feare of the Lord: but he would that we ſhould know, that wee are altogether void of wiſdom, except we haue the feare of the Lord: ſo that we can not begin to be wiſe, vnleſſe we feare the Lorde: not as the infidels & faithleſſe doe, which haue no vnderſtanding: for they haue no knowledge frō whēce only proceedeth the true feare. Such people, I ſay, haue not the feare of the Lord, but of torments. They feare him without knowing him to be pitiful & merciful: and therfore they are afraide of the ſharpnes of his iudgement, as a pore offender is afraide & trembleth in the preſence of the Iudge, of whom he looketh but for al rigour. Beſides this, we muſt note, that the table of wiſdom is not prepared with prophane & vnclean things, but with holy things, the taſt wherof, ſtandeth in vnderſtanding. They then which delight themſelues in vanities & foliſhnes, in malice & wickednes, in filthines & pollution, haue no felowſhip at the table of wiſdom: & it is good reaſon, for they are like vnto the horſe and Mule in which there is no vnderſtanding, the which only giueth taſt in the heauenly things, wherof cōmeth a good humour of the feare of the Lord, the which quickeneth the ſoules of wiſdoms children. *Pſal. 32. 9.*

11 *For thy daies, &c.* To the ende that we ſhoulde not refuſe to come vnto the table of wiſdom, & to eate of her bread, & drinke of her wine, Wiſdom doth ſhew vs that they which eate & drinke at her table, ſhalbe of no ſmal cōtinuance. As if he ſaid, there is no man but deſireth to liue long, & flye death. Wherefore come, eate of my bread, and drink of my wine, & ye ſhal obtaine your deſires. *By me ſhal thy dayes be multiplied, &c.* We haue the ſame in the 3. Chapter, & 2. verſe: and 4. Chapter & 22. verſe, We can take no poyſon at wiſdoms table, vnles we abuſe that which ſhe giueth vs. The meates & drinkes that ſhe giueth, are not corruptible, & they breed no euil humors nor ſuperfluities, as do corporal meates, whereof if we take too much, they hurt both the bodie & the mind: for they make the body heauy, & dul the ſpirits, & are cauſe that finally we go to perdition. Cōtrarily, we can not exceed in eating & drinking at the table of Wiſdō, we need not feare to take too much: for the more we eate and drinke thereat, by ſo much the more are we better diſpoſed to liue long. And therefore the bridegrome, which is the wiſdome of God, feareth not to ſay vnto his Church, Fellowes, eate and drinke: Friendes, fill your ſelues full. And this is that which *Cant. 5. 1.* *Ephe. 5. 18.*

Saint Pauſe woulde: and be not dronke with wine, wherein is exceſſe: but be filled with the Spirite. And as there is no danger to fil our ſelues at the table of wiſdome, but is verie healthful: euen ſo the table is alwayes couered, wheruнto continually are al kindes of people called and bidden, and ſo many as come, are refreſhed. The preaching of the Worde, and the adminiſtration of the Sacraments doe plainly enough ſhewe the ſame.

12 *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelf, and if thou be a ſcorner, thou alone ſhalt ſuffer.*

Foraſmuch as it is ſo, that by wiſedome the dayes of ſuch as eate at her table ſhalbe multiplied, which turneth to the great profite of thoſe which are there refreſhed, ſhe cōcludeth moſt fitly, *If thou be wiſe, &c.* Wiſedome is not like vnto Inholders, which cal in their gueſtes and euil intreat them, and make them pay wel. That which ſhe doeth, commeth from her pure liberalitie, and her high magnificence: ſhe intreateth her gueſtes verie honeſtly, and with great gentlenes. O God, how excellent is thy mercy? O God, &c. It is not without cauſe that refreſhing is attributed vnto the goodneſſe of God: For how much ſoeuer he giueth, he asketh no payment therfore. Hoe, euery one that thirſteth, come yee to the waters, and yee that haue no ſiluer, come, bye and eate, &c. Then when wiſedome doeth cal vs vnto her table, ſhee regardeth our profit: but it ought not ſo to be counted ours, that we ſhould be ſorie, if others be partakers thereof: for albeit that it is ſaide, *Thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelfe:* yet it is not to ſay, that it is not lawful for vs to vſe wiſdome, as the couetous doe vſe their riches they haue, keeping the ſame to themſelues, and haue no minde to impart them vnto their neighbors, for feare to diminiſhe them. For this that wiſdom doth giue vs at her table, is aſwel for the pore which haue need, as for our ſelues. But to be wiſe for a man his ſelf, is to vſe the gifts & benefits of wiſdome as it behooueth, & not to receiue them in vaine. And alſo we are taught that we looſe not our time, when we giue our ſelues vnto wiſdom: for we are neuer deſtitute of good vnderſtanding, whereby we take heede of the miſeries, & chiefly from the ſpiritual. This is to bee wiſe for him ſelfe. Contrarily, when a man is bare of all goods,

Pſal.36.7.8.

Eſai.55.1.

goods, & is in great neceſſitie, if he refuſe the benefite that is offered him, deriding them which woulde helpe him, hee is worthie to periſh miſerably, and to ſuffer that none other feele his griefe and euill. Again they that are ſtiffenecked & vncorrigible, voide of wiſedome the which is very neceſſary for them, & do ſcorn them which bidde them vnto wiſedome, euen to the hating of them, and perſecuting of them ſo much as in them lyeth, ſhall themſelues ſuffer the euill whereof they are worthie, and not the commenners and houſeholde people of wiſedome. Solomon doth wel ſignifie the ſame, whē he ſaith, *And if thou bee a ſcorner, &c.* This ſentence agreeth with the ſame in Ezechiell. The ſame ſoule that ſinneth ſhal die. Againe, We muſt al appeare before the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt. Of theſe ſentences wee muſt gather that it is an abuſe to thinke that there is any Purgatory for to cleanſe the ſoules after this life. As the wiſe ſhall be wiſe for him ſelfe, and ſhal haue thereby eternall profite: euen ſo the ſcorner ſhal ſuffer continually. For as there is no place after this life for repentance, euen ſo there is no obteining of forgiueneſſe of ſinnes. Eſay doth wel ſhewe it when he pricketh vs, ſaying, Seeke the Lorde while he may be founde, cal vpon him while he is nigh. And Saint Paule ſaith: Behold now the accepted time, Behold now the day of ſaluation. Bee not deceiued: GOD is not mocked: for whatſoeuer a man ſoweth, that ſhal hee alſo reape.

Eze.18.20.
2.Cor.5.10.
Eſay.55.6.
2.Cor.6.2.
a Gal.6.7.

13 *A fooliſh woman is troubleſome: ſhe is ignorant, and knoweth nothing.*
14 *But ſhe ſitteth at the dore of her houſe, on a ſeate in the high places of the citie:*
15 *To cal them that paſſe by the way, that go right on their way, ſaying:*
16 *Who ſo is ſimple, let him come hither: and to him that is deſtitute of wiſedome, ſhe ſaith alſo,*
17 *Stollen waters are ſweete, and hid bread is pleaſant.*
18 *But he knoweth not, that the dead are there, and that her gueſtes are in the depth of hel.*

Vnder the name of a fooliſh woman and ignorant, Solomon deſcribeth the folly, aſwel of them which mainteine others in fooliſhneſſe, as they that commit fooliſhneſſe themſelues. He attributeth troubleſomneſſe and ignorance vnto them, as if he ſaide, Where the fooles and doltes ought to holde their peace, and to giue eare vnto the wiſe for to learne of thē, bicauſe they are ignorāt, they are ſo preſumptuous, that they labor to ſet forth & ſhew themſelues, in criyng & making noyce, partly, bicauſe the wiſe ſhold not be heard, & that they ſeeme to be ouercome, partly to aſtoniſh the ſimple & vndiſcrete, that they may holde them in their fooliſhnes and ignorance. Suche is the ſubtiltie of Satan, the maiſter and guider of ſuch people, which doth puffe them vp with pride in ſuch wiſe that they waxe bolde to ſhewe themſelues, where they ought in no wiſe to appeare: they ſtand vp to ſpeake, where they ought to hold their peace: they ſtirre vp ſtriſe, where ought to bee at quiet, and and to learne with ſilence. And albeit, as is ſaide, that they are ignorant, and that they deſerue to bee contemned, yet will they bee the moſt apparant and moſt ſet by. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when he ſaith,

14 *But ſhee ſitteth at the dore, &c.* This deſire to be ſeene, and to be honoured, is declared vnto vs by the Lorde, ſpeaking of the Phariſees, which doe all their workes to bee ſeene of men, &c. They that followe them, as doe the Monkes and Prieſts with al the ſchoole doctours, doe ſit at the gates of their houſe, the which they haue placed vpon the high places of the citie: for there is no people in al the world that deſireth more to be ſeene, and more to be eſteemed & praiſed then they. Now the cauſe that moueth thē to deſire to be ſo ſeene, is to draw a great number of people after thē: for the world deſireth the things which are glorious, and is drawne by that which greatly appeareth, rather thā by that which is true. That they tend therevnto, Solomon doth ſignifie it, when he ſaith that it is, *Mat. 23. 5*

15 *To call, &c.* Wee are al paſſengers and pilgrims in this worlde which ſeeke another place: at the leaſtwiſe we ought to be, and to walke right in our pathes by innocencie and righteouſneſſe, with contempt of earthly things, which haue a faire ſhew. Therfore when theſe holy men, ſo deuout & religious, deſire vs to heare thē, they labour to ſtay vs on earth, and make vs fixe our deſires and affections therevpon: they ſtudy to drawe vs out of the right way. *Heb. 13. 14. Col. 12. 20*

They deſire not to haue their audience and hearers wiſe, & men of vnderſtanding, but fooles and vndiſcrete, the which cannot perceiue that their wiſdome is fooliſhneſſe before God: for they call:

17 *Who ſo is ſimple,&c.* When Solomon ſpeaketh thus, he neither expreſſeth the thoughts, nor the ſayinges of theſe fooliſhe maiſters: for thinking themſelues wiſe, and deſiring to be ſo counted, they deſire to be hearde of wiſe men for to make them more wiſer: but he expreſſeth what they doe,, and what thir auditorie is: that is, that by their wordes and manners, they allure vnto folly and ignorance, and make thoſe which giue eare vnto them, beaſtes, yea, wicked and malicious: for we learne nothing of them, but to giue our ſelues vnto wickedneſſe and malice, and to take our pleaſures & luſtes. The which Solomon doth ſignifie by the ſtollen waters, and hidden bread: for as the wholſome doctrine of the law and the Goſpel, which is plainely called water and bread, recreateth and refreſheth the mindes of the faithfull, and worketh goodneſſe in them, and maketh them wholy to delight therein: & being thus diſpoſed, are boulde to preſent themſelues before, and deſire not to go backe from the preſence of God, neither feare to appeare before him: euen ſo the doctrines and traditions of men which are not ſimply called water and bread: but ſtolne waters, and bread that is ſecretely takē, do delight the carnal and infidels, and doe not teach them the pure trueth, and true righteouſneſſe and innocencie, but al kinde of follies and dreames, doe make them to be giuen vnto diuerſe wickedneſſes, and doe alwaies hold them in doubt, and being thus diſpoſed dare not approch vnto God, but ſo much as in them lieth, do run & hide themſelues from him as theeues. And this is the cauſe why the doctrines and traditions of men, and that which followeth of them are called ſtolne waters, and bread ſecretely taken.

18 *But he knoweth not,&c.* Whoſoeuer drinketh of the waters of folly, & eateth of her bread, is greatly deceiued when he delighteth therein. Solomon doth wel ſignifie it, when he ſaith, *But he knoweth not,&c.* It is a great deceit for a man to take delight in his deſtruction and perdition, and not to know it: and not onely an abuſe, but alſo moſt perilous daunger, wherein there is no remedy, no more then if a blinde man not regarding a good guide, ceaſſeth not to runne hither and thither, vntill hee bee fallen

downe into a bottomleſſe pit. Heere wee ſee that ignorance is very
*Mat.*15.14 dangerous, and that it excuſeth not the ignorant. True it is that if
the ignorant will returne vnto goodneſſe by true repentance,
their ignorances nor yet wickedneſſes ſhall not bee imputed vnto
*Luke.*23.24 them. Our Lorde doeth ſhew it, when he prayeth for his murde-
1.*Tim.*1.12. rers: and Saint Paule ſaying, Therefore I thanke him, which hath
13. made me ſtrong, that is, Ieſus Chriſte our Lord: for he counted me
faithful, and put me in his ſeruice: When before I was a blaſphemer
and a perſecuter, and an oppreſſor: but I was receiued to mercy: for
I did it ignorantly through vnbeliefe.

¶ *The ende of the nienth Chapter, and the Preface to the Prouerbes.*

☛ THE PROVERBES OF SOLOMON.

The tenth Chapter.

1 *A wiſe ſonne maketh a glad father: but a fooliſh ſonne is an heauineſſe to his mother.*

WE haue ſaid at the beginning of this booke, that Solomon in the niene firſt Chapters did make a Preface & preamble vpon theſe notable ſentẽces that he would publiſh. That this is true, partly is ſeen by this, that the former wordes doe followe now & then betweene, and may be ioyned togeather, as we haue already ſhewed: partly alſo by this, that now in the beginning of this tenth Chapter, he giueth the title, ſaying, *The Prouerbes of Solomon:* as though he began a newe booke. And theſe ſayings, as may be ſeene, are halfe and parted ſentences, for the ioyning whereof we need not to take any great paines. But we muſt vnderſtande that theſe ſayinges are groundes and rules ſpoken according to the worde of the Lorde: whereby he inſtructeth the manners, and correcteth the errour, and the faultes of carnal wiſedome. And almoſt there is no verſe heereafter, but hath his rule and ſentence, and for the moſt part diuided in twaine: for euen in one verſe you ſhall finde the praiſe of vertue, and the blame of the contrarie vice. The firſt ſentence praiſeth the wiſe childe, and blameth the fooliſh. It ſayth nothing which is not aproued true of all thē that haue any iudgement at all: And alſo that which is heere pronounced, is commonly prooued of euery one, according as he is counted eyther wiſe or fooliſhe. The one ſort haue a true experience, and the other falſe and vaine, after as the one hath knowledge of wiſedome: and the other (which are the greateſt number) after as they beleeue lyes, and are giuen to vanitie. The ſuperſticious and idolaters, the carnall wiſe worldlinges are glad when their children are like vnto them, and count them very wiſe: but as this wiſdome is reproued of God (who wil deſtroy it) as hath been ſaide: (I wil deſtroy the wiſedome of the wiſe, &c. For the wiſedome of this worlde, and of the princes therof, ſhal periſh:) ſo alſo their ioy ſhall not be of any continuance, for it is worldly and carnall, and therfore it ſhall vaniſh away quickly. Solomon ſpeaketh not heere of this wiſedome and gladneſſe, but of that which is after God, the which continewe for euer, ſeeing that the giftes and callinges of God are without repentance. It is a gift and calling of GOD, when the childe, be it ſonne or daughter, is wiſe, and that the father reioyceth therein, and that truely, and thus it is not a thing which quickly vaniſheth away. But to the ende that wee might knowe which are the children that do truely make glad their fathers, we muſt vnderſtande, what true wiſedome is, and wherein it ſtandeth. Moſes doeth ſhewe it, Beholde I haue taught you Ordinances and Lawes, euen as the Lorde God hath commanded me: yee ſhall doe them therefore, and keepe them, for this is your wiſedome. And foraſmuch as there is no father being of ſound iudgement, but reioyceth at the wiſedome of his children. Therefore it followeth, firſt of al that the fathers and mothers, and al ſuperious and gouerners ought to bet careful to ſee their children and ſubiectes to bee inſtructed in

Eſay.29.14.
1.Cor.1.19.
&.2.6.

Rom. 11.24.

Deut.4.5

the worde, and not to be delighted with their follies, wickedneſſe, and diſſoluteneſſe as are many: but it oftentimes happeneth, that the ioy of the fathers and mothers, is turned into weeping & mourning, when theyr children being euil brought vp, doe diuerſly worke them iniurie and wrong both by worde and deede, or when they ſee them miſerablie periſhe. And in this manner is ſomewhat fulfilled that the fooliſh childe is ſorowe vnto his mother, & that iuſtly: for theſe wicked fathers & mothers, theſe negligent ſuperiours, & careleſſe gouernours, which doe not diligently take heede to gouerne their children, and them which are vnder their charge: but ſuffers, or ſeemes not to ſee when they commit follies, and runne aſtray, do wel deſerue to haue much ſorowe therefore. Secondly, it followeth that the children and vnderlings which deſire to make their fathers and mothers glad, and their ſuperiours & gouernours ioyful, ought to giue themſelues to folow the worde of God, without declining therefrom, either to the right hande or to the left: that if in this ſort their parentes and ſuperiours doe not reioyce, yet, they ceaſſe not to be wiſe, and ſo much as in them lyeth doe make them glad. They ought aboue al thinges to bee giuen vnto the feare and reuerence of God, as hee requireth in the firſt table of the Lawe: and then to giue reuerence and honour vnto them, vnto whome it is due, and then afterwardes to be gentle towardes their neighbours. Heerin they ſhall ſhewe foorth true wiſedome, whereat their parentes and ſuperiours, and men of honeſtie wil reioyce and be glad: but the wicked wil perſecute them, as thoſe places where the Pope raigneth, doe proue it to be true: For they call euil, good; & good, euill. Such kinde of people, ſtriuing againſt this preſent inſtruction, are greeued at the wiſe, and reioyce at fooles, whoſe parentes being led by the ſpirite of God, cannot reioyce, but are in continual ſorowe and griefe. For as Solomon ſaith, *A fooliſhe childe is an heauineſſe to his mother:&c.* And becauſe that Solomon laboured to giue vs ſhort ſentences, hee expreſſeth not in plaine wordes what he woulde haue vs to vnderſtande. Hee ſpeaketh heere of children onely in the maſculine gender: yet hee meaneth aſwell to inſtruct the daughters as the ſonnes, the women aſwell as the men, according to the common manner of the Scripture. Alſo he

Eſay.5.20

expreſſeth not in the firſt part of this ſentence but the father, and in the 2. but the mother. For if we be people of a ſounde iudgement, wee haue all one affection towardes our children, ſo that it is ſuche towards our daughters, as towards our ſonnes. And it is not without cauſe that we haue ſaid that fathers and mothers, and al ſuperiours and gouernors ought to be carefull. For firſt of all they are ordeined of GOD to bee as ſchoole maiſters, and to keepe them in diſcipline that are committed vnto their charge. Secondly, children doe paſſe little for wiſedome, neither make any count to attaine the ſame, except they bee thruſt forwarde by ſome of their friendes: and the common people are eaſie to runne aſtray, except the Magiſtrate be very carefull to keepe them in ſtraight, &c. Euen ſo the wiſedome of children and inferiours, ſtandeth in obedience and ſufferance to be ruled after the worde of God, and not in gouerning others. For the Lorde wil haue the weake to bee ſubiect, and to be taught obedience by the worde. As Dauid ſayeth, Wherin ſhal a young man redreſſe his way? in taking heede according to thy worde. *Pſal. 119.9.* If children and inferiours doe thus wiſely gouerne them ſelues, they neede not to feare any aduerſitie: for the Lorde wil keepe and defende them, and make them bleſſed. The which Solomon doth wel ſignifie by the ioy of the father. For there is nothing that more reioyceth the father, then to ſee and knowe that his children doe proſper. And ſo wee may vnderſtande that in the fathers ioye, there is promiſe of health encloſed: and contrarily, that in heauineſſe of the mother, there is threatning of death and damnation. Beſides this, let vs note that this which is ſaide of parents & carnal children, may likewiſe bee ſtretched vnto the miniſters, and to their charge.

2 *The treaſures of wickednes profit nothing: but righteouſnes deliuereth from death.*

Although this ſentence is general, yet conſidering the contentes of the former, it may bee ſaide that Solomon reprooueth thoſe fathers, which care not whither their children bee wiſe or no: but are contented onely that they haue wherewith to ſuſteine their bodies : and to come thereby, they gather goodes togeather both by right and wrong, and reach their children to doe the ſame. This is that which Solomon ſaith, *the treaſures of wickedneſſe* : and ſaith, that ſuch treaſures ſhall not profite. For firſt they are corruptible, and ſubiect to be loſt. Secondly, they that owe them, moſt commonly, dare not beſtowe them in well doing, leaſt they ſhoulde diminiſh them, which is a great miſery. Thirdly, moſt commonly ſtrangers do poſſeſſe them, & not their children. It is an euil diſeaſe, that the riches which are kept, turne to the hurt of their owners. Fourthly, when he hath gotten much, he cannot long enioy them : for a man paſſeth away as a ſhadow, he heapeth vp goods, & knoweth not who ſhal gather them. O foole, this night wil they fetche away thy ſoule from thee: then whoſe ſhal thoſe thinges bee, which thou haſt prouided? Fifthly after this life they goe to damnation as wee may ſee by the riche glutton in the 16. of Luke. It is therfore true that the treaſures of wickednes ſhal not proſper, as ſaieth Solomon. Wherein he iuſtly condemneth couetouſnes. Hee condemneth not riches, for they are the good creatures of God giuen for the vſe of the faithful, and are inſtrumentes whereby charitie is exerciſed: and are ordeined of God, to the ende that wee ſhoulde bee enriched, not in hiding them and locking thē vp, but that we ſhould abounde in good woorkes. After that he hath rebuked & condemned the couetous with their couetouſnes, he praiſeth and commendeth hoſpitalitie and liberalitie, when he ſaith, *but righteouſnes deliuereth from death*. Here he ſetteth righteouſnes againſt the treaſures of wickednes, wherein hee ſheweth that they which bee not dealers of almoſe and liberal towardes their needy neighbours, are vnrighteous, and deſerue wel to bee puniſhed, euen with death, as Solomon doeth wel declare , when hee ſetteth the deliuerance from *death* againſt not profiting, This is aſmuch as if hee ſaide, ſo much it wanteth that the couetous doe receiue any profite of that which they heape togither by the hinderance of their neighbours, that they ſhal dye eternally: but they that ſhal vſe liberaltie and beneuolence taking heede from doing of wrong to their neighbours, and giuing to euery man his owne , ſhalbee deliuered from death, and ſo ſhal liue for euer. Heere Solomon taketh iuſtice for hoſpita-

Mat.6.19.
Iam.5.10.
Eccle.6.2
&.5.12.13.
Pſalm.39.7
Luke.12.20

hoſpitalitie, and liberalitie, for almes, and good deedes, for the workes of charitie and loue, as the Scripture taketh it in other places. But it may here ſeeme that Solomon doth attribute power vnto our workes to ſaue vs, and ſo wee ſhoulde not obteine eternall life through grace, but by our merites. I anſwere, that of our ſelues wee are altogether voide of righteouſneſſe: and if wee doe any workes, it is becauſe that God fauoureth vs, and worketh the ſame in vs by his holy ſpirite: and then he alloweth our workes of his onely goodneſſe, and not of their owne worthineſſe: and becauſe they are pleaſant vnto him, he promiſeth to reward them, and doth attribute vnto them that which belongeth vnto his onely grace & mercy. And this is becauſe he doeth freely loue vs, buriyng all our faultes, for neuer more to remember them. And ſo albeit wee can deſerue nothing by our works, yet are they not in vaine: for if they be done according to the word of God in vprightneſſe of conſcience, they are witneſſes that he loueth vs, and doe aſſure vs that we ſhall not periſhe, but do fully certifie vs of eternal felicitie. Beſides this, let vs note that they which haue the goodes of this world, and care not to do good vnto others, do poſſeſſe the treaſures of iniquitie: though they labour not to drawe vnto themſelues the riches of others, and that that they poſſeſſe be well gotten, or be attained by gift, or by ſucceſſion of kindred.

3 *The Lorde will not famiſhe the ſoule of the righteous: but hee caſteth away the ſubſtacnce of the wicked.*

Wee may ſee the wicked proſper, and to abound in wealth, they haue their eaſe and pleaſures, they ſpende their time ioyfully, and haue reſt and quietneſſe: and in the meane while the faithfull which ſtudie to follow righteouſneſſe, are poore, and ſuffer muche ſorrowe. This is common and ordinary through all the world: wherevpon it commeth that the children of God do enuie and are greeued and greatly tempted to forſake all righteouſneſſe and innocencie, and to followe all wickedneſſe, that they may be partakers of the eaſe with the wicked, and to proſper for a time as they doe. They which flatter not them ſelues in their infirmities and imper-

Pſal.73.2

Mat. 6.24.

fections, and that truely knowe what they are : doe know and feele howe they are toſſed with ſuche temptations. Dauid in his Pſalmes doeth declare to haue felt it, as he confeſſeth. Hee admoniſheth vs not to vexe our ſelues at the wicked, neither to enuie them that worke wickedneſſe. And by the diſcourſe of the Pſalme, hee ſheweth vs that the goodly ſhew of the wicked is nothing but vanitie, and that the poore eſtate of the faithful is much more better, and more profitable then it ſeemeth, or is thought to bee. In following this doctrine, Solomon would not haue fathers & mothers to feare, that their children (which they ſhall inſtruct in wiſedome and righteouſneſſe) ſhoulde periſhe and ſtarue for hunger, though they gather no great treaſures for them. Hee alſo inſtructeth vs all generally, that wee ſhould not put our truſt in our goods, though we abounde in them : and that wee ſhoulde not bee diſcouraged whether we haue little or much, prouided that we delight to walke in a ſafe conſcience, as God teach vs by his worde. For to bring vs vnto this, and to perſwade vs it, hee ſaith, *The Lord will not famiſh, &c.* Our Lorde doeth giue vs the like doctrine in the ſixth Chapter of Saint Matth : No man can ſerue two maiſters, and ſo foorth to the ende of the Chapter. But they which haue forſaken the Goſpel, and receiued the interim, they which dare not confeſſe Ieſus Chriſt for feare of looſing their liues & goods, do not beleeue his promiſes made by Dauid, Solomon, and Ieſus Chriſte, which haue ſpoken by the ſpirite of GOD: and thus, ſo muche as they can, they make God a lyar, ſpoyle him of his trueth, and conſequently of his diuinitie, ſeeing hee cannot be God without his trueth. Suche kinde of people and others which do truſt in their riches, ſhal finde themſelues deceiued, as they deſerue. They thinke to bee ſafe from euil, and that their goodes ſhall not faile them : but Solomon ſaith, *The Lorde caſteth away the ſubſtance of the wicked.* The Lorde doeth this in diuers ſortes, as is dayly prooued, to wit, by warre, by lawe, by tempeſtes, coldes, and ſurfettinges : in theſe manners hee caſteth away the ſubſtance of the wicked, when hee ſpoyleth them of them, or that hee take them from the middeſt of their goodes, when they thinke them ſelues to bee at reſt, and that it ſeemeth vnto them that nothing can hurt them. Moreouer, firſt of all let vs note that as (in the ſeconde verſe) righteouſneſſe is taken for beneuolence : ſo alſo in this place by the righteouſneſſe is ment him that renounceth all couetouſneſſe, and doth dedicate him ſelfe to do good vnto his neighbours, according as God hath made him able, and feareth not that his goodes ſhoulde diminiſh, or hee Pſal.37.16. ſuffer want : hee ſaith with Dauid, A ſmal thing vnto the iuſt man & .25. is better than great riches to the wicked and mightie. Againe, I haue beene young, and am olde : yet I ſawe neuer the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeede begging breade. Secondly, that if wee would be ſatisfied, we muſt fly the company of the wicked, & not to ſpare our goodes from the poore. Thirdly, that wee muſt not attribute any thing vnto fortune or chaunce, as doe the vnfaithfull and idolaters, which haue no true knowledge of God, neither of his prouidence : but as wee knowe that to him onely belongeth the conſeruation and gouernment of all riches, euen ſo alſo doth waſting and deſtruction. It is he, that ſatisfieth and giueth power to the meates and drinkes to ſuſteine vs : It is hee alſo which breaketh and ouerthroweth all ſubſtance of bread and wine, taking from them the power of nouriſhing. And thus it is needefull for vs, that wee aske and craue of the Lorde, Giue vs this day our dayly bread. &c.

Fourthly when Solomon doth promiſe vs that which we ſee, not with our corporall eyes, but doe prooue and feele the cleane contrary after the ſenſe of the fleſhe, hee teacheth vs, that wee haue neede of faith, whereby wee may bee armed againſt the ſlaunders of the croſſe. For when wee ſee that the wicked proſper, and that the good bee afflicted, the fleſhe is offended thereat, and iudgeth that GOD careth not for to helpe them. But the promiſes of GOD require faith, wherby wee beleeue that GOD doeth helpe and defende vs : albeit that for a little time he ſuffer vs to be exerciſed by diuerſe kindes of afflictions : and doeth defende vs not onely in preſeruing vs in this life, but alſo too giue vs poſſeſſion of the life to come. For ſith Heb.13.11. that his giftes and callinges are without repentaunce, it followeth that his promiſes doe reache further then this worlde, as the holy Patriarkes did wel vnderſtand it. Again, thoſe which he counteth not worthie of this world, cannot but looke for perpetuall miſerie and calamitie. Therfore when hee threatneth to caſt away the ſubſtance of the wicked, let vs vnderſtande that hee threatneth them with eternall deſtruction: for they cannot bee worthie of the bleſſed life, when they are vnworthy of earthly ſubſtance. Fiftly, that Solomon doeth not promiſe vntoo the righteous great bankets, and aboundance of riches and goodes, for to liue plentifully in carnall delightes and pleaſures, but onely that they ſhall not bee famiſhed. For wee muſt eate, to ſlake hunger and to quench thriſt, and not to fill our ſelues in gluttonie and drunkenneſſe: and alſo wee are taught to deſire our dayly bread, and to content our ſelues hauing foode and clothing, &c. As doeth the Apoſtle alſo admoniſhe vs, ſaying, Let your conuerſation bee without couetouſneſſe, and bee contente with thoſe thinges which you haue: for hee hath ſayde, I will not faile thee, neither forſake thee.

1.Tim.6.8.
Heb.13.5

4 *A ſlouthful hande maketh poore: but the hande of the diligent maketh riche.*

When they loue to bee at reſt, and woulde not labour, doe heare ſay that the Lord wil not hungerſtarue the ſoule of the righteous: it ſeemeth vnto them that they neede not to laye their handes to worke, and will eate their bread in idleneſſe, and without labour, and doe not thinke that it is poſſible for them to become poore, & to haue neede: but Solomõ doth wel ſhew them the cõtrary, ſaying, *A ſlouthful hand maketh poore:* He ſpeaketh here nothing darkly, nor which is not dayly prooued true by experience: but when hee ſpeaketh thus, it is not to ſay, that wee muſt labour diligently, leſt wee become poore, and with deſire to be riche: for in the firſt, there ſhoulde bee diſtruſt of the goodneſſe and prouidence of God: And in the ſecond, Couetouſneſſe, which are two vices abhominable before God. For he woulde that as he declareth himſelf to be our father, & doth promiſe to nouriſh vs, euẽ ſo ſhold we aſſure our ſelues of his goodnes towards vs, & that we ſhoulde loke with patience for al goodnes to come frõ him, without feare of

wanting,caſting al our cares vpon him. So doing,we ſhalbe the true
ſeede of Abraham,which is the father of all beleeuers. The promiſe Rom.4.11.
ſhall belong to vs,Feare not,Abrahã,I am thy buckler, & thine exceeding Gen.15.1
great reward. The Lord ſhal bring it to paſſe vpon vs. Caſt Pſal.55.22.
thy burden vpon the Lord,& he ſhal nouriſh thee: He will not ſuffer 1.Pet.5.7.
the righteous to fall for euer. Caſt al your care vppon him: for
hee careth for you. And in thus eaſing vs of our burthen, let vs not
be negligent and ſlouthfull,but let vs knowe that care, labour, and
diligence are ordeined for al times. Wherfore let vs follow the burden
that God hath laid vpon vs,which is, In the ſweate of thy face Gen.2.19.
ſhalt thou eate thy bread. If then wee labour not, wee are well &.3.19.
worthie to fall into great pouertie, and are not worthie to eate, 2.The.3.10.
vnleſſe wee labour. Albeit then that wee muſt truſt in GOD and Pſal.37.3.
commit our affaires vnto him, yet muſt wee not haue a ſlouthfull
hande, but to be occupied in well doing. Commit thy way vnto &.1.5.
the Lorde,and truſt in him,and hee ſhal bring it too paſſe. But as
hath beene ſaide, wee muſt not doe it for feare to waxe poore: for
albeit that wee labour,yet ſhall we not ceaſſe to bee poore and needy,
except God bleſſe our labour. For, neither is hee that planteth,
any thing,neither he that watereth, but God that giueth the
encreaſe. It is very lawful to labour for to flie and auoide pouertie,
but not to bee ſeaſed with the feare thereof: as it is lawful to become 1.Cor.3.7.
riche by working with care and diligence,but it is not lawful
to couet riches: for ſuch deſire is couetouſneſſe, which is very deteſtable
before God, and hurtfull to our neighbours,which is not Ephe.5.3.
lawful to bee named. Whoſoeuer is couetous,is an idolater: for &.5.
he ſerueth riches,and not God: hee putteth his truſt in vnſenſible Col.3.5
creatures, and not in the Creator ,which hath giuen him wit and
vnderſtanding: hee worſhippeth golde and ſiluer,and his belly,and
not God, from whome all riches commeth. And as hee hath not Ephe.5.5.
his heart ſet on God, ſo hath hee no part in his inheritance. The
couetous perſon which is an idolater, hath no inheritaunce in the
kingdome of Chriſt and of God.Saint Paul nameth the couetous, 1.Cor.6.10.
amongeſt them which ſhall not inherite the kingdome of God. It
is good reaſon that ſuche perſons ſhoulde bee abhorred before
God,and caſt out of his kingdome,when they diſtruſt him, which
is all good and almightie,and doth good to all men: (for wee haue

nothing but of his goodneſſe and liberalitie) & do put their truſt in their owne arme : they leane and ſtay themſelues vpon tranſitory thinges, wherein they ſet their affection, for the which to ſatisfie and to poſſeſſe riches at their wiſhe and deſire, they gather wrongfully and otherwayes then they ſhoulde: they pole and pill their neighbours diuerſe waies , and ſo they make them ſelues the enimies of God and of men. Wherefore they ſhall haue a great count to make. Beſides this, when wee heare that the *hande of the diligent maketh riche*, let vs not depriue God of his honour : but confeſſe that if through our diligence wee encreaſe in riches, that it is, becauſe God guideth our hands ,& our worke, and bleſſeth our labour, &c. Alſo that which wee haue ſaide to bee a *ſlouthfull hande*, Solomon in his ſpeache calleth, a deceitfull hand. For they which are negligent and ſlouthfull , and which doe not their office and duetie, doe dreame hollowly and deuiſe vnlaweful meanes, to drawe vnto them the goodes of others. And becauſe that Solomon ſetteth diligence againſt deceit, we take deceit for negligẽce & ſlouthfulneſſe.

5 *Hee that gathereth in Sommer , is the ſonne of wiſedome: but hee that ſleepeth in Harueſt , is the ſonne of confuſion.*

Albeit that our Lorde (for to make vs to put our truſt & hope in God our father) doeth ſay vnto vs , Beholde the foules of the ayre : for they ſowe not, neither reape, nor carry into the barnes & yet your heauenly father feedeth them : yet let vs not thinke hee goeth about to turne vs away from labouring , or that hee woulde wee ſhould ſuffer the goodes that God bringeth out of the earth to periſh, or that we ſhold eate vp al in one day, without keeping ſome thing all the yere long. For firſt of al our Lord hath not taught for to aboliſh the decree of God his father, the which is, that man ſhould labour, not onely one day, but all the yeere through : and that in labouring hee might liue and be nouriſhed euery day, throughout his life : as he gaue to Adam to vnderſtand (placing him in the garden of Eden, for to dreſſe it) that hee ſhould eate his bread in the ſweate of his face, vntill hee returne vnto the earth. And after the flood hee ſaide, Heere after ſeede time and harueſt, and colde and heate, and Sommer and Winter, and day and night, ſhall not ceaſſe ſo long as the earth remaineth. God hath not ordeined theſe times and ſeaſons in vaine, but that according to the time and ſeaſon man ſhoulde imploy himſelfe to work and to labour, and that thereof he ſhoulde gather fruite to ſuſteine him and his. And ſith that harueſt doth not come but once a yeere, and that the ſame is ordeined for to gather the fruites of the earth, that God hath brought foorth for mans ſuſtenance, it followeth that in acknowledging the goodneſſe and liberalitie of God our heauenly father: if wee gather the fruites of the earth, and lay them vp in barnes and ſellers, and too keepe them, and to vſe them for our neceſſitie all the yeere after, that in ſo doing, wee doe not diſobey the doctrine of our Lorde, but wee obey God, and conſequently our Lord. For it is not his intent to condemne the ſeede time and harueſt, nor the prouiſion that is made without couetouſneſſe: onely hee woulde that wee ſhould not bee nigardes, as they which haue neuer enough: and as hath beene ſaide, Doe feare that the earth ſhoulde faile them. If wee muſt not be ſuch, much leſſe may we be like theſe theeues and murderers, to theſe rogues and cutthrotes, which gather the fruites of the earth, vnder hope to make them deare, and wil enrich them ſelues by the hurte of their poore neighbour. They which profeſſe the Goſpell, and doe vſe ſuche cruell trades, and ſuch vngentle and diueliſhe traines and deuiſes, as there are but too many which occupie them,) doe greatly offende and giue an euill example: and it were better that they neuer had heard ſpeaking of the Goſpell, except the Lord graunt them grace to confeſſe their ſinnes, and to forſake and giue ouer ſuche helliſhe practiſes. If our Lord would induce not to gather in ſeaſon, he would pul vs back frõ wiſdome, and woulde ſet vs in confuſion: he would make vs to deſpiſe the ordinance of God, our father, the which wee ought in no maner of wiſe either to thinke or ſpeake: but knowing that Ieſus Chriſt is of one wil with God his father, we muſt gather in Sõmer, & watch in harueſt, that is, that we take care & diligẽce to lay our hands to worke according to the ſeaſons & times appointed, euery one folowing the eſtate wherto god hath called him. For albeit that

Gen. 2. 15. & 3. 19. & 8. 22

Solomon hath not expreſſed but *Sommer and Harueſt*,becauſe he
endeuoureth to giue vs briefe ſentences,and eaſie to beholde, yet
wee will heere comprehende all ſeaſons, and whatſoeuer GOD
woulde that man ſhoulde bee occupied in. If wee ſpende the
time aboute the labours and workes that God hath ordeined,we
ſhalbe wiſe, and ſhall auoide confuſion, from which alſo wee ſhall
keepe others,ſo muche as lyeth in vs: for we will liue of our labor,
and ſhalbe preſerued from begging, which is a confuſion not able to
be borne, and ſhall alſo deliuer them from it which we ſhall refreſh
with the fruite of our paine and trauel. Contrarily,if we be giuen
to ſleepe,and to idleneſſe,when it is time to worke, wee ſhall both
confounde our ſelues and others, for whome we are bounde to beſtowe
our ſelues,to keepe them from begging. This worde *Confuſion*,
Pſal. 37. 19. is taken in this ſignification in the 37. Pſalme, They ſhall not
be confounded in the perilous time,and in the dayes of famine they
ſhal haue enough.But it may be ſaid that Solomon ſhould not haue
brought foorth this as a notable ſentence,ſeeing that there is not ſo
ſimple an Idiot,which knoweth not wel that we muſt gather riches
in due ſeaſon,and that wee muſt not be ſluggiſhe when it is time to
gather the fruites of the earth: and therefore, that there is not
ſo much wiſedome in it,as that there ſhoulde bee mention made of
it.I anſwere, That ſith God hath ordeyned ſuch gathering and vigilancie,
it is no ſmal wiſedome for a man to knowe well howe too
imploy him ſelfe as it behooueth. All the wiſedome of the
Monkes and Friers in Popery, is nothing but fooliſhneſſe and vanitie,
yea euen wickedneſſe,in compariſon of this wiſedome. But
it may bee replied,that there is not the pooreſt Labourer or handy
craftes man that is not as wiſe as the miniſters of the Church: for
the miniſters doe no other thing then did the Friers, Prieſtes and
Monkes. I anſwere, That the true Miniſters are aſſured of their
vocation,and do occupie themſelues therein,and alſo they do not
gather togeather nor watche. The true Miniſters, are Preachers,
Doctours,Paſtours, builders, Reapers,Sowers, Watchmen: but
the Friers are cleane contrary, they are good for nothing but to
trouble the water, to prate without doctrine, to eate, to deſtroy,
to treade vnderfoote the good corne,& to be dumb dogs & ſleepy.

There is then great difference : for as we haue probation, ſome are wiſe children, and others doe bring confuſion.

6 *Bleſſings are vpon the head of the righteous : but iniquitie ſhal couer the mouth of the wicked.*

So long as we liue in this bodie, wee can not iudge by our outward wit what the righteous are, (that is to ſay, thoſe which by the feare, reuerence, and Fayth they beare vnto the worde of God, doe delight to ſerue the Lorde and their neighbours, and deſire to profite al men, and to hurt no man,) neither that they can be counted bleſſed, nor that they are in the grace and fauour of God, ſeeing that we ſee them abounde in miſerie, and to bee beaten downe with calamities : they are afflicted of the world by peeling and polling, priſonment, woundes, baniſhment, curſing, lying, ſlandering, and cauillations, & diuers other wayes, which can not be eaſily expreſſed. For ſome doe ſuffer in one ſort, and ſome in an other : to be ſhorte, it ſeemeth that God is their enemy, and that hee perſecuteth them to deſtroy them. And therefore, fewe eſteemeth wel of them, as Eliphas the Themanite of Iob. Remember, I pray thee : who euer periſhed being an innocent? Or where were the righteous deſtroyed? The Iewes did no leſſe eſteeme of the Prophets, and of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and of his Apoſtles. The Papiſts haue the poore Chriſtians which ſuffer perſecution for the Goſpel, in like reputatiō. Cōtrarily, the wicked (that is to ſay, the infidels, which with wil and minde, with deed and word, doe deſpight God, and make no count of their neighbours,) are iudged happie and bleſſed : they are feaſted, they are prayſed and commended, and it ſeemeth wel that they are in the grace and fauour of God, and that he doeth bleſſe them, that hee doeth loue them and mainteine them. Such is the iudgement of carnal man, which iudgeth after the outwarde ſight : but Fayth iudgeth farre otherwiſe, and the worde wherupon Fayth is ſtayed, pronounceth alſo contrarie : as we ſee it, when Solomon is not contented alone to ſay, that the *righteous* ſhal obteine bleſſing: but to ſhewe that he is euen here happie in diuers ſortes, although he be greatly moleſted : he ſayeth, *bleſſinges are vpon the head of the righteous* : hee appointeth not the time, neither preſent nor to

Iob.4.7.

Pſal.7.3.

come, for to declare that the bleſſings ſhal not fayle them: but hauing had their beginning in this life, they ſhal endure for euer. Bleſſed are ye, when men reuile you, and perſecute you, and ſay al manner of euil againſt you for my ſake, falſly. *Mat.5.11.* My brethren, count it exceeding ioy, when ye fall into diuers temptations. *Iam.1.2.* Againe, Bleſſed is the man, that endureth tentation: *Iam.1,12.* for when he is tried, he ſhal receiue the Crowne of life, which the Lorde hath promiſed to them that loue him. Contrarily, though the wicked doe floriſh, yet are they, and ſhalbe curſed, as may be knowne plainly, when their iniquitie ſhal bee opened, and that for the ſame they ſhalbe aſhamed, for becauſe of their iniquitie, which ſhalbe as a choke peare to ſtop their mouth, they ſhal not be able to alledge any thing worthe to defende them ſelues with al. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee ſayeth, *But iniquitie ſhal couer the mouth of the wicked.* In ſome it is opened ſooner, and in other ſome later. Some mens ſinnes are manifeſt before hande, and goe before vnto iudgement: but ſome mens folowe after. *1.Tim.5.24.* For their iniquitie committed, they ſhal ſuffer puniſhment before al men, wherwith they ſhalbe greatly confounded: and the righteous ſhalbe glorified and honoured, and their felicitie ſhal ſhine and ſhalbe ſeene of al men. Solomon doeth wel ſignifie the ſame, when he placeth the bleſſings to light on the head, the which is the higheſt part in man, vpon the which the ornaments can not be hid. Theſe ornaments of bleſſing are nowe hidde in the worlde: but they which are not ſtayed at the outwarde appearance, but by Fayth, do beholde the goodneſſe that God hath done vnto his faythful ſeruantes in the midſt of their troubles, doe ſee euen preſently the head of the righteous garniſhed with bleſſinges, the which they ſhal more plainly ſee in the poſſeſſion of the heauenly kingdome.

7 *The memorial of the iuſt ſhalbe bleſſed: but the name of the wicked ſhal rotte.*

Albeit, that nowe preſently it ſeemeth vnto the worlde, that the righteous are forgotten before God, becauſe that no man reuengeth the iniuries & wrongs that are done them (as Dauid doth declare it, ſaying, *Pſal.10.11.* He hath ſaide in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth away his face, and wil neuer ſee. O Lorde the auenger, O God the

auenger, ſhewe thy ſelfe clearely. And for this cauſe alſo the faith- *Pſal.94.1.*
ful doe lament, and complaine. Why ſtandeſt thou farre of, O Lord, *Pſal.10.1.*
and hideſt thee in due time, euen in affliction? Againe, How long *Pſal.13.1.*
wilt thou forget mee, O Lorde? for euer? Howe long wilt thou hide *Pſal.45.23.*
thy face from mee? Againe, Vp, why ſleepeſt thou, O Lorde? awake, *& 24.*
be not farre of for euer. Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and forgetteſt
our miſerie & our affliction?) yet notwithſtanding, he hath
not ſo much forgotten them, but that he doeth remember to bleſſe
them for to doe them good, and ſhewe them grace and fauour, to
giue them helpe, defence and ſauegarde, ſo farre as hee knoweth to
be expedient to bring them vnto eternal bleſſing. Solomon doeth
ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, *The memorial of the iuſt, ſhalbe bleſſed.*
Contrarily, the wicked are famous, they are commended, and doe
prayſe them ſelues. He ſayeth in his heart, I ſhal neuer be mooued, *Pſal.10.6.*
nor be in danger. And, With our tongue wil we preuaile: our lippes *& 12.4.*
are our owne: who is Lorde ouer vs? but their name ſhalbe abominable
and filthie. Solomon doeth declare it, ſaying, *The name of the
wicked ſhal rotte.*

8 *The wiſe in heart wil receiue commandements: but the fooliſh in talke ſhalbe beaten.*

Our wiſedome is to keepe and to doe the commandementes of *Deut.4.6.*
God. Wherefore the wiſe ſayeth verie wel, that the wiſe of heart,
will receiue them. Hee ſayeth expreſly, the wiſe of heart, that
is to ſay, hee which truely loueth wiſedome, and is no counterfaite
as the worldly wiſe, which iuſtifie ſo much them ſelues, that
they can not abide any admonition though it be very needeful, as S. *2.Tim.3.1.*
Paule doeth ſhewe it, This knowe alſo, that in the laſt dayes ſhall
come perillous times, &c. Thoſe that are ſuch, can not ſuffer any admonitions
neither of Father nor Magiſtrates, neither yet of Miniſters:
and yet leſſe of priuate and particular perſons. But he which
hath wiſedome printed in his heart, knoweth well that hee hath
neede of wiſedome, and deſireth to increaſe therein: and therfore
hee gladly heareth that which is ſhewed him in the name, and
by the Worde of GOD, and laboureth to conforme him-

ſelfe.

ſelf vnto the doctrine that is ſet before him. This ſame is to receiue the commandements, and not to be like vnto the ſonne which promiſed to his father to doe that hee commaunded, and did nothing. But rather if in time paſt wee haue ſaide, we wil not goe, that nowe by true repentance & Fayth let vs giue our hearts to obey God our father, & conſequently them, which hee hath ordeined ouer vs, to direct and gouerne vs. Thus doing, wee ſhal not bee woorthie of ſtripes and woundes, but rather of good rewarde and recompence: though wee can not deſerue it, but ſuche is the wil of God our Father, ſo to recompence his obedient children and ſeruants. Contrarily, if we declare our ſelues to be rebels and diſobedient, let vs looke to be beaten as we deſerue, becauſe of our follie, which we ſhew in gainſaying, and ſtriuing againſt the trueth, and that by iuſtice and equitie. Solomon doeth ſhewe it vs, ſaying, *But the fooliſh in talke ſhalbe beaten.* Hee that maketh not count of true wiſedome which is taught vs by the worde, but doeth giue him ſelfe to ſpeake and doe things contrarie therevnto, is fooliſh in his talke, and yet ceaſeth not to be foliſh in his heart: for from the abundance of the hart the mouth ſpeaketh: and alſo other outwarde workes doe folowe thereof: for the outward parte is like to the inwarde, except wee diſfigure our ſelues by hypocriſie, the which wil alwayes appeare holie and wiſe, and not fooliſhe: and therefore, if we ſhewe any fooliſhneſſe in wordes, or in workes, it is a plaine argument that wee are not wiſe in heart. Wherefore, wee may iudge that they which permit and take leaue to talke fooliſhly, or to do acts againſt God and his worde, for to auoide perſecutions, doe deceiue themſelues when they would make men beleeue that they thinke not as they ſay, or as they doe: for the outward workes, and chiefly ſuche as are wicked, are certaine fruites conceiued in the heart of man, the which is euil from his childhood. And thus, though Solomon doe not ſpeake but of the lippes, yet he forgetteth not to touch the hart, which is the roote that bringeth foorth the fruite, as we ought to vnderſtande by the former reaſons. And alſo the Antitheſis or compariſon that hee maketh betweene the wiſe in heart, and the fooliſh in talke, doeth ſhewe it wel: otherwiſe it ſhould not agree. In the firſt parte of the compariſon, he expreſſeth the roote, for to exclude worldly wiſedome, which is of great ſhew, and is nothing but rebellion: for it wil not be ſubiect vnto the lawe of God: for it is ledde by the deſire of the fleſhe: afterwardes hee expreſſeth the fruites which proceede from the true wiſedome of the heart, that is to ſay, To receiue the commandements: wherein hee noteth the obedience of the wiſe in heart, to the which the wiſe worldlinges are contrarie and oppoſite: whereof foloweth, that they are diſobedient. Rom. 8.6.7.

In the ſeconde parte of the compariſon, hee expreſſeth but the euil fruite, which can not lye: and therefore in expreſſing it, hee declareth plainly what the roote is, that is to ſay, euil: for the tree is knowne by his fruite. He immediatly after expreſſeth the recompence of them which ſpeake and doe euil, that is to ſay, that they ſhal be beaten, they ſhal bee chaſtened and puniſhed, firſt in this worlde, if ſo be it, that they watch diligently ouer the publike ſlanders and offences, and that the Magiſtrates be zealous, and that they bee careful to pronounce good and right iudgement, vppon that which they knowe, and is manifeſt vnto them, in ſuſteining and defending the good, and puniſhing the wicked, according as the fruits appeare: for they haue not the knowledge of inwarde fooliſhneſſe, but ſo farre as the ſame is opened outwardly: and therefore, Solomon ſayeth not, the fooliſh of heart ſhal be beaten: but the fooliſh in talke, that is to ſay, hee which ſhal ſhewe him ſelfe fooliſhe by wordes and wicked workes. If fathers and mothers loue their children, & are careful more for their ſoules then for their bodies, they wil chaſten them, if their manners and conuerſation be not good and honeſt. They which ſpare the rodde at neede, doe hate their children, and make no count of the honour of God. Wherevpon they ought to looke for grieuous puniſhment: for ſith they wil not ſtrike whileſt it is time, they them ſelues are worthie to be beaten. And alſo it happeneth often vnto them, that their children which they haue borne withal in their malice, when they come to age, not only doe ſet naught by them and reiect them, but alſo ſtand vp againſt them, in robbing them, curſing and doing them much hurt. And finally, if they doe not confeſſe their negligence, they ſhalbe beaten with eternal paynes. If ſuperiours doe truely loue their ſubiectes, they wil chaſten the fooliſhe, that the good may liue in peace, and that the ſlaunders and offences may be rooted out from the congregation of the Lorde: otherwiſe they ſhal be beaten: for firſt of all, the fooliſh wil riſe vp againſt them: and in the ende, they ſhal not auoide eternal damnation. I wil honour them that honour mee, &c. 1.Sam.2.30. And as they which ought to puniſh the fooliſhe, ſhalbe beaten for their negligence: euen ſo alſo, ſhal the fooliſhe be for their fooliſhnes, except they returne by true repentance.

9 *He that walketh vprightly, walketh boldly: but hee that peruerteth his wayes, ſhal be knowne.*

For as much as wee al deſire to auoide perils and dangers, and to liue ſafely and without feare of euil, we muſt heare Solomon which doth admoniſh vs of the meanes, when he ſayeth, *He that walketh vprightly.* There is none in this worlde that liueth ſo perfectly, but that he hath ſome fault. For wee haue al neede to craue pardon for our ſinnes, and continually to confeſſe that we are ſinners, how vprightly ſoeuer we liue: and thus the vprightneſſe wherof Solomon ſpeaketh, lyeth not in a perfection that can not be mended, & wherto there can nothing be added: for ſo long as we liue in this world, we haue neede to repent, to amend our faults, and alwayes to grow forwarde in goodneſſe, through the knowledge of the trueth. But this vprightneſſe lieth in ſoundneſſe of conſcience, whereby hauing our heartes right and not double, we abhorre al diſſimulations and hypocriſies, and labour to folowe holines, righteouſnes and trueth in al things, and with al men. The worlde maketh no great account of this vprightneſſe, but al the worlde almoſt is giuen to deceit and craftie dealing, vnto filthines and vncleannes, vnto hypocriſie & lying. Pſal.12.2. And foraſmuch as the greateſt parte of men & women are ſuch, they iudge them ſelues to be in ſafetie, when they are giuen to ſuch wickednes. And ſo the number of them which beleeue the ſentence of Solomon, is verie ſmal, and almoſt none. Wherevpon foloweth alſo that there is almoſt none, that walketh ſafely: but it happeneth almoſt to al, as it is ſaid, When they ſhal ſay, Peace, and ſafetie; then ſhal come vpon them, ſodeine deſtruction. 1.Theſ.5.3 The world deſtroyed by the flood, Sodome and Gomorrha, Dathan, Core and Abiram, and diuers other wicked ones, haue wel felt and ſhal feele it, and if wee folowe them, wee muſt looke alſo to feele the ſame. For as the Lorde knoweth the righteous & perfect, for to deliuer them from temptation, to keepe them, to defend them, and to ſaue them, that hee may giue them victorie ouer al perils and dangers: euen ſo alſo they which peruerte their wayes, contemning all integritie and vprightnes, and giuing them ſelues in diuers ſortes vnto contrarie thinges, can not be hid, but ſhal be knowne by the Lorde, to draw *Mat.13.4.* them and deuide them from the iuſt and perfect, as wee ſeparate the tares and the chaffe from the good corne, for to ſende them vnto vnquenchable fire. In looking for the which, albeit they ſay, that God doeth not ſee them, nor knowe them, yet can hee finde them out, as they daily feele by warres, peſtilences, famines, diſeaſes, by afflictions outward & inward: and in this ſort they beginne heere their hel, the which ſhal not forſake them. For as they eſteeme not to make their wayes right, as wel by blindnes and ignorance, as by hardnes & obſtinacie, & that attributing al vnto fortune & chance, in their affliction they knowe not that it is the hande of God that ſtriketh them, neither alſo doe they make any haſte to turne vnto God, for to craue of him repentance and amendement of their ſins, and deliuerance from euil: and ſo they muſt needes periſh in them. But albeit, that after the outwarde apparance and the ſenſe of the fleſh, the iuſt & perfect ſuffer in this word the like or more grieuous afflictions, yet do they not here begin their hel. For they knowing that they be the roddes of God their Father, doe aske deliuerance, and are aſſured to obteine the ſame. And thus on what ſide ſoeuer that the afflictiōs do come to the iuſt & perfect, becauſe they know that God is their keeper and deliuerer, they are not afrayde as diſcouraged and deſperate, but in al aſſurance they ſay, Yea though I *Pſal.23.4.* ſhould walke through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I wil feare *& 27.1.* none euil. Againe, The Lorde is my light and my ſaluation: whome ſhal I feare? The Lorde is the ſtrength of my lyfe, of whom ſhal I bee afrayde? They knowe this ſame, becauſe of the infallible promiſe: and cal vpon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliuer thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie mee. The Lorde is neere vnto al that *Pſal.50.15.* call vppon him: yea, to all that call vppon him in trueth. Come *& 145.18.* vnto mee, all yee that are wearie and laden, and I will eaſe you. *Mat.11.28.* Feare not, litle flocke: for it is your fathers pleaſure, to giue you *Luk.12.32.* the kingdome. And GOD is faythful, which wil not ſuffer *1.Cor.10.13.*

you to be tempted aboue that you bee able, but wil euen giue the iſſue with the temptatiõ, that ye may be able to beare it. The wicked can not thus ſpeake in deed: for although they thinke themſelues ſo ſafe and ſure that they can not be more, and that they truſt in their owne ſtrength, yet becauſe they are hated of God, he can wel finde them out, and bring their enterpriſes to naught, and deſtroy them by their owne counſels. He hath made a pit and digged it, and is fal- *Pſal.7.15. & 16.* len into the pit that he made. His miſchiefe ſhal returne vppon his owne head, and his crueltie ſhal fal vpon his owne pate. The heathen are ſuncken downe in the pit that they made: in the nette that *Pſal.9.15.* they hid, is their foote taken.

10 *Hee that wincketh with the eye, worketh ſorow: and hee that is fooliſh in talke, ſhalbe beaten.*

Amongſt them which peruert their wayes, there are ſome more cloaſe and couerte then other ſome are: ſome there bee that are knowne foorthwith, and others againe for a certaine time lye hid and are ſecret. The cloſe and hid, are moſt hurtful & pernitious. For a time they make a goodly ſhewe, and beare a ſmooth countenance, and ſeeme that they laugh at the proſperitie of their neighbour, as though they were readie to do them pleaſure; but yet for all that they delight to mocke, & to inuent ſome treaſon. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame by wincking or making ſigne with the eye. But when at laſt their diſſimulation and hypocriſie is knowne, and that they are ſeene to counterfaite and diſſemble, by the fruites which come from them, then feele we greater ſorowe and more grieuous payne then if wee had knowne them openly at the firſt. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame, when he ſayeth, *That he worketh ſorowe, that wincketh with his eye.* If they (which by ſuche maners bring hurt, either to the bodie or to this worlds good) do worke ſorow, & that we be careful to take heede therof, by a more ſtrong reaſon muſt wee take *Mat.7.15.* heed of Monkes & Friers which haue a goodly ſhew, for with this, *Rom.16.18.* that they deuoure tẽporal riches, iudging gain to be godlines, ſo do *1.Tim.6.5.* they alſo deſtroy the ſoules of thoſe that folow thẽ. For if the blind *Mat.15.14.* lead the blind, both ſhal fal into the ditch, the which is a ſorow and griefe vnexpreſſable, and without any remedie, except wee prouide helpe in good time for the ſame. They which openly declare and ſhewe foorth their fooliſhnes and wickednes, are not ſo dangerous:

they bring not ſo much ſorow to them which haue any wit to flye and auoide them, or to turne them away from their enterpriſes, or to ſuppreſſe their inſolencie. Alſo, looke where there is good order, when they ſhewe them ſelues ſuche, they are admoniſhed and rebuked, they are chaſtened and puniſhed. And therfore they can not bring ſo much ſorowe and griefe. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying, *He that is fooliſh in talke, ſhalbe be beaten.* There is here no vertue compared or ſet againſt vice, but a greater vice, vnto a leſſer. The firſt part of the ſentence conteineth a rebuke of hypocriſie, flatterie, diſſimulation, and counterfaiting, with aduertiſement of the euil that commeth thereof. Wherein we ought to learne, not to be children in vnderſtanding, but of ripe wit and good diſcretion, ſeeing there is none but is grieued, when he feeleth him ſelfe to be deceiued. By the ſecond part, hee ſheweth what the fooliſh and wicked doe deſerue, and warneth them that are aloft and in authoritie, to doe their duetie, and to take away offences and ſlanders ſo much as in them lieth. And moreouer, becauſe that no man would gladly be beaten, hee exhorteth vs to be wiſe, and to be of good, holie, and honeſt conuerſation. If thus doing we ſuffer wrong, as haue the holie Patriarks, Prophets, Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and other ſeruants of God, let vs not be grieued. Bleſſed are they which ſuffer perſecution for righteouſnes ſake. And who is it that wil harme you, if ye folowe that which is good? Dearely beloued, think it not ſtrange concerning the firie trial, which is among you to proue you, as though ſome ſtrange thing were come vnto you.

1.Cor.14.20
Mat.5.10.
1.Pet.3.13
& 4.12.

11 *The mouth of the righteous is a welſpring of life: but iniquitie couereth the mouth of the wicked.*

For when a verie cleare ſpring and pure, floweth with water, running here and there by fordes, then it ſerueth to refreſhe them which drinke therof, and preſerueth them from dying by thirſt: and ſo it is healthful vnto them, & doth alſo as cōcerning the body quicken the ſame. The mouth of the righteous wil ſpeake of wiſedome, and his tongue wil talke of iudgement. Then doeth it profite them which beleeue his counſels, for they are deliuered from death, inſomuch as they are freed from ſin, & made ſeruants to God, they haue their fruit in holines, and the end, euerlaſting life: for the righteous doeth not teach nor counſel, but onely that which ſerueth to ſalua-

Pſal.37.30.
Rom.6.22.

tion & life. Solomon doth ſignifie it, when he calleth his mouth the *welſpring of life.* Our Lorde ſaith that from the abundance of the Mat.12.34. hart the mouth ſpeaketh. Now it is ſaid: the law of his God is in his Pſal.37.31. hart, therfore his ſteps ſhal not ſlide. Wheruppon foloweth that it bringeth life to them which receiue this doctrine, which folow his counſels, tremble at his threatnings, & delite in his exhortatiõs, & alſo do aſſure thẽſelues of the promiſes of life that is preached vnto them. Cõtrarily, as out of a durty puddle, we can draw nothing but filthines and infection, for to infect, poiſon & to kil thoſe which drinke therof: ſo alſo it is ſaide, there is no conſtancie in the mouth Pſalm.5.9. of the wicked: within they are very corruption, their throte is an open ſepulchre, & they flatter with their tongue. Wherupon foloweth that we can learne nothing of the mouth of the wicked, but al euil, when we heare no maner of goodnes come from their mouth: but it aboũdeth with al filthy & corrupt words, as it appeareth: for it doth open it ſelf. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, *but iniquitie couereth the mouth of the wicked.* When Solomon ſaieth, *doth couer,* he neither excludeth the time paſt nor preſent, but ſpeaking in the future tence, hee ſheweth the hardnes and obſtinacie of the wicked, to the end that we ſhould ſtande vpon our watche at al times. For as they haue not ceaſed nor do ceaſe, ſo alſo they ſhal neuer ceaſe, vntil the ende of the worlde, to ſpeake filthily, to giue euil counſel, & to ſpread abroade falſe doctrine. But the euil men & deceiuers, ſhal waxe worſe & worſe, deceiuing and beeing deceiued. Now they which folow their vncleannes & wickednes, giuing thẽ- 2.Tim.3.13. ſelues vnto iniquitie, ſhal fal in death. For it is ſaide, The rewarde of ſinne, is death. Heeretofore, we haue expounded the 2. parte of this Rom.6.23. ſentence otherwiſe, but not contrary, & that by force of the Antitheſis or compariſon that Solomon maketh there. Heere hee ſetteth the vertue of wel ſpeaking & ruling the mouth, againſt the vice of peruerſe and wicked mouthes. Hee doeth this honor vnto them which ſpeake wel, for to attribute vnto them the welſpring of life, and to make them as it were auctors of health and life, vnto theſe which learne of them. Saint Iames doeth the like, ſaying, Brethren if any amongſt you hath erred from the trueth, and ſome man hath Iam.5.19.& 20. conuerted him, let him knowe that hee which hath conuerted the ſinner from going aſtray or out of his way, ſhall ſaue a ſoule from death. And this is according vnto the doctrine of our Lorde. Thus it pleaſeth the Lorde to honour ſuch as ſpeake trueth. Contrarily, Solomon accuſeth thoſe which haue their mouthes couered with iniquitie, of murther: hee expreſſeth not the accuſation, but it muſt bee vnderſtoode by the preſent Antitheſis. Nowe ſith that they which haue an euil tongue are murtherers, they cannot looke but for death. Contrarily, thoſe which out of the good treaſure of their hartes do bring good thinges, are aſſured of life, as by their office they are the auctors of life, &c. *Mat.18.15* *Iohn.20.23.*

12 *Hatred ſtirreth vp contentions: but loue couereth all treſpaſſes.*

When men or women are kindled with hatred, wrath, & anger, with enuie and yll wil againſt their neighbours, although it be very wrongfully and without cauſe, and that their neighbours haue giuē them no maner of occaſion to beare euil affection towardes thē; yet can they not ſpeake gently and louingly vnto them, they cannot ſay wel of them: but do wrong and deale iniuriouſly with them, and ſpeake al the euil they can againſt them, & do greatly reproche them to their faces, being ready to ſtryke & beate them, to murther & kil the innocents: & behind their backes they ſlaunder & do falſly belly them, they diffame them, & bring them into the hatred, ſo much as they cā, of al the world, that many may riſe vp againſt them which haue not offēded, that they may be deſtroyed & vndone: So much as poſſible they cā, they ſet al in trouble, they ſtir vp ſeditiōs, vprores & perſecutions againſt thoſe that wiſh them no euil. Solomō doeth ſignifie it, ſaying, *hatred ſtirreth vp contentions*. This ſtir is made, as is ſayde, and as the innocentes in al tymes haue had trial: As Abel, Moyſes, Dauid, the Prophetes, our Lorde, his Apoſtles, and other faithful men: and yet ſtil the wicked ceaſe not to doe and to ſpeake the like againſt them that folowe the trueth, and that deſire nothing but their health and ſaluation. But the ſaying of Solomon ought not to be reſtrained vnto this maner of hatred. For we haue experiēce that whē there is hatred betweene parties, that they bite & ſting one another, do charge & reproch one another with al the villanies they cā: they detract one another, & there is nothing but they wil blame, & interpret the doings & ſayings one of another altogether in the euil parte : the which is cauſe of mortal ſtrife, of ſeditions, of vprores, of battels and warres, of murthers and ſlaughters. Solomon doeth wel ſignifie it here : and ſo he accuſeth al them which hate their neighbours of murther & manſlaughter : hee pronounceth them guiltie, and breakers of this commandement, Thou ſhalt not kil : as doth alſo our Lord, who ſoeuer hateth his brother, is a manſleyar. They that are ſuche, can not pray vnto God, but againſt them ſelues, as appeareth. Wherefore, we muſt vnderſtande, that hatred is a ſinne moſt deteſtable, and which wee ought greatly to abhorre when it ſeparateth vs from God, and hindereth vs to haue acceſſe vnto him. Contrarily, for that which hath beene ſaide of hatred, if men and women doe truely loue their neighbours, they wil ſpeake vnto them with al ſoftnes and gentlenes, they will haue none euil ſuſpition of them, they wil not labour to hinder their good name: but where they are euil ſpoken of, they wil endeuour to excuſe them, and euen when we haue offended them, they wil diſſemble and beare with many thinges : they ſuffer, and yet forgiue many thinges, burying their neighbours faultes, and labour to ſaue their honeſtie. Solomon doeth wel ſignifie it, ſaying, *But loue couereth all treſpaſſes :* and after him, Saint Paule ſayeth, *Loue is patient.* We haue here a doctrine of great excellencie, whereunto we muſt diligently apply our ſelues, if we wil auoide ſtrife and contentions, & to be the true children of God: Beloued, let vs loue one another: for loue cōmeth of God, & euery one that loueth, is borne of God, and knoweth God. Notwithſtanding, this is not to ſay, that if our neighbours be offenſiue, that we ſhould allow their wickedneſſes : but if they haue offended vs, that we ſhould beare with them in healing them, and giuing remedie thereto by admonitions, aduertiſements, corrections, and threatenings, not ſharpe nor rigorous at the firſt entrance, leaſt it happē, that handling them too hardly at the beginning, the euil and diſeaſe be rather increaſed & made worſe, then diminiſhed & amended.

Mat.5.22. *1 Ioh.3.13.* *Mat.6.18.* *1. Cor. 13.4.* *1 Ioh.4.7.*

When S. Peter exhorteth vs, that aboue al things we ſhould haue feruent loue amongſt vs: for loue couereth the multitude of ſinnes: for to confirme his exhortation, & to ſhew vs that there is nothing more profitable vnto the ſaints & faithful, thē to mainteine mutual charitie, hee bringeth this reaſon. For loue couereth the multitude

1.Pet.4.8.

of ſinnes. And this is moſt fitly and aptly, forſomuch as wee all offende, and fall in many thinges. Wherefore wee haue all neede to be forgiuen, and there is no man but deſireth to be forgiuen. Thus loue is very neceſſary. For if it rule amongeſt vs, ſhe bringeth vs this excellent benefite, that wee forget innumerable euils. Contrarily, if wee giue hatred the bridle, men in biting and tearing one another, muſt needes conſume one another: And therefore Paule doeth exhort vs by loue to ſerue one another. And wee muſt marke that Solomon ſaith, *All treſpaſſes*, And Saint Peter, multitude of ſinnes: wherein they teach vs, that in what ſorte ſoeuer our neighbours ſinne againſt vs, and howe often ſoeuer they ſhall offende vs, wee ſhoulde gladly forgiue them, if we loue them truely, and that according vnto the ſentence of our Lorde. And for to ſhewe vs that we ought and are bounde to obey his ſentence, and that we ſhould not thinke wee doe any great thing when we forgiue, hee addeth a ſimilitude. As touching the reſt, by howe much as loue doeth giue remedie to more ſinnes, by ſo muche doeth his profite reach further vnto the conſeruation of mankinde, the which falleth aſunder, and runneth to deſtruction through hatred & variance that foloweth thereof. Beholde, this is the plaine meaning of this verſe. Wherevpon it appeareth, that the Papiſts doe wel deſerue to bee mocked, when, by corrupting this text, they labour to eſtabliſh their ſatisfactions, and would haue almes and other workes of charitie to take place of recompence before God, for to put away ſinnes. It is verie true, that if wee haue pitie and compaſſion of our brethren which erre & goe aſtray, & that of loue we ſhew them their faltes, ſo that by our aduertiſement they returne to wel dooing, our loue ſerueth them to obteine forgiuenes of their ſinnes. Brethren, if any of you haue erred from the truth, and ſome man hath conuerted him, let him knowe that he which hath conuerted the ſinner from going aſtray out of his way, ſhal ſaue a ſoule from death, and ſhal hide a multitude of ſinnes. Wherein let vs note that S. Iames doeth not alledge the witnes of Solomon, but only doeth make an alluſion theretoo: as if he ſaid, Solomon ſaith that the frute of loue is, that it couereth ſinnes: but there is no better nor more healthful way for to hide them, then when they are vtterly & cleane blotted out before God. Now this is done, when by our admonition the ſinner is

Gala.5.13.

Mat.18.22.

Ia.5.19.& 20.

reduced and brought again into the good way: & therfore we muſt be diligent to admoniſh thē which go aſtray. Moreouer, although it is not the intent of Solomon, yet the trueth ſtandeth, that if by loue we forgiue our neighbors the offences they cōmit againſt vs, that God wil forgiue vs ours that we cōmit againſt him. Mat.6.14. But yet for al that let vs not think that our loue or the conuerſion and winning of our neighbours can deſerue the forgiueneſſe of ſinnes: and therfore wee ſhoulde not haue regarde vnto them to reſt our ſaluation therevpon, which commeth of the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes: but let vs knowe that both the one and the other doe obteine pardon and to attaine vnto ſaluation, becauſe that by faith wee are aſſured, and ſtayed vpon the promiſes of God, which are conteined in the bokes of the Prophetes and Apoſtles. Eze.18. Mat.6.

13 *In the lippes of him that hath vnderſtanding, wiſedome is founde, and a rodde ſhalbe for the backe of him that is deſtitute of wiſedome.*

He is a wiſe man which being taught in the worde of God, doeth ſet his whole delight therin, and through the knowledge that he hath thereof, the which is printed in his heart, he laboureth to gouerne him ſelfe wel both in his doings and ſayings. Suche a man is repleniſhed with true wiſedome. And for ſo much as from the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh, they that are ſuch, muſt needes vtter wiſedome, and continne and perſeuer therein. Alſo Solomon ſayeth not, that wiſedome hath bene founde, or is found, albeit that it is ſo: but to ſhewe the conſtancie and perſeueraunce, hee ſayeth, *ſhalbe founde.* This is a great argument, that in this worlde the number of wiſe men is verie ſmall, and almoſt none. For if there bee verie fewe of them, in whoſe lippes wiſedome is founde, yet is the number of them leſſe, in whom it ſhalbe found, experience doeth ſufficiently ſhewe it, but yet wee may vnderſtande the ſame by the parable of the ſeede caſt into the grounde, &c. Mat.13. For as the heart is diſpoſed, ſo doeth it leade and gouerne the lippes. And as touching the countrie, where, the Preachers by the worde of God, doe freely and at libertie teach the true wiſdom and prudence, we finde in the lippes of the moſt parte, fooliſhnes and wickednes, we may wel iudge, that the heartes are bent and diſpoſed to euil, and that they are deſtitute of prudence and wiſedome.

If the Magiſtrates and iuſtices of the bench had ſuch zeale as they ought to haue to do their office, & that they were ſo careful to take heede as it behoueth, vpon the ſlanders and inſolentneſſe: If fathers and mothers, and ſuch as haue the charge of youth, did ſtraightly looke to the maners of childrē & yong people, we ſhould ſee other maner of puniſhments and corrections then wee doe. The fooliſh which for want of good minde and hart do openly diſdaine and reiect wiſedome, and are ſo lewde that they giue them ſelues vnto vanitie, fooliſhnes, and wickednes, ſhould be puniſhed, for they wel deſerue the ſame: as Solomon ſayth, that *a rod ſhalbe for the backe of him*, that is deſtitute of wiſdom, or lewd of hart. Wherein Solomon ſheweth into what diſhonor and danger they do bring thēſelues, which haue not a right hart, & they which ſet not their mind & deſire to folow vnderſtanding and wiſdom, but do lay the bridle in the neck of their carnal luſtes, and doe delight in things nothing worth, and folow foliſhnes and wickednes. He teacheth Magiſtrates alſo their leſſon, and doth ſhew them that if the fooliſh & vnprofitable & hurtful perſons continew in their lewdnes, and doe openly declare it, either by deedes or by words, that they ought not to abſtaine from giuing ſuch puniſhment, as the fooliſhe and wicked ſhal deſerue. Likewiſe he inſtructeth fathers & mothers. Furthermore, when he ſetteth lewdnes of hart againſt vnderſtanding, and the rod againſt wiſdom, we ought to vnderſtand that the prudent and wiſe ſhould be handled with al ſoftnes & gentlenes, & that they ſhould be kept from al ſhame and wrong. But the doctrine of Solomon is greatly deſpiſed and ſcorned through the worlde, as do the wiſe and faithful ſeruants of God know and feele. For there is no people in the world how wicked ſoeuer they are, that are ſo much diſhonored as they, and ſo cruelly perſecuted: yet ought they not to bee afraide, but to reioyce: for therein they are compaignions with the Prophets and Apoſtles, yea euen with our Lord. And what trouble ſoeuer they ſuffer, they muſt take good heede from making Solomon a lier: but their lippes muſt alwaies be founde with wiſedome. The wiſe and faithful Miniſters doe labour diligently to doe this: but moſt often they ſpeake vnto the walles and pillers, and moſt commonly they haue very ſmal auditory. Whereuppon followeth that there are many lewde of harte, the which do rather deſerue to haue the rod on their backe, & to bee ſharply corrected, then to be receiued and counted wiſe, and to be admitted into the number of the houſhold people and children of God.

14 *Wiſe men laye vp knowledge: but the mouth of the foole is a preſent deſtruction.*

As a wiſe and diſcreete houſholder which is prouident, or as a diligent and faithful Steward doeth not caſt away and deſpiſe that which is profitable and neceſſarie for to mainteine his houſholde, but heapeth and gathereth together his prouiſion, layeth it vp ſafely, and locketh it vp, to vſe the ſame in time, and to diſtribute it vnto his houſhold as they haue need, and doeth not ſpare it, leaſt it ſhoulde waſt: euen ſo the wiſe man and diſcreete, doeth not reiecte and contemne knowledge, the which is a neceſſarie prouiſion, but doeth labour to increaſe and to augment in the ſame, and doeth not ſuffer it to paſſe & vaniſh away, but taketh heede leaſt it ſcape from him, and doeth ſhut it vp cloſe with him ſelſe by holy meditations in the worde, wherein hee hath al his delight, and alſo al his hope. And albeit that he doeth locke it and ſhut it vp as in a garner or in a ſeller, yet is it not to the ende, but to make his neighbours which haue neede, parteners therof: but as the good treaſure of his heart doeth abounde, euen ſo doeth he drawe good thinges out thereof, for to giue ſpiritual nouriſhment in time vnto the houſhold of his Lorde. Solomon doeth ſomewhat ſignifie this ſame, when he ſaith, *That wiſe men laye vp knowledge:* but more plainly, when he ſaid, verſe 13. That wiſedome is, or ſhalbe founde in the lippes of him that hath vnderſtanding. They that are thus wiſe, are worthie to be honoured, and to be preſerued from danger and deſtruction, and to be exempted from al hurt, and that no man ſhould doe them any euil: Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when ſetting the foole againſt the wiſe, hee ſayeth, *But the mouth of the foole is a preſent deſtruction.* The foole hath no knowledge, hee can not diſcerne betweene that which is to be ſpoken, and that, that is to be kept ſecrete: for ſo farre is he of from laying vp of knowledge, that rather hee ſcorneth it, and caſteth it away, and perſecuteth it: and therefore he cannot ſpeake but fooliſhly, vainly, iniuriouſly, and wickedly: wher-vpon foloweth his deſtruction ſooner then he weeneth & woldeth.

Solomon doeth declare it, by the deſtruction neere to his mouth: as if hee ſaid, that the foole by his vaine babbling, by his foliſh counſels and outragious wordes, doeth call and pull deſtruction vppon himſelfe.

Nowe foraſmuche as there is no man of ſounde iudgement that ſeeketh his owne hurt, but that euery one doeth deſire to profite, & to bee at eaſe, Solomon doeth exhort vs to bee carefull too learne knowledge, and to keepe it, and rather to bee ready to holde our peace for to heare and to learne, that wee may grow and increaſe in diſcretion and true knowledge, then raſhly and amaſedly to ſpeake. *Mat.12.36*
Our Lorde doth teache vs the very ſame, ſaying, But I ſay vnto you that of euery idle worde that men ſhall ſpeake, they ſhall giue an account thereof at the day of iudgement. Let euery man bee ſwift to heare, and ſlowe to ſpeake. *Iam.1.19.* Therefore it is very meete that in all our life, we vſe our tongue ſoberly, that wee bee not bablers, haſtie and raſhe in our wordes. And chiefly when wee take in hande to teache Chriſtian religion, we muſt take very good heede leaſt we preach any doctrine whereby we may hurt the faith of any man. Be not haſtie with thy mouth and let not thine heart ſpeake any thing *Eccle.5.1* raſhly before God. &c. Let vs alſo learne in this place, that the ſchoole doctours do ſend the people to ruine and deſtruction, when they forbid the common people to reade the holy Scripture, (which is our true knowledge) and woulde haue them to remaine in ignorance. For it followeth wel, ſeeing Solomon ſetteth the laying vp of knowledge againſt preſent deſtruction, that they which are without knowledge, and make no account thereof, muſt needes ſuffer vnrecouerable loſſes wherewith God threateneth the people of Iſrael, ſaying, My people periſhe, becauſe they haue no knowledge. And al- *Oſe.5.4.6* beit that the Preachers doe dayly labour to withdrawe vs from this danger by the preaching of the worde of trueth, yet doe they pro- *Oſe.5.1.* fite very little: ſo that wee may iuſtly make this complaint, There is no trueth, ther is no mercy, there is no knowledge of God in the lande. Let vs note alſo that when Solomon ſaith, That deſtruction is preſent, or at hande, or neere the mouth of the foole, hee ſheweth vs that in vaine the wicked doe promiſe them ſelues victory and Lordſhip, ſaying, With our tongue wee wil preuaile. *Pſal.12.5.* For as Solomon affirmeth, the puniſhment ſhal not be long defferred after the

wordes of the foole. Alſo the Pſalmiſt ſaith, Helpe Lorde for the faithfull are diminiſhed frõ among the children of men. Wherfore let vs take heede to leane to the iudgement of our eyes, and to the ſenſe of our fleſhe: for they iudge cleane contrary to this threatning that Solomon maketh heere. After the outward apparance, there are none better welcome then they which ſpeake euil: and ſuche as lay vp knowledge, are refuſed as the plague. *Pſal. 12.*

15 *The rich mans goods, are his ſtrong hold, but their owne pouertie feareth the poore.*

Let vs not thinke that all the ſentences of Solomon doe expreſſely conteine commandementes which ought too bee obeied: or doctrine that wee ought to follow: but let vs knowe that ſome of his ſentences doe deſcribe vnto vs the affections and thoughtes and the maners of worldly & carnall men, which are not renued by the holy Ghoſt, and walke after the luſtes of the fleſhe: and ſo doth paint foorth the thinges which happen, and are dayly doone in the worlde. For the number of the worldlinges and carnall, is without compariſon greater then the number of the children of God which are regenerated by the holy Ghoſt. Such ſentences are not vnprofitable, but fruitefull: for they are ſet foorth for to aduertiſe vs of the manners of the worlde, and that by the knowledge of them, we ſhould not conforme our ſelues like vnto them, but ſhold labour to bee transfourmed by the renewing of our mindes. And ſo they conteine cloſely good and neceſſary doctrine. Wee haue heere a ſentence of the ſame kinde, the which doth deſcribe the maners of the riche worldlinges, and of the poore ſort which haue not their hope in God, but doe either truſt or tremble according too that they ſee with their outwarde eye. Firſt of all Solomon compareth the worldly rich man, that doeth truſt in his goodes and riches, vnto a man which dwelleth in a Citie inuincible, & which cannot bee taken and wonne: hee feareth none euill that ſhoulde happen vnto him, albeit that the ſtrong and mightie enimies with a great number, doe beſiege and aſſault the Towne, and doe ſtriue what they can to ouerthrowe and deſtroy all, and to ſet all on fire and blood: hee mocketh at his enimies, hee paſſeth not a Figge nor philippe for them, and ſetteth them at nought. If hee hath hurte his enemies, hee feareth not for their reuengement. The worldly riche man eſteemeth his goods as a ſtrong citie, hee truſteth in his riches, hee thinketh nothing can hurte him, and that by them hee ſhal ſurmount and ouercome al encombrances: becauſe of them hee ſwelleth and becommeth proude: hee is ſo arrogant and high minded that hee careth neither for GOD nor men. *Pſal.*10.2. The vngodly for his owne luſt doth perſecute the poore. Againe, *Pſal.*10.4. The vngodly is ſo proude that he careth not for GOD, neither is *Pſ.*37.16.&35 GOD in all his thoughts. A ſmal thing that the righteous hath is better then great riches of the vngodly. Againe, I my ſelfe haue ſeene the vngodly in great power, and floriſhing like a greene bay tree: I went by, and loe, he was gone: I ſought him, but his place coulde no where bee founde. The ouerthrowe of Sodome, the deſtruction of the nations at the entring in of the children of Iſrael into the Land of Canaan, the taking of the Citie of Babylon, and other diſcomfitures doe ſhewe vs that the riche doe deceiue themſelues, truſting in their riches, and waxing proude becauſe of them, when they ought to weepe: and chiefly when they abuſe them. For they cannot but looke for al miſerie, ruine and deſtruction: as Saint *Iam.*5,1. Iames doeth ſhewe ſaying, Goe too nowe yee riche men weepe and houle on your wretchednes that ſhal come vppon you. Your riches is corrupt, your garmentes are motheaten. Your golde and ſiluer are cankered, and the ruſt of them ſhal bee witneſſe vnto you, and ſhal eate your fleſh as it were fire. And therefore our Lorde doeth *Luke.*12.15. admoniſh vs, to take heede and beware of couetouſneſſe. For no mans life ſtandeth in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth.

Hee ſheweth vs alſo how we muſt vſe our riches, ſaying, make you friends of the vnrighteous mammon, that when yee ſhal haue *Luke.*16.9. need, they may receiue you into euerlaſting habitatiōs. And S. Paul *1.Tim.*6.17. ſaith, charge thē which are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor thruſt in vncertaine riches, but in the liuing GOD, (which giueth vs abundantly al things to enioy thē:) that they doe good, that they be rich in good works, that they be readie to giue, & gladly to diſtribute, laying vp in ſtore for them a good foundation againſt the tyme to come, that they may obteine eternal life.

Albeeit then that Solomon doeth not giue vs heere expreſſe commandement that wee ſhoulde not truſt nor delite our ſelues in our riches; yet ought we to vnderſtand it, when he deſcribeth the manners, and expreſſeth the thoughtes of the rich, the which the Lorde doth often breake and ouerthrow: as we may plainly ſee it in many. Wee muſt alſo vnderſtande, that by this deſcription Solomon blameth and condemneth the pride and arrogancy of the riche, their fooliſh truſt and vaine confidence. Againſt the which he ſetteth the weaknes, the diſtruſt and the feare of them which are not contented with the pouertie that God pleaſeth to ſende them, when hee ſaieth, *but their owne pouertie feareth the poore.* Wherein hee painteth out the inwarde diſpoſition and nature of thē which haue ſet their deſire on riches, & cannot attaine vnto them, neither ſeeth any meanes to obteine thē. They are aſtoniſhed and afraide, they abhorre pouertie, and doe greatly feare they ſhal want. They are continually toſſed with ſuch thoughtes and purpoſes, which doeth diſcourage them and make them deſpayre. Beholde howe the couetous power, and ſuch as haue ſet their hartes on riches, are affectioned, & alſo the rich which neuer haue ynough, and feare leaſt the earth ſhoulde fayle: Although Solomon counte their riches a ſtrong citie for the worldlinges which haue not the knowledge of GOD, are neuer ſtayed, but haue very much feare, and neuer haue ſo much that they ſay wee haue ynough: In this ſorte though they be rich yet are they poore and miſerable, hauing their mindes neuer ſatiſfied. This ſame is ſet before vs, that if riches doe abounde, wee ſhoulde not ſet our hartes vppon them to bee puft vp with pride therefore, or with vaine confidence: and if pouertie pricke vs, that wee ſhoulde not bee oppreſſed with feare nor with diſpaire, but ſhoulde bee aſſured that they which doe euil, ſhal bee rooted
Pſ.37.9.16.32 out, &c. Againe, a ſmal thing that the righteous hath, is better then
great riches of the vngodly. Againe, The ſteps of man are di-
1.Tim.6.6. rected by the Lorde. Againe, Let vs knowe, that godlineſſe is
Heb.13.5. great riches, if a man bee content with that hee hath. And let vs
Iob.1.21.&.2 folowe that which S. Paul teacheth, let your conuerſation be with-
10. out couetouſnes. Let vs ſay alſo with Iob, Naked came I out of my
moothers wombe, and al naked ſhal I returne thither againe.

Shal

Shall wee receiue proſperitie at the hande of God, and not receiue aduerſitie alſo? Let vs further note alſo, that the opinion of the riche is falſe, as our Lorde doeth ſhewe, I tel you truely, it is very harde for a riche man to enter into the kingdome of heauen. To this purpoſe alſo apperteineth the parable of the man whoſe fielde brought foorth a treaſure of golde, whereof hee reioyced: And of the riche glutton.

Mat.19.23.
Luke.12.16.
&.16.19.

16 *The righteous laboureth to do good, but the vngodly vſeth his encreaſe vnto ſinne.*

When men occupie themſelues and take ſome worke in hand, they ſeeke to profite and gaine thereby: but oftentimes they deceiue them ſelues. For none but good people doe truely proſper in their affaires: though mans reaſon doe iudge the contrary. As touching the wicked, what gain ſoeuer they get, & what ioy ſoeuer they haue, yet doeth it all turne vnto their hurt. It ſeemeth good to outward apparāce that good people are moſt miſerable, & that ther are noone more vnhappy and curſed then they in all the worlde: but Solomon which lyeth not, doeth ſhewe vs their proſperitie, when hee attributeth life vnto the worke of the righteous: as if hee did ſay, that the iuſt man doth not apply himſelfe vnto any worke, but vnto that which is the path way that leadeth vnto life. Contrarily, after the outward ſight, the wicked reape great profite by the works they take in hande: but their deſtruction which is great: is at hand, vtterly to beate them downe. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame vnto vs, when hee ſaith, that the *vngodly vſeth his encreaſe vnto ſinne:* For the rewarde of ſinne is death. But as the worke of the righteous doth not profite himſelfe alone, but doth ſerue to the releeuing of others: euen ſo the euill manners of the wicked doe ſtirre vp others vnto ſinne: wherevpon followeth death. And foraſmuche as wee al deſire to liue, and doe abhorre death, let vs follow the worke of the righteous, let vs worſhip one onely God according vnto his word, flying frō al idolatrie, & forſaking al doubt and diſtruſt, and doing vnto our neighbours as, wee woulde they ſhoulde doe vnto vs. In this manner the worke of the righteous ſhalbe life vnto vs. And let vs not deſire to bee partakers with the

Rom.6.23.

vnfruitfull workes of darkeneſſe, which are the reuenewe of the wicked, but let vs rather reprooue them, leaſt they be imputed vnto vs for ſinne, whereof followeth damnation. But although wee deſire life, yet doe wee not regarde to followe the workes of the righteous: for wee beleeue not, that in following it, we ſhoulde obteine life: ſeeing that as it is written, wee ſee by experience that the afflictions of the iuſt are many in number: they are exerciſed by many miſeries and tribulations, and ſeeme that they are in death
Pſal.34.20. and that they are deſtitute of all helpe. Wherefore their workes and ſayinges are thought to bee vnprofitable. As when Saul perſecuted Dauid, for to deſtroy him, and compelled him to flie and too runne away, no man would haue thought, that what ſhifte ſoeuer hee coulde make, that hee ſhoulde eſcape the handes of Saul, and liue to become king of Iſraell. Likewiſe, when Ieſus Chriſte was ſeene to hang on the croſſe as a thiefe, they thought him cleane deſtroyed: and did not thinke that hee ſhoulde aſcende vnto the glory of his father, nor that his Goſpell ſhoulde bee preached through all the worlde. And ſo their workes were not ſeene but to ſerue to life for themſelues and for others. And at all times men haue iudged, and ſtill doe iudge thus of the faithfull. Contrarily, becauſe the wicked are ſtrong, and flooriſhe with glory and riches of this worlde, it ſeemeth that they ought to come to the end of their deſire, and of that they take in hande, without hinderance and let, and that none ſhould withſtand them. Pharao & his folke thought that they ſhoulde oppreſſe the people of Iſraell at their pleaſure: but the iſſue and ende ſhewed the cleane contrary: for the people of GOD reioyced at their deliuerance, and Pharao and his people made a miſerable ende amongeſt the waues of the Sea. The worke of Moſes and Aaron, and of ſuch as obeied, tended to life: and Pharao with his people receiued the rewarde of ſinne, that is to ſay, death. Thus the worke of the righteous ſerueth to life: for although hee fall into diuers dangers, and is many wayes purſued, yet finally, and in the ende hee ſhalbe deliuered, and his works, his doctrine, and his counſels ſhall bring both him ſelfe and his neighbours life. Contrarily, God curſeth the actions and counſels of the wicked, when he counteth, whatſoeuer they doe and ſay,

to bee ſinne, and conſequently worthie of death. This ſame is well deſcribed vnto vs in the firſt Pſalme. Let vs further note, that albeit it is true, that the righteous doeth not labour couetouſly, nor to get eſtimatió, but onely to imploy the time vnto good works, & to haue neceſſarie thinges belonging to this life, aſwell for him ſelfe as for his family: yet Solomon his minde and intent is not ſuch heere, as wee may knowe by the ſeconde part of his ſentence, wherein he oppoſeth and ſetteth the reuenewe of the wicked againſt the worke and labor of the righteous; and ſinne which bringeth death, againſt life. And albeit that God doeth giue vs this honour by his worde to attribute life vnto the workes and labour: yet let vs not thinke that they are worthie thereof, and deſerue thereby: but let vs in any wiſe confeſſe the grace and mercy of God, which is true in his promiſes: for the which to fulfil, hee doeth thus rewarde our good workes whereof he himſelfe is the only authour, and wee but his inſtrumentes and ſeruants.

17 *He that regardeth inſtruction, is in the way of life: but he that refuſeth correction, goeth out of the way of life.*

For to ſhewe vs the way of life, Solomon in the fourth Chapter & firſt verſe, hath ſhewed vs, ſaying, *Heare, O ye children, the inſtruction of a father, &c.* And to the admonition, hath added the promiſe in the 4. and 6. verſes. Alſo in the 13. verſe hee repeateth againe the ſelfe ſame admonition, and thereto alſo hath added the promiſe. The ſaide admonition ſo often rehearſed, ſhoulde ſuffice to induce vs to receiue and keepe the inſtruction which is giuen vs by the Lorde: and aſo the promiſe ſo often repeated, ought to bee ſufficient to aſſure vs of the goodneſſe of GOD towards vs, and to make vs more enclined to ſubmit our ſelues vnto the good will of GOD. But wee are dull vpon the ſpurre, and for one admonition or twaine, we make no account to giue obedience: and for one or two promiſes, wee cannot bee aſſured of the infallible trueth of GOD: ſo full of rebellion and diſobedience we are & ſo full of doubtfulneſſe and diſtruſt: and therefore wee haue neede that we ſhould be handled according vnto our rudeneſſe and infirmitie. The which our Lord doth in his holy worde, and alſo by the peaching of the ſame word, in the which one ſelf doctrin is ofté repeted. For this cauſe Solomon is not negligent often to tell vs one very thing: and that which he hath already ſaide many times heeretofore, he repeateth, ſaying, *To take heeds &c.* This affirmation conteineth an inſtruction and promiſe: for by affirming it, he would haue vs to vnderſtande that he doeth admoniſhe vs to keepe the inſtruction, and that hee doeth promiſe vs life. And therewith hee teacheth vs too knowe who is righteous, and what his worke is, that ſerueth vnto life. Wherevpon we may gather, that hee is righteous, which with an vnfeigned heart laboureth to giue obedience vnto the worde of God, and doth wholy depend vpon the free promiſes of God. This is to keepe inſtruction, and not to labour to deſerue by workes, as doe the proude Papiſtes: nor to thinke that faith onely without workes is enough to ſaluation, as doe the ſlouthfull thinke, which loue workes already doone, and ſuche as deſire the libertie of the fleſh. For two ſortes of people are out of the way of life: for the one ſort are proude, and the other are vaine, and both are blinde, and deceiue themſelues: they thinke to be in the way of life, and they tend vnto death: they are companions of them which forſake correction, of whome Solomon ſaith, that they are out of the way. They do refuſe to be refourmed, which make no account to amende their liues, what aduertiſmente ſoeuer is made vnto them out of the worde: but the one ſort doth more ſlippe and ſlide away, murmuring and deſpiting them which doe refourme and reproue them. Some willing to ſhewe themſelues holy and deuout, doe make them ſelues beleeue that they ſhall not faile in following of their good intentes and fantaſies, and the traditions and good cuſtomes of their fathers: And the other ſorte which are delicate, and deſire to reſt in peace, doe content themſelues to haue a light opinion of the worde, and doe cal the ſame faith: as doeth Saint Iames graunt them, euen ſuche as haue the diuels. Al ſuch kindes of people doe refuſe to be refourmed, and doe wander out of the way of life, and ſo runne vnto death. Wherſore foraſmuch as we abhorre death, and deſire life, let vs not be like vnto ſuch folkes, but let vs take heed to inſtruction, and not refuſe to be refourmed. For to doe this ſame wel, let vs receiue the worde of trueth, which is the ſeede of life,

Iam.2.19.

Let vs take al our ioy and delight therein, in obeying the commandementes, of the Lorde, and by cleauing faſt vnto his promiſes by faith, being aſſured of his fatherly goodneſſe towardes vs. Let vs be patient in afflictions from what ſide ſoeuer they come, knowing that it is G O D our Father and Sauiour, that doeth chaſten vs, partly for to admoniſhe vs that wee haue offended him, and that wee ſhoulde returne vnto him to aſke pardon, and deliuerance from theſe afflictions: partly to prooue our fayth and patience, and to make vs knowe howe weake and fraile wee be, that feeling our neceſſitie, wee ſhoulde runne vnto him for his helpe. And if wee thinke that hee differreth his helpe ſo long that wee ſhould not be diſcouraged through diſpaire: but with al patience we ſhould looke for his helpe, the which ſhal not bee wanting at time conuenient. *Eſay. 30. 15.*

Thus doing, we ſhal keepe inſtruction, and ſhal not forſake correction, as did the children of Iſrael, who ſeeing themſelues preſſed with neceſſitie in the wilderneſſe, did murmure and bewaile the countrie of Egypt, and alſo when they were preſſed with their enimies, they had their refuge not vnto God, but vnto the help of men againſt Gods commandement.

18 *He that doth diſſemble hatred, with lying lippes, & hee that inuenteth ſlaunder, is a foole.*

When one man belieth another, hee putteth himſelfe in danger to beare ſome euil: for oftentimes hee which doeth ſlaunder, is mooued with anger, and is readie to ſtryke or to kil. It is more often ſeene then were needful: and albeeit that euery man is a lyer: yet is there none but deſireth to bee counted true, and the greateſt lyers ſhalbee they which wil bee moſt deſirous to mainteine their honour, and to reuenge themſelues if they bee painted ſuch as they bee, and bee tolde to their face. Nowe foraſmuch as it is ſo, that wee would not abide to bee called lyers, amongſt other vices wee muſt eſchue diſſimulation and hypocriſie, we muſt take heede to faine to loue thē whome we hate, otherwiſe we belie the holy Ghoſt which ſpeaketh by the mouth of Solomon: and further we doe reſemble Iudas, which by a kiſſe and fained ſalutation betraied the innocent blood. Alſo when they which hate their neighbours, diſſemble the hatred by faire woordes, and goodly ſhew, they are lyers, and conſequently murtherers. And thus Solomon doeth expreſſe but one parte of their ſtyle, attributing vnto them falſe and lying lippes: but he doth not expreſſe ſo ſmal thing but that hee accuſeth them of a crime worthy of death. Thou ſhalt deſtroy them which ſpeake leaſing. *Pſal. 5. 7.* But albeit to auoide lying and treaſon, wee muſt not diſſemble hatred, yet is it not to ſay, that it is laweful to ſpeake euill of our neighbour, when wee hate him. It is the parte of fooles to babble out what they haue in their harte againſt their neighbours, Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying, *And hee that ſpeaketh, &c.* They which are ſo readie to ſlaunder their neighbours, whither it bee wrongfully or that they haue ſome occaſion, are as much, or more guiltie then they which diſſemble. For firſt of al they are led with hatred by ſo ſpeaking, which is equal with murther, or at the leaſt by ſuch hatred men are ſtirred vp thereunto. *Mat. 5. 22.* Whoſoeuer is angrie with his brother vnaduiſedly, ſhalbee woorthy of iudgement. Secondly, they ſlaunder moſt often, not caring what they ſay, ſo that they may doe iniurie to their neighbours, and hurte their good name in belying them falſly againſt their conſcience: ſo much are they kindled with anger and with euil affection. Thirdly, no thanke to them that their neighbours, whome they blame, are not hurte both in their bodies and in their goods. And therefore, when Solomon calleth ſuch ſlaunderers, fooles, wee muſt not vnderſtande that hee ſpeaketh of the ſimple and idiotes, which vtter whatſoeuer comes in their mouth, without good conſideration of that which they ſpeake and promiſe; but hee ſpeaketh of them which through diſdaine of wiſedome, of correction and counſel, and through hatred that they haue to their neighbours, doe maliciouſly ſpeake, and do lye by ſlaundering wittingly. Such are wicked fooles, and doe wel deſerue to bee called fooles, for they are deſtitute of wiſedome and vnderſtanding. Theſe are of the number of them that wiſedome reprooueth and threateneth, in the firſt chapter and 22. verſe. But when Solomon doeth accuſe him that doeth diſſemble hatred of lying and falſhoode, it is not to ſay that it is lawefull for vs too ſhewe vnto our neighbours that wee hate them, but rather wee muſt learne to purge and clenſe vs of al wrath and indignation, diſpleaſure, enuie malice and of al deſire to hurte our neighbours, to the ende that wee may ſpeake truly to our neighbours without deceipt and without fraude, and that wee ſhoulde eſchue the accuſation of lying whereunto Saint Paule doeth admoniſhe vs: Caſt of the olde man, which is corrupt through the deceiuable luſtes. Again, Let no corrupt communication proceede out of your mouthes: but that which is good, to the vſe of edifying, that it may miniſter grace vnto the hearers. But now put ye away euen al theſe things, wrath, anger, malicious nes, curſed and filthy ſpeaking out of your mouthes. *Ephe.4.22. & 29.*

Likewiſe though that Solomon calleth him foole which ſlaundereth, yet it is not to ſay that the Paſtours and miniſters of the woorde ought to abſtaine from blaming and reproouing of vices and of them that are hardened therein: otherwiſe they ſhoulde deſerue to bee called fooles. Noe the embaſſadour of righteouſnes, by the building of the arke condemned the worlde. Moyſes the ſeruant and Prophet of the Lorde did reprooue the people of Iſrael for their diſobedience. The Prophets haue reprooued in diuers ſortes. Wee may ſee howe our Lorde Ieſus hath ſhewed himſelſe ſharpe in chiding and rebuking the Scribes and Phariſees. Saint Paule alſo, and Saint Peter, and Saint Iames, and Saint Iude do reproue and openly blame them which reſiſt the truth, and lead a diſſolute and ſlaunderous life. And our Lord commandeth the vncorrigible to be put ouer vnto the Church: the which cannot be without rebuking them of their vices wherein they are obſtinate and indurate: it ſhoulde be very raſhly done of vs, if for the ſaying of Solomon we ſhould cal al theſe ſame and other which folow them, fooles: wee ſhoulde deprave the ſcripture, the which calleth them fooles which through hatred do rebuke their neighbours, and not them which by their reprehenſions, threates and accuſations, doe labour to reduce the ſtrayed ſheepe. *Collo.3.8.*

19 *In many wordes there cannot want iniquitie: but he that reſtraineth his lippes, is wiſe.*

They that haue a tongue at large to ſpeake readily, delight much to ſpeake, and take pleaſure alſo in their eloquence: they mocke at them which are ſlowe and dul of ſpeache: eſteeming them of no witte: and whiles they prate at pleaſure, they woulde bee counted wittie and learned, and doe thinke themſelues cunning folke. And by howe much as a man is more vaine in his woordes, by ſo much the more doeth hee deſire to bee accounted of them, which heare him, albeeit hee knowe that his wordes bring no profit nor edification. And alſo the common people is eaſie to haue them in eſtimation which flowe in eloquence, and doe thinke al wel ſaide that ſuch people ſay: but ſuch tongue men doe faile, and thoſe which heare them are deceiued. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame, when he ſaith, *Where much, &c.*

And foraſmuch as al vices are to bee fled, wee muſt take heede that wee vſe our tongues ſoberly in priuate communication, and to giue our ſelues to ieſt and to babble at pleaſure. And therein to cõſume much time vnprofitably, as doe ydle and curious folkes, and chiefly maydes and wiues. Beeing ydle, they learne to goe from houſe to houſe. The keepers of Tauerns, which ſpende the goods of God in gluttonie and drunkennes, and the common players are ſtuft with many woordes, not only vaine and vnfruiteful, but hurtful and iniurious, and alſo ful of horrible blaſphemies. Marchants & handicraftes men, and almoſt as many as haue entercourſe or any thing to breake vnto their neighbours, or lawiers and ſuters, wil not briefly tel and plainly declare the trueth of the matter: but to blind & daſel mens eyes, they wil haue trickes and knackes in their budget worthy to be mocked at, and to aſtoniſhe the eares of men, they wil flowe in ſuperfluous and vngodly wordes, with lying, periurie, ſlaundering, with curſing and giuing themſelues vnto the Deuil, euen to the renouncing and forſaking of God: and as they themſelues doe, ſo doe they teache their children and houſholde folkes to doe the like. Wee haue experience then in diuers wayes, and more then were needful, that there is vice & offence in many wordes. And if for to auoide to be guiltie of this vice, wee muſt bee ſober and diſcreete in our common & houſholde talke, when wee commen and conferre togither of things which concerne & touche this preſent life; by a more ſtronger reaſon wee muſt bee well

1.Tim.5.13.

aduiſed to place our wordes, and to talke no vncomely thing, when
wee treate of matters concerning GOD, and which concerne the
honour and glorie of GOD, and the ſaluation of our ſoules : as
when wee take in hande to teache the people, when wee make our
prayers vnto GOD, when wee giue him thankes and ſing prai-
ſes vnto him, then muſt wee take heede to vſe many woordes, o-
therwiſe wee ſhoulde commit a vice, for the which wee ſhoulde
not goe vnpuniſhed : and that for good cauſe, when by ſuch vice
GOD is greatly diſhonored, and wee and our neighbours both
in danger of looſing our ſoules. Wherefore wee ought to vnder-
ſtand that it is neceſſarie to flye & abhorre the cuſtome of the grea-
teſt parte of the worlde, the which is repleniſhed with falſe tea-
chers, deceiuers, idolaters, with ſuperſtitious, with dreamers and
hypocrites, the which abounde in woordes: the one ſorte in hurt-
ful talke, and the other in vnprofitable, vaine and ſuperfluous talke.
Our Lorde doeth ſhewe vs wel that wee muſt not beleeue nor fo-
lowe them. Take heede and beware of the leauen of the Phariſees
and Saducees. Their doctrine is very hurtful. Wo therefore bee *Math.19.6.*
vnto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites, becauſe yee ſhutte vp *Mat.23.13.*
the kingdome of heauen before men. Take heede that no man de- *&.24.4.11.*
ceiue you. Againe, And many falſe Prophetes ſhal ariſe, and ſhall
deceiue many. Nowe I beſeeche you brethren, marke them dili-
gently which cauſe diuiſion and offences, contrary to the doctrine *Rom.16.17.*
which yee haue learned. And when thou prayeſt, bee not as the hy- *Mat.6.5.*
pocrites: for they loue to ſtande, and pray in the Synagogues, and in
the corners of the ſtreetes, becauſe they woulde bee ſeene of men.
Al ſuch kinde of people ought to bee eſchued and fled, except wee
wil declare our ſelues to be blinde and beaſtes, as they are without
vnderſtanding : Let them alone, they be the blinde, leaders of the *Mat.15.14.*
blinde: &c. Nowe the ende of the commandement is loue. So-
lomon doeth alſo partly ſignifie it, when hee attributeth wiſedome
and vnderſtanding vnto him which taketh heede of talking, ſaying,
but he that refrayneth his lips, is wiſe. Wee muſt therefore (to
eſchue vice, and to ſhewe our ſelues wiſe,) be ſober in talke, and that
we vtter not al things that come into our thought. Yet notwith-
ſtanding wee muſt not ſpare our tongues when neede is, but
muſt vnfolde them for the glorie and honour of GOD, and for

the profit and edification of our neighbours. Wee ſee in the holy ſcriptures, that the ſeruantes of GOD haue abounded with woordes in their ſermons, praiſes, and praiers and thankesgiuing, and no faulte nor vice hath beene in them. For as wiſe men, they knewe to refraine their lippes, ſpeaking nothing but that wherwith they were diuinely inſpired by the ſpirit of the Lorde.

20 *The tongue of the iuſt man, is fined ſiluer: but the harte of the vngodly is nothing woorth.*

Solomon doeth compare the tongue of the righteous vnto the pure ſiluer, vnto the ſiluer that is ſeparated from al matter that may hinder the knowledge of his goodneſſe and preciouſneſſe, when it is mineral, and hath not paſſed through the fire. It is not without cauſe that hee maketh this compariſon: for as men doe naturally deſire ſuch kinde of ſiluer, euen ſo the tongue of the righteous is greatly to bee deſired of them which loue the true riches which proceede from wiſedome and innocencie, For the mouth of the righteous wil talke of wiſedome, and his tongue ſhal declare that which is right. *Pſal.37.30.* And alſo, Bleſſed is the man that findeth wiſedome, and the man that vttereth knowledge. And as the pure ſiluer is carefully kept, and is not gladly imployed indifferently to al vſes: euen ſo the righteous, becauſe hee is wiſe, refraineth his lips, and doeth not vnfolde his tongue for euery matter: but as the precious ſiluer is not imployed, but when it is very needful, or about things of greate importance, or there where a man wil be ſeene and get reputation: euen ſo the righteous taketh heede to imploy wel his tongue vnto the glory of GOD, and inſtruction of his neighbours, and not to offende thereby, wherewith hee winneth reputation, and is greatly eſteemed of the faythful which haue knowledge of the trueth. Contrarily, hee compareth the harte of the wicked vnto nothing, or litle woorth: and that rightly. For as wee doe naturally deſire aboundance of thinges that wee thinke to bee neceſſarie and profitable, and doe diſdaine and refuſe that which ſerueth for nothing, or is litle woorth: euen ſo although that the vngodly doe praiſe and boaſt themſelues, and that their harte is haughtie & ſowln, & that they iudge that they ought to be praiſed: yet God who knoweth the hartes, doeth wel ſee that there is nothing in the hart of the vngodly that is any thing woorth, & therfore doeth he diſdaine them, and doeth abhorre them, ſo doe they alſo that are led by the ſpirit of God. For by the outward things, is the vanitie of the hart knowne. And as wee are wont not to ſpare the thinges that are nothing eſteemed, or ſmally, but leaue them at randon, euen ſo the wicked do vnfolde in euery matter the vanitie of their hart, and care not what they doe, nor what they ſay: they haue no right thoughtes: wheruppon foloweth that their hart is nothing woorth, and that they cannot do nor ſay any thing that is ought woorth. Naturally wee are al ſuch, and haue neede that GOD by his holy ſpirit ſhoulde purge, amende, and renewe our hartes, otherwiſe our tongues, which from the aboundance of the heart doe ſpeake, ſhal not bee as pure and tried ſiluer, but our vaine and vnprofitable heartes ſhal ſpurre forewarde our tongues to ſpeake things nothing woorth, and the reſt of our members to doe vnprofitable and hurtful thinges. If wee haue deſire that God ſhoulde woorke in vs by his holy ſpirit, wee muſt bee attentiue vnto his woorde. For as the woordes of the Lorde are called pure as the ſiluer which from the earth is tryed and purified ſeuen times in the fire: euen ſo the lawe of the Lorde is ſaide to bee vndefiled. Wherefore beſides the former expoſitions we may ſay, that as there is no deceite in fine ſiluer, but that it is true and tryed, neither may any man deny to receiue and imploy it: euen ſo the righteous inſtructed and taught in the pure and cleane woorde of GOD, the which doth not deceiue thẽ that put their truſt therein, haue a pure & cleane tongue, neither is their fraude in his mouth, but ſpeaketh the truth from his hart, and that freely. Contrarily, as by a thing of nothing which hath ſome faire ſhewe, the vndiſcreete are deceiued, euen ſo the vngodly doe inuent nothing but deceite and hurt againſt their neighbours. And as the iuſt which by his tongue ſeeketh nothing but the glorie and honour of God, and the edification of his Church, ought to be heard and receiued, and his ſayings obeyed, as if God himſelfe did ſpeake: euen ſo ought wee to bee

Pſalm.12.7.

Pſalm.19.8.

careful to take heed of the wicked, and chiefly of the miniſters of Sathan which doe change themſelues like miniſters of light, and doe labour but to ſeduce the hartes of the innocentes. For other deceiptes can bring no hurte but to the temporal goods or to the bodies: but the miniſters of Sathan deſtroy for euer both the bodies and ſoules of ſo many as beleeue and reuerence them, and followe their doctrine. This laſt expoſition agreeth wel with the ſentence that foloweth, when Solomon ſaith,

21 *The lippes of the righteous feede a whole multitude: but fooles ſhal die for want of wiſedome.*

In what ſtate ſoeuer wee be, if wee bee righteous, we wil labour to hurte no man by our woordes, but wil delite to ſpeake trueth, and by the ſame to profit many, in giuing good counſel, in exhorting, admoniſhing, rebuking, reproouing and correcting. This trueth is the foode of life, the vncorruptible ſeede which quickeneth a man for euer. For man liueth not only by bread, but by euery woorde that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Likewiſe the Goſpel, which is the infallible trueth, is compared vnto a wedding, vnto the which many bee called. And the miniſters which declare this Goſpel are called Paſtors: and in the perſon of Saint Peter Ieſus Chriſt commandeth them to feed his ſheepe: And, ſomuch as in you lyeth, feede the flocke of Chriſt. Take heede to your ſelues and to al the flocke, wherof the holy Ghoſt hath made you ouerſeeers. And as the Miniſters of the Churche by their preaching doe feede the beleeuers vnto eternal life (for the Goſpel is the power of God to ſaue al them that beleeue) euen ſo thoſe Princes and ſuperiours which pronounce good, iuſt and vpright, ſentences, for to giue right vnto him that it belongeth vnto, and doe diligently watche ouer the ſlaunders and offences, proclaming holy ordinances for to eſtabliſh a ſounde eccleſiaſtical pollicie, doe feede many ſo much as in them is: euen ſo doe al heads of houſholde, when no euil woorde doth proceed out of their mouth, but doe ſpeake very wiſely and godly. And as through them many are fed and quickened, euen ſo alſo they feede themſelues, and deliuer themſelues from death.

Deut. 8. 3.

Iohn. 21. 15.

1. Pet. 5. 2.

Actes. 20. 28

But they that are ſo colde and faintharted, that they deſpyſe al honeſtie and holy religion, and care not though they offende and deſtroye their neighbours: as by their wicked woordes proceeding from the weakeneſſe and ſayntneſſe of hart they leade many vnto death, feeding them with poyſon ſo much as lyeth in them: ſo alſo ſhal not they bee ſpared, but by the iuſt vengeance of GOD they ſhal dye, as they deſerue. Theſe are the fooles whereof Solomon ſaieth that they ſhal *dye through their owne follie.*

22 *The bleſſing of the Lord maketh riche men: and he doth adde no ſorrowes with it.*

Euery man naturally deſireth to bee riche and to abounde with temporal goods, not onely for to mainteine this life in a meane eſtate: but alſo to nouriſhe himſelfe in pleaſures and voluptuouſneſſe, to keepe greate cheere and to bee apparelled ſumptuouſly, and to bee magnified and exhalted, and to enioy in this worlde all pleaſures that are poſſible. And to the ende to attaine theretoo, wee labour with body and ſoule, wee beſtowe our bodily labour, and ſet al our minde on woorke to ſee and conſider howe we may become riche. And becauſe wee commonly ſee that fooles and ydiottes, the negligent and ſlouthful the faint and weake to bee poore, and that they haue greate neede, it ſeemeth that man by his wiſedome and pollicie, by his force and ſtrength, by his labour and trauaile doth become riche. For this cauſe man doeth attribute vnto his power the goods and riches that he poſſeſſeth, and thinketh that they are due vnto him and that hee hath wel deſerued them. But in it there is nothing but vanitie without any profit. I made gorgious and faire woorkes, ſaieth Solomon in Eccleſiaſtes the ſecond chapter, &c. Eccle.2.4. But when I conſidered all the woorkes that my handes had wrought, and al the labour that I had taken therein: loe, al was but vanitie and vexation of minde: for in this ſorte man doeth not acknowledge GOD as it behoooueth. When hee ſeeth himſelfe to abounde in riches, hee ought not to bee like vnto ſwine which alwaies haue their ſnout in the grounde til they finde acornes, & looke not vp from whence they fal to the grounde: but he ought to lift vp the eyes of his minde, and to beholde the heauen, and to confeſſe that the goods he hath, though he haue found them in earth, and are brought out of the earth : yet that they deſcended from heauen, and are giuen vnto him of the meere liberalitie of God, who maketh al things to growe for the vſe of man. GOD *Gen.*1.11.28. ſaide, Let the earth bring foorth greene hearbe, &c. Againe, He *&* 9.3. *&* 14.20. bleſſed them, and ſaide, growe and increaſe, &c. And I haue giuen euery greene thing to be meate vnto you, &c. The holie Patriarks *Gen.*18.3. haue wel acknowledged this power and liberalitie. Abraham did wel ſhewe it when he gaue tithes, and would not be enriched with *&* 28.20. the goods of the Sodomites, and when hee receiued the Angelles and intreated them gently. It is alſo ſaide of Iacob that hee made a vowe, ſaying, If the Lorde wil be with mee, and keepe me in my iourney which I goe, and wil giue me bread to eate, and cloathes to put on, ſo that I come againe vnto my fathers houſe in ſafetie, then *&* 32 9. ſhal the Lorde be my God, &c. Againe he him ſelfe ſayth: O God of my Father Abraham, and God of my father Iſaac : Lorde which ſayeth vnto mee, Returne vnto thy countrey, and to thy kindred, *1.Sam.*2.6. and I wil doe al wel with thee, &c. The Lorde is he that killeth and maketh aliue againe. Nowe alſo Solomon doeth confeſſe it, when hee ſayeth, *That the bleſſing of the Lorde maketh riche, &c.* If any man then be riche, the ſame commeth, becauſe God hath extended his bleſſing vpon him. Thus riches ought not to bee attributed either to the labour, or wiſedome, or induſtrie or diligence and care of men, either to fortune or chance by aduenture, as doe *Pſal.*24.1. the infidels: but we ſhoulde acknowledge and confeſſe that as God is the Creatour both of heauen and of earth, and of al thinges in them conteined, and that the earth with the contentes ther of doth appertaine vnto him, euen ſo hee diſtributeth the thinges of this worlde as hee pleaſeth, and to whome hee pleaſeth. After that he hath made a man riche, at his pleaſure hee taketh away the ſame againe, and maketh him poore, and giueth it vnto another. Iob ſaieth in his firſt chapter, The Lorde hath giuen, and the Lord hath taken: and that which was taken from him, was to make theeues and robbers riche. In this ſorte we confeſſe that God not only bleſſeth the faithful and iuſt, but alſo the wicked and vnthankeful: as ſaieth our Lorde, hee maketh the Sunne to riſe both vpon the good *Mat.5.45.* and badde. But hee doeth this, partly to make himſelfe knowne, howe hee hath not left himſelfe without witneſſe of dooing vs good.&c.

And this is alſo to the ende to take away excuſe from the vn- *Act.14.17.* thankeful. For the wrath of God is reuealed from heauen againſt al *Rom.1.18.* vngodlineſſe, and vnrighteouſneſſe of men, which withholde the trueth in vnrighteouſneſſe. Secondly, to the ende that the chil- *Mat.5.44.* dren of God ſhoulde folowe their Father in wel doing to their enemies. Thirdly, that the elect of God ſeeing and beholding the great benefits that the Lorde poureth vpon the wicked, and comparing their afflictions with them, they ſhould learne howe they ought to hope for a much better life then haue the moſt bleſſed of this world, otherwiſe the ſtate of Gods children ſhoulde bee woorſe then the ſame of the wicked. Wherfore, the confiſcations & forfeitures that the tyrantes make nowe adaies, ſhould rather reioyce the afflicted, *Mat.5.11.* then grieue and vexe them. *Iam.1.2.* Thus, albeeit the tyrants, do perſecute banniſhe, ſteale and pilfer from the children of GOD, and that God doeth ſo ſuffer them, yea that hee hath ſo ordeined, yet is it not to ſay that God hath depriued his children of his bleſſing. *Rom.8.31.* For what temptation ſoeuer hee ſendeth vnto his houſholde folkes and *1.Cor.10.13.* children, yet doeth hee not ceaſe to loue them, If God be on our ſide, who ſhal be againſt vs? God is faithful which wil not ſuffer you to be tempted aboue that you be able, but wil euen giue the iſſue with the temptation, that yee may be able to beare it.

Let vs therfore vnderſtand that God doth neuer ſo ſpoile his children, but that hee leaueth them ſufficient goods. For, a ſmal thing that the righteous hath, is better then great riches of the vngodlie. Alſo they which haue their hope in the Lord, as they are not forſakẽ *Pſal.37.16.* of him, (as it is written in the former pſalme, I haue bin yong and nowe olde, yet ſaw I neuer the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging their bread &c.) ſo doe they acknowledge, & trulie confeſſe the bleſſing of God by beeing contented, and thinking themſelues riche ynough. The which contentation they ſhewe by not ſtealing, but doing good vnto their neighbours. For as it is ſaid a litle after, The righteous is euer merciful, and lendeth, and his ſeed is bleſſed. *Pſalm.37.26.*

Nowe the bleſſing of God vpon the faithful, is not much ſeene vnto the eyes: for they ſeeme to bee moſt miſerable of any in all the worlde: but what euil or pouertie ſoeuer happen vnto them, their ſtate is farre more better then the ſame of the moſt richeſt which are not ſtayed vpon the Lorde. For the vnfaithful are poſſeſſours of an euil faith: albeeit that by the bleſſing of GOD they are riche, and doe enioy goods, not knowing from whence they proceede, and doe vſe them without the promiſe of GOD: And becauſe they vſurpe the goods that belong not vnto them, they ſhal ere it bee long and ſooner then they thinke for, bee depriued of this temporal benediction. *Pſa.37.9.* For the wicked dooers ſhalbe rooted out: and which is farre woorſe, they ſhal in no wiſe bee partakers of this precious bleſſing of the kingdome of heauen, and of eternal life. *Pſa.37.38.* As for the tranſgreſſours, they ſhal periſhe together, and the ende of the vngodly, is, they ſhalbee rooted out at the laſt. Likewiſe they whome GOD iudgeth not woorthy of the temporal promiſes, cannot looke for any other felicitie then that they haue in this life. But the faythful which haue the promiſe of this preſent life, doe knowe that what pouertie ſoeuer they ſuffer in this worlde, yet they are riche ynough: for they are Lordes of al the worlde, though they doe not viſibly enioy them. For they vnderſtande wel that the promiſe is not made vntoo them to holde and ſtaye their mindes vppon theſe vaine and tranſitory thinges: but to the ende that with al their harte they ſhoulde aſpire after the heauenly riches, which ſhal endure eternally. And alſo to leade them theretoo the Lorde doeth not ſuffer them to liue at their eaſe, in pleaſures and carnal delights after the luſtes thereof, but moſt often hee doeth compaſſe them with greate and many afflictions. Notwithſtanding, GOD ceaſeth not to performe his promiſe, giuing them worldly ſubſtance, ſo much as is neceſſarie for their ſpiritual and eternal ſaluation, the which cannot faile them, ſeeing they are owners and heires by the promiſe. *Heb.11.13.* The olde and auncient fathers did thus vnderſtande it. Wherefore the faythful beeing poore and miſerable in the eyes of men, doe not ceaſe to bee riche by the bleſſing of the Lord, whereby they ſhal receiue the crowne of glorie.

And foraſmuch as it is ſo that the bleſſing of the Lorde maketh men rich: Let vs firſt of all knowe, that wee poſſeſſe nothing, howe ſmall ſoeuer it bee, but that wee muſt giue thankes vnto God for the ſame. Dauid in his 34. Pſalme doeth point vs the way: and Saint Paule doeth admoniſh vs, that we ſhoulde geue thanke for al thinges. Secondly, foraſmuche as there proceedeth no euill thing from the bleſſing of God, it followeth that riches are good, and that it is lawful to poſſeſſe them, and to vſe them with ioy and gladneſſe. For euery creature of God is good, and nothing ought *1.Tim.4.4.* to bee refuſed, if it bee receiued with thankes giuing. Neuertheleſſe we muſt take heed to abuſe the bleſſing of God. And for to obſerue this, we muſt loke that we poſſeſſe nothing vniuſtly gottē, leaſt wee bee like vnto theeues, robbers, rouers, couetous vſurers, and falſe packing merchantes: but in ſteede of ſpoyling and catching, let vs diſtribute parte of that which wee poſſeſſe, and that wee walke vprightly and faithfully in all our affaires: and for to come well to the ende heereof, wee muſt followe the counſell of the Pſalmiſt, O truſt not in wrong and robbery, giue not your ſelues vn- *Pſal.62.11.* to vanitie: If riches increaſe, ſet not your heart vpon them. For if wee ſet not our harts vpon riches, we do not poſſeſſe thē as the bleſſing of the Lorde: and for our vnthankefulneſſe wee depriue our ſelues of the heauenly and euerlaſting bleſſing. Howe hardly ſhal a rich man enter into the kingdome of heauen? They that will *Mar.10.23.* bee riche, fall into temptation and ſnares, and into many fooliſhe, *1.Timo.6.9.* and noyſome luſtes, which drowne men in perdition and deſtruction. Wee muſt alſo looke that wee vſe not the riches of God diſſolutely and vntemperately, as doe the gluttons and drunkardes, braue and prodigall Gentlemen, which cannot ſoberly and temperately reioyce, but haue a beaſtly and arrogant ioy: but wee muſt vſe them, reioycing our ſelues in the preſence of the Lorde. For to doe this well, wee muſt not eate ſo muche meate, nor exceede *Leu. 23. 43.* in coſtly and gorgeous apparrell, but that wee ſhoulde thinke on the needie, and chiefly on the houſholde of faith. For if to bee like vnto our heauenly father, wee ought too doe good vnto our enimies, by a more ſtrong reaſon wee muſt bee carefull of them which doe loue vs in Ieſus Chriſte, and to ſpare the morſell out of

our owne mouth for to giue it them, and to doe with a good heart and free wil. Thus wee muſt reioyce in vſing the bleſſing of the Lorde. Thirdly, foraſmuche as the bleſſing maketh riche, it followeth that wee may aske riches of God, ſo farre as is needeful to
Mat.6. 11. helpe our neceſſitie. Our Lorde doeth teach it vs, when hee would haue vs to aske our dayly bread. But alſo wee muſt conſider that when hee addeth, This day, hee woulde not that wee ſhoulde de-
1.Tim.6.8. ſire to become riche, but as Saint Paule doeth teach vs, that hauing
Heb.23.5. meate and clothing, we ſhoulde bee therewith content. Let your conuerſation be without couetouſneſſe, being contented with that which you haue already. Albeit then that it is lawful for vs to aske riches of God, which may ſuffice to keepe vs in this life, that hauing thinges neceſſary for vs, wee may the better followe our vocation: yet is it not laweful for vs to couet riches, as hath beene al-
Luke.12.14. ready alledged. For take heede, and beware of couetouſneſſe, ſaith the Lorde. Fourthly, let vs knowe, that it is not in the power of man to make himſelſe riche, but that he muſt receiue al from the gracious and liberall hande of God. And if man cannot do the leſſer, he hath no power to doe the greater. Wherevpon followeth that it is not in the power of man to make himſelfe riche with ſpiritual riches, which ſerue to preſerue the ſoule, & make it to obtein eternall life. It is not then in mans owne power to come vntoo the kingdome of heauen. Beholde what wee muſt learne, when Solomon doeth ſay vnto vs, that *the bleſſing of the Lorde maketh men riche*. And let vs alſo learne that if God bleſſe vs, that according to his liberalitie and bleſſing beſtowed vpon vs, wee muſt bleſſe our needy neighbours by doing good vnto them. Charge them that are riche in this worlde, that they bee not high minded, and that they truſt not in vncertaine riches, but in the liuing GOD, (which giueth aboundantly all thinges to enioy.)
1.Tim.6.17 That they doe good and bee riche in good workes, and ready to diſtribute, & communicate. That which we diſtribute to the poore,
2.Cor.9.5. S. Paul calleth it a bleſſing or a beneuolence: wherefore I thought it neceſſary to exhort the brethren to come before vnto you, and to finiſhe your beneuolence appointed afore, that it might be ready, & come as of beneuolence, & not as of niggardlines. Thervpon Solomon

lomõ doth ſay, that the lord doth not giue trouble with his bleſſing. But at the firſt ſight, the contrarie may ſeeme true: for he hath not altogither ſpoiled man of his bleſſing: and yet, though hee had ſinned, and had deſerued to be depriued of al goodnes, the Lord hath giuen him of them abundantly: but yet hee hath ſaide vnto him, Becauſe thou haſt obeyed the voice of thy wife, &c. the earth ſhalbe accurſed for thy ſake. *Gen. 3. 17.* Hee enriched the Patriarkes the which liued not without trouble, as may be ſeene by the hiſtorie of their life. Hee bleſſed Dauid with riches, and exalted him, ordeyning him king in Iſrael: but before that hee attained vnto it, hee ſuffred very much: and after that hee was exalted, hee had much trouble, and that by the meanes of his owne blood. And our Lorde Ieſus doeth not promiſe any riches vnto his faithful people, but with condition of perſecution. And alſo, hee woulde that wee al ſhoulde beare our croſſe. *Mar. 10. 13. Luke. 9. 23.* I anſwere, that the bleſſing of God doeth not exempt the faithful from afflictions in their fleſh, and that they ſhould not ſuffer much trouble in this worlde: for let vs knowe that the afflictions of this preſent time are not woorthy of the glorie which ſhal bee ſhewed vnto vs, *Rom. 8. 18.* they beare them with patience and ioy, and are at peace and quietneſſe in their conſciences: and are aſſured of the goodneſſe and loue of God towardes them, they ſay with Dauid, The Lorde is my ſheepehearde, therefore ſhal I want nothing. *Pſ. 23. 1. & 27 1. & 34, 18.* The Lorde is my light &c. When the righteous crye vnto the Lorde, hee heareth them, and doeth deliuer them out of al their troubles. Yea though hee ſhoulde kil mee, yet wil I put my thruſt in him, ſaieth Iob. *Iob. 13. 15.*

Contrarily, albeeit that the vngodly, which doe not acknowledge the goodneſſe and bleſſing of GOD, doe greatly proſper in the outwarde ſight of the worlde (for it is ſaide that they feele no trouble, &c.) yet ſo much as in them lyeth, they refuſe and reiect the bleſſing of GOD, and are alſo greatly troubled in their conſciences, and are much vexed in their mindes: they haue no peace nor quietneſſe in their vnderſtanding. The wicked are lyke the raging ſea, which cannot reſt, whoſe water fometh with the myre and grauel. Euen ſo the wicked haue no peace ſaith God. *Eſay. 57. 20.*

23 *It is paſtime to a foole to do wickedly: but wiſdom is vnderſtanding to a man.*

When wee haue committed any faultes and offences, howe ſmal and litle ſoeuer they bee, and bee it that wee haue offended and ſinned by infirmitie or malice, by ignorance or of ſet purpoſe to doe euil, it is neceſſary wee ſhoulde knowe that wee haue grieuouſly offended, foraſmuch as wee haue tranſgreſſed the lawe of our God, the which is ſo holy, good and iuſt. And vpon the knowledge herof, we muſt tremble and be afraid of the righteous iudgement of God, the which wee haue deſerued that hee ſhoulde poure vpon vs and exerciſe againſt vs his wrath and anger, and that hee ſhoulde no whit ſpare vs, but damne and deſtroy vs: and being thus feared, that wee may bee brought to ſay without colour and ſaynedneſſe with Dauid, Correct mee not in thy wrath, O Lorde, nor chaſten mee not in thy heauie diſpleaſure. *Pſalm.38.2.* It is alſo neceſſarie for vs that ſuch a feare ſhoulde leade vs, not to a deſpayre, as it did Iudas, but vnto a griefe and ſorrowe which may make vs hate the euil that wee haue committed, and to deteſt and abhorre the ſame. This kinde of ſorrowe is very profitable and needful for vs, as S. Paule doeth declare, when hee reioyced at that, that he had made the Corinthians ſory, ſaying, *2.Cor.7.9.* I nowe reioyce, not that yee were ſory, but that yee ſorowed to repentance: for yee ſorowed godly, ſo that in nothing yee were hurt by vs: for godly ſorowe cauſeth repentance vnto ſaluation, not to bee repented of: but worldly ſorowe cauſeth death. Nowe as this ſorowe is healthful vnto them which refuſe it not euen ſo alſo the contempt therof is very dangerous. *Eſay.22.11.* And in that day did the Lorde God of hoſtes cal men vnto weeping & mourning, to baldneſſe and girding about with ſackecloth. And beholde they haue ioye and gladneſſe, ſlaying oxen & killing ſheepe, eating fleſh, and drinking wyne. Likewiſe Solomon rebuketh this contempt, when hee ſaieth, *that hee maketh but a ſporte of wickednes, &c.* He ſpeaketh here chiefly of faults & ſinnes which haue bin much thought on, and are committed vpon ſet purpoſe: for hee vſeth a word which commeth of a verbe that ſignifieth thoughtes.

Such faults are very greeuous and abhominable before God, bicauſe they proceede of very ſet malice, and that they which commit them, woulde doe no better, but if they coulde, they would yet more wickedly. And albeit they know wel that they do euil, & that they wold not bee ſo ſerued, and that they would be ready to reuenge themſelues if any man ſhoulde offend them, yet as though GOD ſawe them not, they ſpare not to thinke and do euill. They haue no feare of God, and doe laugh euen whiles they doe euil, as if they were well aſſured, and as though they had made a couenaunte with death and hell. They are of the number of thoſe that Eſay ſpeaketh of, ſaying:

Eſay.5.81. 19 &.20. Woe bee vnto them, that drawe wickedneſſe vnto them with cordes of vanitie: and ſinne as it were with a carte rope. Let the counſel of the holie one of Iſrael come and drawe nigh, that wee may knowe it. Woe be vnto them that cal euil good, and good euil, which make darkeneſſe light, and light darkeneſſe, that make ſweete ſowre, and ſowre ſweete. *Eſai.28.14.* And therefore, heare the worde of the Lorde, ye mockers, becauſe ye haue ſaide, we haue made a couenant with death, and with hell are wee at agreement. Solomon calleth ſuch people fooles, and not without a cauſe. For though there were nothing but this, that they are deſtitute of wiſdome & knowledge, they deſerue to be called fooles: by a ſtronger reaſon, when they eſteeme not wiſedome, but mocke thereat, contemning and refuſing it, and in ſo muche as in them lyeth, doe perſecute it, they deſerue to be called fooles. Alſo they are without wit, without reaſon, without vnderſtanding: the which is cauſe that they do nothing care to do euil, but do it, of ſet purpoſe: & for al the admonitiōs or threatnings that can be made vnto them, yet do they nothing but ſcorne, they make no more account of the woorde of God then of fables, yea and leſſe alſo. Wherby we may iudge that they are without vnderſtanding, & that they do wel deſerue to be called fooles. Now that they are without vnderſtanding, Solomon doth ſhew it, when he ſayth.

But wiſedome ruleth the man that hath vnderſtanding. Hee ſetteth wiſdome againſt fooliſhnes, and vnderſtanding againſt mocking, ſhewing vs that the foole hath no wiſedom, and that the mockers are as beaſtes without any knowledge: & therefore they feare not to doe euil, and doe aſſure themſelues in their wickedneſſe. Amongeſt the number of ſuche fooles and mockers, wee may ſee Caine, who after hee had ſlaine Abell, paſſed not for his fault committed: as wee may knowe it, by the anſwere hee made, when hee knewe not where his brother was, &c. And likewiſe, the worlde deſtroyed by the flood. For albeit that Noe did condemne it by the building of the Arke, yet had they no care, nor tooke no thought: but continued ſtill in their wickedneſſe, paſſing the time away merily: as our Lorde doeth ſhewe it, ſaying. For as they were in the dayes before the flood, They did eate and drinke, marry, & giue in marriage vnto the day that Noe entered into the Ark, and they knewe nothing till the flood came, and tooke them all away, &c. Sodome alſo: the brethren of Ioſeph: Dauid alſo, vntil that hee was reprooued by the Prophet Nathan. The Iewes which by enuie crucified Ieſus Chriſt, did mocke him, ſaying, hee hath ſaued other, him ſelfe hee can not ſaue. And nowe at this day, the greateſt parte of them which perſecute the poore members of Ieſus Chriſt, are mockers. And I woulde to God that there were none but in Poperie, &c.

Gen.4.9. *Heb.11.7.* *Mat.24.38.* *Gen.18.19.* *Eze.16.49* *Luk.17.28* *Mat.27.41.*

Wee bring foorth theſe examples, to the ende that wee knowing that of our owne corrupt nature, wee are not, neither can bee better: let vs therfore be diligent to aske of God, that he would ſo print his feare in our heartes, that thereby wee may renounce all carnal truſt, which is but follie, and which holdeth man in giering and mocking. And that by this feare, wee might come and attaine vnto the true wiſedome, the which may make vs vnderſtande that wee ought not to laugh and mocke, but to bee ſorie when we haue ſinned: but that of a ſorowful ſpirite and contrite harte, with al humbleneſſe we ſhould aſke with Dauid, Haue mercy vpon me, O God, after thy great goodneſſe. &c.

Pſ.51.15.3.17.

And to the ende that as wee vnderſtande wee ought not to reioyce at our wickednes, euen ſo alſo ought wee to conuert the fooliſh, and bring thé vnto true vnderſtanding. Let vs aſke with Dauid: Make me a cleane hart, O God, and renewe a right ſpirit within me, &c. Again, O Lord open thou my lips, & my mouth ſhal ſhew forth thy praiſe. Otherwiſe, if we take in hand to correct others, wee bee

Mat.7.3. *Rom.2.1.*

be hypocrites, and condemne other our ſelues. And foraſmuche as wiſedome is vnderſtanding vnto man, it is a certaine argument that we want wiſdome, when we know not howe to gouerne our ſelues in the feare and reuerence of the Lord: and thus we are fooles, & conſequently mockers and ſcoffers. And if wee bee ſuche, wee cannot but looke for a horrible mockery: for when wee make but a mocke at ſinne, and doe euil, wee ſcoffe at God, refuſing his yoke: euen ſo alſo wil hee mocke at vs. If we deſire to auoide the ſame let vs not tarry till the Lorde ſpeake vnto vs in his fury: but nowe whiles hee ſpeaketh gently vnto vs by his ſonne in his Goſpel, let vs heare him, and obey him, receiuing this holy Goſpell with faith and repentance. Thoſe that receiue it after this ſorte are wiſe, and haue vnderſtanding. Contrarily, they which deſpiſe him are fooles and ſcoffers, as wee may ſee but too muche by experience. *Pſal.2.4.* *Pro.1.26.*

24 *The thing that the vngodly are afraide of, ſhall come vppon them: but the righteous ſhall haue their deſire.*

It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that Solomon doth contrarie himſelfe: for hee hath ſaide that the feare is as mocking. Nowe it ſeemeth like that the man which laugheth and leappeth for ioy, is aſſured and that hee feareth nothing. And alſo, the vngodly is ſo proud, that hee careth not for GOD: neither is God in all his thoughtes. And nowe hee ſaith, that which the vngodly feareth, &c. But no man doeth gladly laugh that feareth: for feare bringeth weeping, howling, carefulneſſe and melancholie: and if it happen that any man in feare laugheth, it commeth not of ioy, nor of aſſurance they haue, but it is to labour to turne away this feare, and to diminiſhe the griefe that men haue conceiued. I anſwere, The cauſe why the vngodly, and a foole laugheth and mocketh when hee worketh wickedneſſe, is not becauſe hee is altogether without feare and doubt, and that hee is truely aſſured that no hurt ſhall happen vnto him: hee is deſtitute of the promiſes of peace, of life, of ſaluation, and of all felicitie and proſperitie, *Pſal.10.4*

aſwell of this worlde as of eternall ioy : for theſe promiſes do appertaine
onely vnto the wiſe,and to the righteous elected . And
they are the ſame which truely may aſſure and deliuer a man from
feare. The aſſurance and ſafetie that the wicked labour to haue,and
doe promiſe themſelues,is not ſafetie, but vaine preſumption and
a falſe opinion , the which they ſtriue to keepe ſtill in their
braines . Caine doeth ſtrongly ſtriue to aſſure himſelfe after he had
Gen.4.9. ſlaine his brother : but when hee anſwereth GOD, howe hee
knoweth not where his brother is become , and that hee asketh
if he be his brothers keeper,hee well declareth that hee is not
without feare : for if he had been aſſured,and had feared nothing,
hee woulde haue anſwered boldly, I haue ſlaine him . The reioycing
then of the vngodly doth not proceede of true aſſurance,but of
that they endeuour to harden themſelues and to waxe obſtinate in
euill,that they may caſt from them al fearefulneſſe,if it be poſſible.
Likewiſe Lamech,albeit that he boaſteth to be ſo ſtrong and hardie,
Gen.4.23. that though hee were hurt & maymed yet in his ſtrength he would
kill a man : yet doeth hee wel declare himſelfe not too bee aſſured,
but afraide , when without any worde of GOD,hee threateneth
him that ſhall kil him,with more greeuous vengeance than GOD
had threatened the man that ſhould ſlaye Caine . Although then
that the vngodly are but too mightie and too hardy to cōmit euill,
and that without remorſe of conſcience , with an vnbrideled deſire,
they make horrible things,yet do they wel know they do euil,
and that there can none but euill fall vpon them : and ſo they can
not bee without al doubt and feare . Saint Paule doeth ſhewe it,
Rom.2.12. All that haue ſinned without the law, ſhall periſhe without lawe.
What ioy ſoeuer the vngodly haue,yet doth the ſame not procede
Eſay.57. 20. of quietneſſe and reſt that they haue in their conſciences . For the
Deut.26.56. wicked are like the raging Sea which cannot reſt, Moſes alſo ſaith,
vnto the contemners of the Lawe, The Lord ſhal giue thee a
fearefull heart ,and daſeling eyes,and a ſorowefull ſpirite .&c. But
though the fooles and wicked doe tremble and feare, the ſame
doeth auaile them nothing : for after they are tormented in
their mindes, they cannot deliuer them ſelues from the miſeries
and calamities , but fall from one to another . as ſaith

Solomon , that which the *vngodly feareth, ſhall come vppon*
him. The builders of the towre of Babylon haue felt it. The vnbeleeuing *Gen.11.4*
and rebellious children of Iſrael did feare to be deſtroyed, if
they went vp into the lande of promiſe: alſo the deſtruction fell
vpon them, & were deſtroyed fourtie yeeres in the wildernes. Saul *Num.14.1.*
feared himſelfe and his houſe to be deſtroyed, & that Dauid ſhould
be king of Iſrael: the very which happened. To be ſhort, the vngodly
deſire to flooriſh and triumphe many yeeres together, and at
laſt doe feare deſtruction and damnation: the which alſo hapeneth *Pſal.37.9.*
and ſhal come vpon them. Wherein wee may ſee that the world
deceiueth them which beholde him, and put their truſt in him. For
this cauſe alſo Saint Paul doth admoniſh vs, And this I ſay, brethrẽ, *1.Cor.7.29.*
becauſe the time is ſhorte, heereafter that both they which haue
wiues, be as though they had none: and they that weepe, as though
they wept not: and they that reioyce, as though they reioyced not.
&c. Againe, Saint Iohn ſaith, Loue not this worlde, neither the
thinges that are in this worlde. If wee withdrawe and ſeparate our *1.Iohn.2.15.*
ſelues from the worlde, which is ſet vpon euill, and againe that we
giue our ſelues to followe the feare of God, deſiring too doe iuſtly,
wee ſhall not be compaſſed with the feare of the wicked: but what
aduerſitie and afflictions ſoeuer doe aſſault vs, wee ſhall by faith ouercome
them, the Lorde helping vs. Great are the troubles of the
righteous: but the Lorde deliuereth them out of all. And againe, *Pſal.34.20.*
The Lorde is nigh vnto al them that call vpon him in trueth, &c. *&.145.18.*
And according to the ſaying of Solomon, but *the righteous ſhall*
haue their deſire. And becauſe that theſe thinges are ſeldome
ſeene vnto the corporall eies, the worlde doeth laugh and mocke at
this truſt and hope: as the wicked are reprooued therefore. Wherupon
the children of God haue great neede of pacience. With *Pſal.14.6.*
theſe witneſſes ſo faithful, we haue the infallible trueth which ſaith, *Heb.10.36.*
Aske, and it ſhal bee giuen you. And this is the truſt that wee haue *Mat.7.7.*
to Godwarde, that if wee aske any thing according to his will, hee *1.Iohn.5.14*
heareth vs.

25 *As the ſtorme paſſeth, euen ſo ſhall the vngodly vaniſhe
away: but the righteous, remaineth as a ſtrong
foundation.*

A ſtorme is an horrible and feareful thing, as experience proueth, and this is partly becauſe that it commeth with a great noyſe vnlooked for: partly becauſe alſo that in ſmal time it maketh deſtruction, and bringeth great hurt euen vpon the ſoden. Euē ſo the holy ſcripture willing to feare the vngodly, by ſignifiyng vnto them ſoden deſtruction, doth threaten them with a ſtorme. And the ſame ſhal come quickly, as if it were a ſtorme, &c. Solomon compareth the
Pro 2.27. wicked which is ſtrōg & mighty, vnto a tēpeſt: for ſo much as he vt-
Pſal.83.14. terly can, he ſheweth himſelfe horrible and feareful vnto the poore
Eſay.29.5. faithful, and doeth deſtroy and kil them, ſo much as in him lyeth. Likewiſe the fury, violence and vehemencie of the wicked are compared vnto the tempeſt and ſtorme. Dauid doth ſhewe it, when hee
Pſal.55.2. prayeth, Take heede vnto mee, and heare me, howe I mourne in my
&.3. prayer, and am vexed. The enimie crieth ſo, and the vngodly commeth on ſo faſt: for they are minded to doe ſome miſchiefe, ſo ma-
&.8. litiouſly are they ſet againſt mee, &c. Againe, I woulde make haſt to eſcape: becauſe of the ſtormie winde and tempeſt. Woe ſhalbee to
Eſay.17.12. the multitude of much people, which ſhal make a ſounde like the noyſe of the Sea. But although the vngodly bee ſo ſtormie and violent, the faithful ought not to be afraid therof. Firſt of al, becauſe the fierceneſſe of the wicked doeth not long continue. The holy hiſtories doe ſhew it, and amongeſt others the violence of the Egyptians agaiſt the children of Iſrael, and the furie, and vehemencie of the Iewes againſt Ieſus Chriſte. The Pſalme alſo doeth plainely declare it, Yet a little while, and the vngodly ſhalbe cleane gone: thou ſhalt looke after his place, and he ſhalbe away. And according heere-
Pſal.37.10. vnto Solomon ſaith heere, that the wicked ſhalbe like the ſtorme that paſſeth away, or when it is paſt. Solomon then doth not heere compare the wicked vnto the tempeſt, for to make the faithful righteous and innocent, afraide: but rather to the ende that the faithful ſhoulde not feare the vngodly, ſeeing their violence continueth not: as Solomon doeth ſhewe by this compariſon, wherein his chiefe intent is to comfort the poore afflicted, to the ende that they ſhoulde knowe that they ſhal not bee long vnder the raging tyran-
Gen.19.24. nie of the wicked. Iuſt Lot hath prooued it by experience. And
Exo.14.13. Moyſes ſayth vnto the children of Iſrael, Feare yee not, ſtande ſtill,

and behold, how the Lord ſhal ſaue you this day,&c. And according
vnto his worde they were ſoone deliuered, and the Egyptians rooted
out,&c. And when the children of Iſrael beganne to enter into
the Lande of promiſe, many Kinges and nations aſſaulted them
with great fierceneſſe, but they continued not long: for the Lorde
fought for his people of Iſrael. Abſolom rebelled againſt his father
Dauid with great furie and violẽce, but he was ſoone ouerthrown. *2.Sam.15*
The fierceneſſe of the Aſſyrians was alſo of ſmal continuance. Secondly, *2.Kin.18.& 19.*
the crueltie and rage of the wicked howe long and forcible
ſoeuer they bee, ought not to feare the faithfull. For as when
a foundation laid with good ſtones, being wel ioyned & ſodered together,
is ſtedfaſt and ſtable, ſo that there is no ſtorme ſo ſtrong *Eſa.36.&.37*
that can ſhake the ſame: euen ſo the righteous man which putteth
his truſt in the Lord being ſtayed vpon his power & goodnes,
ought not to care for the aſſaultes of Satan, of the world, nor of the
wicked: for it is ſaid, They that truſt in the Lorde ſhalbe euen as
the mont Sion: which cannot bee remoued, but ſtandeth faſt for
euer.&c.

And leaſt wee ſhoulde bee deceiued with vaine preſumption, *Pſal.125.1*
thinke to bee ſure and not to bee ſhaken. For further too ſtabliſhe
vs in the truſt wee haue in God, and in the hope that wee haue that
wee ſhall dwell for euer in the courtes of the Lorde, and in his
holy mountaine: we muſt walke innocently,&c. Who ſo doth theſe
thinges, ſhall neuer fall: for he is wel ſodered together with ſtrong *Pſal.15.5*
faith, and true repentance. And this is the cauſe why Solomon
ſaith,

But the righteous remaineth as a ſtorng foundation. Therefore
if we wil be ſtedfaſt, and not to be ſhaken through the rage and
vehemẽcie of the wicked, neither feare them, though they aſſault vs,
for to deſtroy either in our goods or in our bodies, or that they labour
to deſtroy our ſoules by ouerthrowing of the true and ſound
doctrine, and by taking away of the pure religion, wee muſt bee armed,
not with an idle and dead faith, but with a liuely faith, which
worketh by loue, as the Lorde teacheth vs in his worde. Then ſhall
wee bee built vppon the rocke wherevpon Ieſus Chriſt hath built

his

his Churche : againſt the which the gates of hell cannot preuaile.
Mat.16.18. Our Lorde doeth well ſhewe it alſo by an other ſimilitude. It is not
Mat.7.24. therfore without cauſe that Solomō calleth the righteous, *A ſtrōg*
foundation. For(as we may vnderſtand by the words of our Lord)
this foundation ſhall not onely be ſure in this world,but it ſhall re-
Iam.1.12. maine for euer,in eternall bleſſedneſſe. For bleſſed is the man that
abideth temptation: for after he hath beene tried, he ſhal receiue a
crowne of glory.

26 *As vineger is vnto the teeth, & as ſmoke is vnto the eyes,euen ſo is a ſlouthfull body vnto him that ſendeth him.*

Solomon hath rebuked and reprooued the ſlouthfull for conſuming of the time vnprofitably & ſpending it in vnneceſſary works, and thereby runne in danger ſodenly too fall into beggery and extreme pouertie. And heerby hee hath ſhewed that the ſlouthfull was hurtful to himſelfe. Nowe to the ende that wee ſhoulde take heede of the ſlouthful. And that wee ſhoulde not lightly ſet them a worke, chiefly when ſpeede and diligence is required, hee ſheweth vs that the ſlouthfull bringeth hurt, griefe and trouble vnto them which imploy and ſet them on worke. And for this cauſe he compareth the ſlouthful vnto vineger that is laide vnto the teeth: the which it greeueth and troubleth,becauſe of the coldneſſe & ſharpneſſe thereof,and becauſe of his biting and harſhneſſe it heateth and ſetteth the teeth on edge,and ſo doth hurt them. Secondly he compareth the ſlouthfull vnto ſmoke which ſmiteth againſt the eies: vnto the which it doeth much harme, it doeth darken them, and make them water,and doeth ſeeth them : and ſo doeth weaken the ſight, and hinder the eyes from doing their office, and taking their recreation and pleaſure. It is not without cauſe that Solomon, maketh theſe cōpariſons,and is not contented to cōpare the ſlouthful,either to vineger,or to ſmoke,but vnto them both : and chiefly the ſlouthfull body that is ſet about ſome good worke : for he cauſeth not onely one griefe and hurt,but many : hee is cauſe of muche ſorrowe and anger, becauſe hee doeth not faithfully nor with ſuche care and diligence execute and diſcharge his office duely, as is required, nor content and ſatisfie them which haue hired and ſet him on worke. This hath no neede of proofe: for they which hire and ſend labourers to do their work, do ſufficiently trie what hurt and hinderance they ſuffer, if their laborers be ſlouthful & negligēt: albeit the matter is not great. But we are al of this nature, that we trouble our ſelues, except that men doe as we wil haue them, euen in the affaires & workes of ſmal importance: neither wil we afterwards be ſerued with ſuch ſlouthful and negligent perſons againe, but wee diſdaine and reiect them: for we would haue our workes ſo wel done, that we could finde no manner of fault. Nowe foraſmuch as wee are of this nature, let euery one of vs take heede by the lawe of charitie, if wee be ſent, and appointed to doe ſome worke, that through our negligence and ſlouthfulneſſe we grieue no man: but that faithfully and truely we giue vnto our neighbours that which wee owe them: that we be readie to doe towardes our neighbours, according as we are able. Let them which are luſtie and ſtrong, labour with their bodies to helpe the feeble and weake: let the riche bee riche in good workes: let the wiſe, prudent, and diſcreete, not ſpare their lippes and tongues, for to teache and to direct the vndiſcreete, and them that goe aſtray. Otherwiſe we ſhal not be onely as vineger and ſmoke vnto men, but alſo vnto God: for, of what eſtate or condition ſoeuer we be, it is hee that calleth vs thereunto, which doeth ordaine and ſende vs: ſo that wee doe no good worke, but that it is the worke of the Lorde. If then we be ſlacke, careleſſe and ſlouthful to doe our duetie, we are greeuous and troubleſome vnto God: as we may plainly knowe by the ſimilitude of the talents. *Mat.25.a.* To the ende therefore that we be not troubleſome vnto our God, and leaſt we be rebuked of euil and ſlouthfulneſſe, wee muſt euery one of vs ſet our ſelues to worke, according to the number and excellencie of the talents that we haue receiued of the Lorde, that wee may be like the faithful and wiſe ſeruant, and not vnto the euil ſeruant. For to do this wel, let vs conſider vnto what ſtate we are called, and to what worke wee are ſent. Firſt of al, that the Kings, Princes, and Superiours of the earth (to whome God hath giuen this honour to communicate his name vnto them, ſaying, I haue ſaide yee are Gods, and are al children of the moſt higheſt) *Pſa..82.6.* as God neuer ceaſeth

ſeth working in gouerning the worlde by iudgement & iuſtice, and
is careful and diligent to prouide for his creatures : ſo alſo they
ſhould not be giuen to ſleepe & reſt, to take their eaſe and pleaſures,
to take their ſporte and worldly paſtime, to eate and drinke out of
meaſure, to delight in pompes and ſuperfluous magnificence, but
ſhould be diligent and attentiue, as Dauid ſaieth, Be wiſe now therfore,
Pſal.2.10. O ye Kings, be learned, ye that are Iudges of the earth. For to
Exo.18.21 compaſſe this wel, they muſt be men indued with vertue, and careful
& 31.1. to folow the leſſon that is taught them, and as they are commaunded,
Pſal.82.3. to miniſter right vnto the poore, &c. Otherwiſe they ſhall
Eſai.1.23. be as vineger and ſmoke before the Lorde : hee wil be grieued at
Ier.5.27. them, as he wel ſheweth when he doeth threaten them, Thy Princes
are vnfaithful, and companions of theeues, &c. Beholde howe
they are exalted and enriched. Let the Miniſters of the word, which
are Heraldes Poſtes and Meſſengers of the great King and Ruler of
al the world, for to carie the meſſage of ſaluation, and to proclaime
the ordinances of their Lorde and Maiſter, bee careful and diligent
: euen as the Goſpel that they beare, is compared to a courſe,
Eſai.56.10 as alſo the life of al Chriſtians : and by a ſtronger reaſon their liues,
Act.20.28 becauſe they ought to proceede and go before their flock. Let them
not be like vnto ſluggiſhe beaſtes, vnto lying Doctours, which are
ſlowebellies, which through ſweete wordes and faire ſpeeches, (for
to ſerue their bellies and not God, neither his Chriſte,) doe deceiue
the heartes of the ſimple. And let them not be of the number of thē
of whome Eſai ſpeaketh, Al their watchmen are blinde guides: they
knowe nothing, &c. But let them folowe the counſel that S. Paule
Rom.12.11 giueth, Let euerie one of them learne to be diligent: and to folowe
the doctrine of Saint Paul, to wit, that they bee not ſlouthful to doe
ſeruice, &c.

27 *The feare of the Lorde encreaſeth the dayes: but the yeeres of the wicked ſhalbe diminiſhed.*

To the ende that we ſhould vnderſtand howe our dayes ſhalbee encreaſed to liue long, as there is none of vs but doeth deſire the ſame: foraſmuch as the feare of the Lorde is the way thereunto, we muſt not ſtraye from it, but muſt fixe the ſame in our heartes, and make the ſame familiar and an houſholde ſeruant, not in fearing the

Lorde as a cruel tyrant, or ſeuere and ſharpe iudge. For after this
ſort we ſhould haue the feare of puniſhment and torment, and not
the feare of the Lorde. And as they which ſo feare the Lorde, haue
not the feare of the Lorde: ſo alſo haue they neither wiſedome nor
vnderſtanding. For the feare of the Lorde is the beginning of wiſe-
dome. Againe: the beginning of wiſedome is the feare of the Lord. *Pro.1.7.*
And thus wiſedome is not without feare, nor feare without wiſe- *& 9.10.*
dome. If we wil not be founde naked, we muſt take diligent heede
vnto the commandements of God. And foraſmuche as the Lorde
promiſeth in the lawe, length of dayes vnto them which ſhal keepe
his commandements: it foloweth that it is not without cauſe that
Solomon attributeth encreaſe of dayes vnto wiſedome. And hereby
we may vnderſtand that the feare of the Lord and wiſedome are ſo *Pro.2.1.*
knit together, that the one is not without the other: ſo that they *Pro.3.16*
which are wiſe, are not without the feare of the Lord: and they that
feare him, are not without wiſdō. It is thē the feare of the Lord that
increaſeth the daies of the wiſe, making thē to liue lōg in this world,
ſo lōg as is expedient & neceſſary for their ſpiritual & eternal helth.
Contrarily, the fooliſh which want the feare of the Lorde, and
therefore ſlippe and fal away to al rebellion and diſobedience, and
ſo become wicked, ſhal not continewe long, but their yeeres ſhalbe
cut ſhorte, albeit that in the reſpect of the outwarde ſight they liue
long: but this length is nothing before God. For a thouſand yeeres *Pſal.90.4.*
in thy ſight, are but as yeſterday that is paſt. Moreouer the yeres of *Pro.2.21.22*
the vngodly ought not to be counted long, becauſe that afterwards *& 3.20.*
they ſhal go into eternal death.

*25 The patient abyding of the righteous ſhalbe gladneſſe:
but the hope of the wicked ſhal periſh.*

Although that after our vicious and corrupted nature, wee be ſo
blind & ignorant, that wee knowe not howe to reioyce, nor what
true godlines is, yet are wee ſo affectioned after ſuch a ſort, that we
deſire to reioyce with gladnes, that wee might neuer want: & wee
think that there is nothing better. I haue knowen nothing better of
al theſe things, then to reioyce & to do wel in this life Again, there *Eccle.3.12*
is nothing better for a man but to reioice himſelfe in his woorkes. *22.& 5.17*
And it is a faire thing to eate and drinke, & for a man to reioyce of *& 11.9.*

his labour, &c. And be merie in thy youth, & let thy heart bee glad. Now as we are ignorãt, euẽ ſo of our ſelues do we neuer attein vnto this gladneſſe, though we doe much deſire it. But Solomon willing that we ſhould obteine our deſires, doeth teache vs howe wee ſhal atteine thereunto, when he ſayeth, *the patient abiding of the righteous, is ioye.* He attributeth ioy vnto righteouſnes, the which conſiſteth in this, that being aſſured of the goodnes & loue of God towardes vs, we ſhould delight to giue him obedience according to his lawe, by louing him with al our hearts, and our neighbours as our ſelues. If we bee ſuch, though wee haue many troubles, griefes, and ſorowes, for that which wee ſee to happen in the worlde, and chiefly becauſe of our ſinnes, and alſo for the offences and ſlaunders of our neighbours (for it is that which ought to greeue vs more then al other thinges) yet if of a free wil and perfect heart we aſpire *2.Cor.6.9.* vnto righteouſnes, we ſhal not be depriued of ioy. The ſeruants of God doe prooue, and may ſay with Saint Paule: as vnknowne, and yet knowne: as ſorowing, and yet alway reioyſing: as dying, and behold we liue: as chaſtened, and yet not killed: as ſorowing, and yet alway reioyſing: as poore, and yet make many rich: as hauing nothing, and yet poſſeſſing al thinges. Foraſmuche as they knowe *Pſal.5.12.* and are aſſured that God loueth them, they delight and reioyce in *& 32.1.* his Worde, knowing that God is true in his promiſes and holie in al his workes, lawes and commandements: and let al them that put their truſt in thee, reioyce: they ſhal euer be giuing of thankes, becauſe thou defendeſt them, they that loue thy name, ſhalbe ioyful in thee. Reioyce in the Lorde, O ye righteous: for it becommeth wel the iuſt to be thankful. But albeit the righteous do reioyce, becauſe they are aſſured God loueth them, as Solomon doeth ſhewe, when he is not contented to ſay, that the righteous doe reioyce, but hee doeth attribute their gladneſſe vnto their hope. For he ſayeth, *The patient abiding of the righteous is ioye:* as if he ſaide, that which reioyceth the righteous, is the hope they haue in the Lorde, who wil not deceiue them of that which they looke for of him: and thus their ioy ſhal abide for euer, ſeeing they ſhal haue full and perpetuall poſſeſſion of that whereof they reioyce and looke for with gladnes. Likewiſe what miſeries ſoeuer they ſuffer in this worlde, yet haue they good occaſion and matter to reioyce, as our Lord doth ſhew, them, making them felowes & companions of al the Prophetes, and aſſuring them of a moſt precious rewarde. Therefore if we wil hold the true ioy, let vs not lament & be ſorie for the eaſe of this world, the luſtes and pleaſures, the abundance and ſuperfluitie of ſubſtance and riches of this world, which doe deceiue and beguile the vngodly. For they ſeeing them ſelues in worldly and temporal proſperitie, do runne into inſolencie and vnſhamefaſtnes, & do promiſe themſelues, that no euil nor hurt ſhal happen vnto them. But Solomon doeth threaten them with the contrarie, when hee ſayeth, *But the hope of the wicked ſhal periſh.* This is often ſeene to happen to the worlde, and the Scriptures are repleniſhed with ſuch examples, and alſo with like threates. And alſo it is written, Woe be to you that are riche men: for you haue receiued your conſolation.

Luk.6.24.

29 *The way of the Lorde is ſtrong for him that is perfecte: but feare ſhalbe to them that worke iniquitie.*

They that wil be aſſured and ſafe either from their enemies, or from other thinges which might hurt them, or ouerthrowe and deſtroy them, doe arme and fortifie them ſelues either with multitude of people, or golde and ſiluer, or with Caſtles and townes ſurely compaſſed with ſtrong walles, deepe and large ditches, and other things which they eſteeme to be fit and meete for to preſerue them from the feare of their enemies, & other dangers. It is not euil done for a man to arme him ſelfe againſt al aduerſities: but it is euil done to truſt in worldly and temporal helpes. For with this, that more often they finde themſelues deceiued & beguiled, they alſo offēd God, by ſtriuing againſt his word, wherby he doth ſhew vnto vs that we muſt only put our truſt in him, & that it is onely from whome wee muſt looke for our only refuge, for to ſtrengthen vs againſt whatſoeuer we may feare, aſwel in this life as after the ſame: likewiſe the Lorde reprooueth ſuch confidence, doth curſe them & ouerthrowe them: as the children of Iſrael haue prooued, and other nations in their order: euen as the holy hiſtories do declare, and the Prophets haue foretold: that it is euil done to truſt in mens helpe, Dauid doth ſhew, when he ſaieth, that ſome put their truſt in Charets, & ſome in Horſes: but wee wil remember of the Lorde our God. There be ſome that put their truſt in their goods: and boaſt themſelues

Pſal.20.8. & 49.6

in the multitude of their riches. And that it is againſt the worde, it
is manifeſt : for it is ſaid, Thou wilt make no couenant with them,
Exo.23.32. nor with their goods. Let vs knowe then that wee ſtriue againſt the
worde of the Lorde, when wee haue our regarde vnto worldly and
temporal helpe, for to ſaue vs, and that in this ſort wee looſe our
ſelues, by the iuſt vengeaunce of God (the which wee cannot deſire,
except we be madde and out of their wittes, but doe craue our
conſeruation and ſaluation, and would gladly bee aſſured thereof,
without danger of falling therefrom, but to be ſurely kept and faſt
holden therein) we muſt be verie diligent to marke the doctrine of
Solomon, when hee ſayeth, *The way of the Lorde is ſtrong vnto*
Rom.4.13. *him that is perfect.* For he doeth ſhewe vs, that if we wil be without
& 11.6. feare and out of danger, and to be ſtrongly armed and fortified,
for to withſtand al the aſſaults of Satan and of the world,and to ouercome
them, wee muſt bee perfect, and walke in the way of the
Lorde,wherein at the firſt ſight, it ſeemeth that hee doeth attribute
the aſſurance of our ſaluation vnto the dignitie & excellencie of the
perſon,and to the deſert of works,the which is contrarie vnto grace
and to the promiſes. For the promiſe,that Abraham ſhoulde be the
heire of the world, was not giuen him, or to his ſeede through the
righteouſnes of Fayth. Again, If it be of grace, it is not any more of
workes,or grace were no more grace. For to reſolue & vnlooſe this
queſtiō & doubt,let vs firſt of al note that it is al one, to walk in the
way of the Lorde, & to be perfect : for the one is the diffinition of
the other. The which ſhal be eaſie for vs to vnderſtand,if we know
that the way of the Lord is that which he teacheth and commaundeth
Pſal.25.4. vs by his word,true and iuſt. Shew me thy wayes, O Lord: and
Eſai.2.3. teach me thy pathes. Come & let vs aſcend vp to the mountaine of
the Lord,& he ſhal teach vs his wayes. Now the perfect man, is hee
Pſal.119.1 that walketh in the lawe or doctrine of the Lorde. Bleſſed are thoſe
that are vndefiled in the way: & walke in the way of the Lord. Noe
was a iuſt & perfect man in his dayes, walking after God. And God
ſaid vnto Abraham, walk before me & be perfect. Now muſt we ſee
Gen.9.9. from whence this perfectiō commeth to man, & whither it come of
& 17.1. his owne power that hee walketh & perſeuereth in the way of the
Lord. The Scriptures condemneth al men of corruption & wickednes.
But deliuerance commeth of God, Moſes doth wel ſhew it, The

Lord thy God ſhal circumciſe thine hart,&c. Create in me a cleane hart O God,&c. Turne me O Lord,& I ſhal bee turned. Againe, I wil put my lawe within them,and write it in their hartes, &c. And foraſmuch as it commeth of the grace and gift of God,that man is perfit,and that he walketh in the way of the Lorde, it foloweth wel that Solomon doth heere attribute nothing vnto the dignitie and excellencie of man,nor to the merite of his workes: but by the free promiſe of God he laboureth to aſſure the faythful man againſt al temptations,promiſing him that if by faith he ſtay himſelf vpō the goodneſſe of God,and that by true repentance hee endeuoureth to giue obedience vnto his lawe,that he ſhalbe out of al dangers of deſtruction & perdition,& ſhalbe wel armed and fortified againſt all battels aſwel of the Deuil as of the worlde. This mans houſe is builded vpō the rock. We are thē here exhorted not to feare any thing, if we receiue the word in feare and reuerence. Alſo, foraſmuch as ſtrength is promiſed vnto vs,it foloweth there is no power in vs, & that it is the gift of God: Moreouer, that ſtrength is promiſed & giuen vs,to the end that we ſhould imploy our ſelues manly & mightely. Finally,my brethren, be ſtrong in the Lord,and in the power of his might, &c. But if wee lay apart thoſe armours and weapons through infidelitie and rebellion,and perſeuer in our corruption & naughtineſſe,albeeit that after the ſight of the eyes,wee bee bolde, hardy,and valiant,or rather cruel and raging: yet becauſe our conſcience doth reprooue vs,we haue no aſſurance, nor can haue. For as Solomon ſaith they ſhalbe afraide that worke wickedneſſe. And this is by folowing the threatninges of the lawe, as heere aboue is alreadie ſaide in the 24. verſe.&c.

Gene.6.& 8.
Iohn.3.
Rom.3.& 7
Iere.10.
Deut.30.6.
Pſal.51. 12.
Iere.31. 18.
Mat.7.24.
Ephe.6.10.

30 *The righteous ſhal neuer bee remoued: but the wicked ſhal not remaine in the land.*

Foraſmuch as the righteous is he which hath a perfit hart, & doth delite to liue cōformably after the rule that God giueth him in his word,by ſeruing God with al honor & reuerence, & his neighbors in ſimplicitie and innocencie,it might ſeeme at the firſt ſight that the promiſe which Solomon maketh here,hath no place, & that the cōtrary thereof is true. For firſt of al the ſcripture giueth witneſſe vnto Abel, that he was righteous: & yet it appeareth that he was remoued, whē through the crueltie of his brother Caine, his tēporal life was takē frō him, & his bloodſhead. Likewiſe many other righteous men, (amongſt the which were the Prophets and Apoſtles) haue bin cruelly handled, & ſuffred great tyrannie, as killing & murthering. *Mat.23.3.* Euen Ieſus Chriſt, which did not ſin, in whoſe mouth was *Heb.11.4.* founde no guile, he I ſay, which is the reſurrection & the life, euen the Creator of heauen & earth: the Lord which hath al in his power, was moſt ſhamefully taken of the world. With theſe ſo many *Eccle.26.1.* examples, we haue alſo witneſſes. Was there euer man that periſhed in *Eſay.57.1.* his righteouſnes: or wicked which prolonged his dayes with his malice? The righteous is deſtroyed, and no man thinketh thereof in his heart. I anſwere, Albeit that this world & the preſent life apper- *Pſ.37.&.24* teine vnto the righteous by promiſe, and that the earth, ſhoulde bee *Rom.4.3.* their inheritance, becauſe they are the children of God, & ſeede of Abraham, to whom the earth apperteineth: and therupon heires of the world: yet notwithſtāding through the rage of the vngodly they are oftentimes euil handled, & are after the outward ſight takē from the world, & ſeeme to be depriued of this worldly heritage, (promiſed vnto their father Abraham,) & to be deſtroyed & damned: but the truth indeed is, as Solomon ſaith, that they ſhal neuer be remoued. *Heb.11.9.* For as Abraham remained in the promiſed lande as a Pilgrime and ſtranger, euen ſo the righteous do iudge themſelues ſtrangers in this world, & ſeeke another countrey: and therfore they feare not to be taken out of this world, but rather reioyce: & ſo, albeit they depart out of this world, yet they are not driuen out perforce: & therfore they think it no remoouing, when they change this life. For by this meanes they enioy the reſt which hath bene prepared from the beginning, & do obteine glorious immortalitie. Thus the righteous *Eſay.57.1.* is reduced back from euil, that he may come in peace. The ſoules of *Wiſ.3.1.* the righteous are in the handes of God, & no torment doth touch them. After this ſorte they eſteeme them ſelues, neither ought to bee iudged remooued: but that if they were ſurely planted by Fayth and hope, that nowe they are planted muche more ſtrongly, when they obteine the fruition of that which they beleeued, and looked for through hope: and doe obteine it, for to enioy it eternally.

nally. For they which reſt in the heauẽly glorie, can neuer be drawne from thence. Thẽ ſhalbe perfectly fulfilled, that which Dauid ſaith, *Pſal.92.13* The righteous ſhal floriſhe like a Palme tree: and ſhal ſpreade abroad like a Ceder in Libanus, &c. Contrarily and againſt this promiſe, he ſetteth a threatening for to feare the wicked, pronouncing vnto them, that they ſhalbe depriued of their pleaſures. They take their pleaſure in this worlde, and in this earth, and haue no other minde, but to place them ſelues at eaſe in earth, and to haue abundance of riches to triumph and to make great cheare. Their meditation is, *Pſal.49.12* that they would haue their houſes endure for euer. But Solomon doeth pronounce, that they ſhal not dwel in the land. If wee beholde the outwarde apparance, it ſhall ſeeme vnto vs that there is no people in the worlde, which haue better, nor longer habitation in the lande, then haue the wicked: they obteine the kingdomes and principalities, townes and caſtles, they haue abundance of ſubſtance and riches, and take alſo their eaſe, and as it ſeemeth they want nothing of that they can deſire and wiſhe: in ſuch wiſe, that the children of God are tempted to folowe them, to be partakers of their proſperitie. But albeit that God doeth ſuffer his to be *Pſal.73.1.* tempted, yet he letteth them not fal. For, truely God is good to Iſrael, and to them which are of a cleane heart. *Iere.12.1.* Euen ſo at the firſt ſight it might ſeeme, *Iob.21.7.* that the contrarie of this threatening were true.

Ieremy alſo ſayeth, If I ſhoulde diſpute with thee, O Lord, thou arte righteous, yet let mee ſpeake of iudgement before thee. Why doeth the way of the vngodly proſper? Wherefore doe the wicked ſtil waxe and growe riche? If we looke wel howe Solomon ſpeaketh, hee giueth vs the ſolution of this queſtion, and doubt: *Leui.26.* for hee ſayeth not that the wicked doe not dwel in the lande, *Deut.28.* but that they ſhal not dwel in the land: and this is according to the threatenings that God maketh againſt the contemners of his lawe, and according to that which is pronounced againſt the wicked. *Iere.12.3.* Ieremie alſo giueth the ſolution, *Pſal.37.* when hee prayeth, Drawe them as ſheepe vnto the ſlaughter, and prepare them againſt the day of murther. So doeth Iob alſo, ſaying, Loe, their wealth is not in their hand. *Iob.21.16*

31 *The mouth of the righteous ſhal bring foorth wiſedome: but the tongue of the froward ſhalbe rooted out.*

Vnwillingly do men remooue a good tree from his place,wherin
it hath taken great and good rootes, and bringeth foorth good
fruit with abundance,except they hope that it wil fructifie more in
an other place. And ſo when it is wel rooted, it mooueth not,but
keepeth his place.Contrarily, the axe is alreadie ſet to the roote of
Mat.3.10. the trees : therfore euerie tree which bringeth not forth good fruit,
is hewen downe,and caſt into the fire.Alſo Solomon knowing that
the righteous is like vnto the good tree, which giueth and bringeth
foorth his fruite in due ſeaſon, hath ſaide, that hee ſhal neuer bee
remooued. And after this,he ſheweth what fruit he bringeth forth,
when he ſayeth,*That the mouth of the righteous ſhal bring foorth*
wiſedome. That which is proper vnto the heart, hee attributeth
Mat.12.34. vnto the mouth, becauſe it is the Organe of the heart, and that
35. from the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh : and that
a good man from the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth foorth
good thinges.Nowe that this fruit is good, it ought to be knowne
enough to vs, by that which hath bene ſaide of the excellencie,dignitie,
Rom.12.7. and goodneſſe of wiſedome. But the meanes to produce this
Ephe.4.29. fruit,is to folow the coũſel of the Apoſtle which ſaith,He that hath
& 5.3. an office, let him waite on his office: or hee that teacheth, on teaching,
&c. Let no corrupt communication proceede out of your
mouthes : but that which is good,to the vſe of edifying,that it may
miniſter grace vnto the hearers. But fornication,and al vncleannes,
or couetouſnes, let it not be once named amongſt you, as it becommeth
Saintes. Let euerie man as hee hath receiued the gift, miniſter
the ſame one to an other, as good diſpoſers of the manifolde
1.Pet.4.10 grace of God. This ſame fruite is required of all, and there is none
that can truely boaſt to bee a Chriſtian, except he bring it forth.But
chiefly the Miniſters of the worde ought to bee careful and diligent
Ioh.15.16. to bring foorth this fruite. I haue choſen you, and ordeined you,
Mat.21.41. that yee ſhoulde goe and bring foorth fruite. They are the huſbandmen
and labourers, vnto whome the Lorde hath let out his
Vineyarde. By this wee may knowe, that the righteous are not

great in number, ſeeing there are but verie fewe that do giue themſelues to ſpeake wiſely : but almoſt euerie mouth doeth vtter vanitie and fooliſhneſſe, vncleanneſſe and wickedneſſe, as is tried. And foraſmuche as the good tree doeth bring foorth his fruit in due ſeaſon, and wiſedome is alwayes in ſeaſon, it is alwayes profitable, yea euen neceſſarie : it foloweth, that the righteous doeth not ceaſe to bring foorth wiſedome by wholeſome doctrine, by good admonitions, by holie corrections and iuſt threates, according to that which is ſaide, The mouth of the righteous wil talke of wiſdome. *Pſal.37.30* This ſame is chiefly fulfilled by the preaching of the Goſpel, which for to declare wel, the Lord hath promiſed a mouth & wiſdō vnto his Apoſtles. Saint Paul doth declare it when he ſayeth, This grace was giuen mee, &c. *Luk.21.15* And when hee ſayeth that hee preacheth the Goſpel, *Ephe.3.8.* admoniſhing euerie man, and teaching euerie man in all wiſedome, that wee may preſent euerie man perfect in Chriſt *Collo.1.28.* Ieſus : againſt the mouth of the righteous, hee ſetteth the tongue of the frowarde, that is a frowarde tongue, which ſpeaketh nothing but vanitie, filthines and wickednes, lying, fraude, curſing, ſlandering, falſe ſwearing, flatterie, wanton ſonges, and other idle wordes. All theſe thinges are euil fruites, the which ought not to proceede from the mouth of the faithfull, neither can they vtter ſuche. And becauſe the tongue of the frowarde bringeth foorth ſuche fruites, Solomon doeth place it in order, and alſo doeth compare it vnto euil trees, when hee ſayeth that it ſhalbee rooted out. Wherein hee ſignifieth, that after the frowarde haue miſuſed their tongues at pleaſure, by blaſpheming of God, and ſlandering of their neighbours in diuers ſortes, that at the laſt, they ſhal be confounded, and ſhalbe compelled to holde their peace. For they ſhewe there is no faithfulneſſe in their mouthes : their inwarde partes are verie wickedneſſe. With our tongues will wee preuaile : wee are they that ought to ſpeake, who is Lord ouer vs? *Pſal.5.10* For they ſtretche foorth their mouth vnto the heauen : and theyr *& 12.4.* tongue goeth through the worlde. *& 73.9.* But it ſhall happen to them at the laſt, as the Pſalmiſt prayeth againſt them. Rewarde them according to their deeds, and according to the wickednes of their owne *Pſal.28.4.* inuentions.

Pſal.12.3. The Lorde ſhal roote out al deceitful lippes: and the tongue that ſpeaketh proude thinges. But it is not without cauſe, that Solomon is not cõtented only to ſay, The tongue of the froward, in the ſingular number: but doeth attribute alſo vnto the tongue, many wickedneſſes. This is to ſhewe briefly, that the tongue of man is ſtopped and infected with a great abundance of wickedneſſes, and that it is impoſſible, or at the leaſt verie harde, to remedie the ſame, as more at large Saint Iames doeth declare, ſaying, Beholde, wee put bittes into the Horſes mouthes, that they ſhould obey vs, and wee turne about al their bodie, &c. *Iam.3.3.*

32 *The lippes of the righteous wil ſpeake things pleaſaunt: but the mouth of the wicked ſpeaketh frowarde things.*

The righteous man for to vtter wiſedome wel, taketh heede of the ſpeaking with his lippes any thing that ſhoulde diſpleaſe God, or which ought to bee yrkeſome or troubleſome vnto his neighbours: but hee guideth his lippes wiſely, ſpeaking according as hee knoweth to bee the pleaſure and wil of God: and therwith hee laboureth to pleaſe al men with his worde, ſo muche as is poſſible, without offending of GOD, and without giuing of offence to his neighbours. This is that which Solomon meaneth, when hee ſayeth, The lippes of the righteous wil ſpeake of acceptable thinges. Whereupon foloweth, that the lippes of the righteous are occupied in pronouncing the worde of God, the which hee woulde haue continually in the mouth of man. Theſe words I command thee this day ſhalbe in thy heart, lay vp then theſe words in your hearts. Seeing that God ſo ſtraightly and expreſly commaundeth this ſame, it foloweth, that if wee occupie our ſelues in ſpeaking ſo, that then our tongues wil ſpeake any thing that is pleaſaunt vnto him. Nowe that which pleaſeth the Creator and Lorde of all the worlde, ought well alſo to pleaſe his creatures, that are his ſubiectes, who for to pleaſe him, ought to loue that which they know wil pleaſe him, cõſidering alſo the excellencie, and profit of this word, & the ſweetnes thereof. *Deut.6.6. & 11.18.*

The wordes of the Lorde are pure wordes. The lawe of the Lorde is an vndefiled lawe, conuerting the ſoule. O howe ſweete are thy wordes vnto my throte? yea, ſweeter then honie vnto my mouth. *Pſal. 12.7. & 19.8. & 119.103.* The wicked, which deſpiſe and reiect the worde, haue no cleane mouthes, but filthie & infected, and altogether diſordered & giuen vp to euil ſpeaking, and to caſt vp out of their throte al filthineſſe and ſtinking ſauour. This is it which Solomon meaneth, when hee ſayeth, but the mouth of the wicked doth ſpeake frowarde thinges. They are a viperous generation, and therefore they can not ſpeake well, ſeeing they them ſelues are euil: for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh. Men vſe not to gather grapes of thornes, nor Figges of thiſtles. Wherefore we knowe that it is not without cauſe that Solomon hath ſaide, that the tongue of the frowarde ſhalbe rooted out. For ſith that the wicked by the euil fruites of their mouth, doe labour to poyſon and to deſtroy their neighbours, and which worſt is, doe deſpight God, by their blaſphemies, they wel deſerue to be rooted out.

The eleuenth Chapter.

1 *FAlſe ballances are an abhomination vnto the Lord: but a perfect waight pleaſeth him.*

Foraſmuche as the worlde is repleniſhed with fraud and deceit, with vſurie and greedineſſe, with theft & robberie, with counterfaiting and falſifying: therefore the commandement is not eſteemed, Thou ſhalt not do vniuſtly in iudgement, in line, in waight or in meaſure. Thou ſhalt not haue in thy bagge twoo maner of waightes, a great and a ſmal. *Leui. 19.35. Deut. 25.13.* There is no account made of the promiſe that God addeth vnto this commandement, That thy dayes may bee made long on the earth: neither alſo is the threatening feared that foloweth: for whoſoeuer ſhal ſo doe, ſhalbee abhorred of the Lorde. In this ſorte wee iudge leſſe of God then of mortal men. If a mighty and riche man hath made promiſe of any thing, wee wil truſt to receiue according to his promiſe, and in the meane while they wil bee diligent to pleaſe him: if he threaten, they wil feare him, and wil take heede to doe any thing that ſhoulde diſpleaſe him. But although that GOD is true, yea euen hee himſelſe the onely trueth (otherwiſe he ſhoulde not bee GOD) and that hee doeth teſtifie his trueth vnto vs by diuers witneſſes, yet wil wee not truſt his promiſes: as wee ſhewe, when wee make no account to labour for to pleaſe him. And alſo though hee be true and faithful, and doeth threaten but vppon iuſt cauſe, yet doe we not tremble, nor feare his vengeance, albeeit he declare the ſame by faithful witneſſes. Moyſes is one of the witneſſes of the promiſes and threateninges: as wee haue nowe heard. After him came Solomon, indued with great wiſedome of GOD, who doeth witneſſe the ſame in this place. Firſt of al hee threateneth them which oppreſſe and deceiue their neighbours in any matter whatſoeuer it is, when hee ſaieth,

1 *Falſe ballances are abhomination vnto the Lord:* he doth threaten them, I ſay with eternal deſtruction and damnation. For it followeth wel that if a falſe ballance diſpleaſeth the Lorde, and that hee doeth abhorre them, that then they which vſe them are wicked: and therefore cannot remaine, but are as chaffe which the winde driueth away, and ſo goe to deſtruction: for the way of the wicked ſhal periſh: ſeing alſo that it is ſaide, Thou art not a GOD that loueſt wickedneſſe, &c. But to the ende that we may knowe who they are that God abhorreth, and that we alſo ſhould abhorre them (for nothing that diſpleaſeth God, ought to pleaſe vs, but we ſhould hate & contemne it) we muſt conſider wherein the falſe ballance ſtandeth, and who they are that vſe them. Which for to doe, let vs knowe that the ballance is taken for al waytes, meaſures, rule, and for al Artes, Sciences, Lawes, and behauiours that we vſe towardes our neighbours, wee may ſo vnderſtande it, by the place afore alledged by Moyſes, out of the which hee collected theſe things. Likewiſe the Lord doth attribute rule and ballance, to that which

Pſal. 1. 6.
Pſal. 5. 4.

which he doeth towards his Church for to reſtore it. Iudgement alſo wil I laye to the rule, and righteouſnes to the ballance. It is then a falſe ballance and deceiueable, when wee doe not faithfully behaue vs towardes our neighbour, when wee are ſlacke and negligent to paye our duetie, or that wee labour to treade them vnder foote, or to deceiue in any matter whatſoeuer it bee. In all eſtates as we prooue by experience, there are falſe ballances: as betweene Merchantes, Citizens, Handicraftes men, and labourers, but the moſt hurtfull are they which are encloſed in the hands of falſe teachers, who by fayre wordes, and flattering ſpeech, deceiue the heartes of the ſimple and innocent. After theſe may bee ſet the ſame of wicked Magiſtrates, which are placed in the ſeate of God, who is righteous: and yet their houſes are filled with the ſpoyles of the poore. Nowe the perfection that is required of vs, is, that wee ſhoulde not imagine nor deuiſe any euil againſt our neighbours, that wee ſhoulde not labour to become riche to their hurt, but that in ſimplicitie & vprightneſſe of conſcience we ſhould procure their wealth with al our power. This is the perfect waight which pleaſeth the Lorde, as ſayeth Solomon. They which vſe this waight, are acceptable vnto God: and as the waight which they vſe is perfect, ſo doeth God allowe them for perfect, and doth not impute vnto them the reliques of imperfection which is in them. And foraſmuche as they pleaſe God, hee wil neuer bee diſpleaſed with them to deſtroy them. Whereupon it foloweth, that Solomon, ſaying, *That a perfect waight pleaſeth the Lorde*, doeth promiſe euerlaſting life vnto them which vſe it, who although they be moſt commonly poore and miſerable before the worlde, yet are they riche enough, and bleſſed, for they are heyres of the heauenly kingdome, and of wonderful riches.

2 ***When pride commeth, then commeth ſhame: but with the lowlie is wiſedome.***

Man naturally deſireth and wiſheth to bee exalted vnto glorie and honour: but hee knoweth not howe to attaine thereunto: and therefore moſt commonly inſteede to aſcende and goe forwarde, he

hee falleth backewarde: and in place of glory and honour, hee get-
teth confuſion, ſhame and diſhonour: and this is not without
hurt, but moſt commonly men are aſhamed and confounded by the
hurt that happeneth againſt their expectation and hope. Our firſt
Father Adam hath wel proued it, and before him the Angels which
kept not their firſt ſtate, but fel from their place. Now as it hath
happened vnto the Angels, and to Adam, euen ſo doeth it, and
ſhal befal vnto al them that are proude. This hath beene founde
true in al ages. And therefore according to experience, Solomon
doeth pronounce: *That when pride commeth, then commeth*
ſhame. If the world deſtroied by the fludde, had beleeued Noe the
meſſenger of righteouſneſſe, it had not fallen into ſuch ſhame and
Gen.11.9 eternal deſtruction. The builders of the Tower of Babylon haue
tryed this true. To be ſhorte, if wee examine the holy hiſtories
of the Byble, wee ſhal finde that they which haue beene raiſed
through pride, haue beene afterwardes confounded and aſhamed:
and this ſame hath not befallen vnto the reprobate onely, but alſo
vnto the children of God as vnto Dauid, and Saint Peter. It is then
2.Sam.24. good reaſon that the proude ſhoulde bee confounded and aſhamed:
Mat.26. for they riſe not vp againſt men, but againſt God, to whom al knees
ought to bowe, and to whome al creatures ought to do homage &
ſeruice, and to humble themſelues vnder his mighty hande, againſt
the which none can reſiſt. For this cauſe (I ſay) it is neceſſary that
they ſhoulde bee confounded and aſhamed: the one for a certaine
time, as Dauid and Saint Peter, who by ſhame came to repentance:
but the other, as the reprobate, lye euer therein. For what
ſhame ſoeuer they feele in this world, yet doe they not cal them-
ſelues home, to conſider againſt whome they quarrel for to hũble
themſelues, but doe harden themſelues through pride and preſump-
tion. As Pharao, when hee purſued the people of God, had di-
uers wounds, & yet he ceaſed not to rebel, euẽ ſo he is & ſhal cõti-
new in eternal confuſiõ as al other proud & arrogant perſons that
wil not ſubmit & humble themſelues. Nowe beholde, the day com-
Mala.4.1. meth that ſhal burne as an ouen, and al the proude, yea and all that
doe wickedly ſhalbee ſtubble, and the day that commeth ſhal
burne them vp, ſaith the Lorde of hoſtes, and ſhall leaue them nei-
ther

ther roote nor branche. The high looke of a man ſhal bee humbled, and the loftineſſe of men ſhallbe abaced, and the Lorde onely ſhall bee exalted in that day, &c. Wee muſt therefore be humble, and we ſhal not bee aſhamed: although the worlde doe contemne and reiect vs, and that we be counted as the filth and doung of the world, yet ſhal we not be confounded nor aſhamed for all the diſhonour that men labour to worke vs, but wee ſhall bee praiſed and honoured ſo much as ſhalbe expedient for the glory of God, and for our ſpiritual health. Ioſeph had experience therof in Egypt. Dauid had experience thereof in diuers ſorts: and therfore the Scripture confeſſeth that god hath choſen & elected him. And alſo hee generally cõfeſſeth, Euẽ thou haſt ſet me vp frõ mine enimies that roſe againſt me: thou haſt deliuered mee from the cruell man. His eyes conſider the poore, and his eye liddes trieth the children of men. Hee hath ſhewed ſtrength with his arme: he hath ſcattered the proude in the imagination of their heartes. Hee hath put downe the mightie from their ſeates, and hath exalted them of lowe degree. Hee hath filled the hungrie with good thinges, and ſent away the riche emptie. Theſe are the wordes of the Virgin Mary. Likewiſe our Lorde Ieſus, who was eſteemed as the ſhame and ſcumme of the worlde, hath beene highly exalted. Therefore wee muſt chiefly learne of our Lorde to humble our ſelues: with his example alſo he hath made vs a promiſe, which ought greatly to mooue vs to humble our ſelues. Whoſoeuer therefore ſhall humble himſelfe as this little childe, the ſame is the greateſt in the kingdome of heauen. For whoſoeeuer exalteth himſelf, ſhalbe brought low, and he that humbleth himſelf, ſhalbe exalted. God reſiſteth the proude, and giueth grace vnto the humble. Solomon doeth giue vs the very ſame promiſe, but yet vnder other words, when he ſaith, but *with the humble commeth wiſedome*. For it is as much as if he did ſay: They which are not giuen vnto their owne iudgement, which preſume not of them ſelues, neither doe eſteeme themſelues aboue others, but doe labour to keepe them ſelues within the ſimplicitie of the worde, by aſſuring themſelues of the goodneſſe and fauour of God, and of his promiſes, and through true repentance do giue thẽſelues to followe the righteouſneſſe that GOD hath commanded by his lawe, and become ſubiect and obedient vnto this good father of

Eſay.2.11.
Pſal.18.48.
Pſal.11.4.
Luke.1.51.
&.52.
&.53.
Phil.2.9.
Mat.11.29.
Ioh.13.14.
Mat.18.4.
Ioh.14.11.
Luke.14.11.
1.Pet.5.5.

heauen : Theſe (I ſay) that are ſuch, and haue ſet all their deſire to
Pſal.131.1. doe the wil of God, and which can ſay, Lord, my hearte is not
hawtie, neither are mine eyes loftie, neither haue I walked in great
matters, and hid from mee, ſuche are accompanied with wiſedome:
where vpon followeth that they ſhall not bee confounded, but ſhal-
Pro.3.16. be exalted vnto honour. For length of daies is in her right hande.
When there is ſo much riches in wiſedome, the which doeth ac-
company and follow the humble, they ſhalbe farre from ſhame, and
ſhalbe crowned with immortall glory. But to the ende that wee
ſhould not deceiue our ſelues, and in the place of humility to be ac-
companied with pride, let vs note that there are ſome which doe
count themſelues, and would alſo be eſteemed of others to be hum-
ble, and yet they burſt with pride. Firſt of all wee place the hypo-
crites which in wordes doe abace and become lowly, and yet in
Math.23.5. deede woulde bee the greateſt. As the Pope nameth himſelfe to bee
&.7.15. the ſeruant of the ſeruants of God : and yet for al that wilbe wor-
Rom.16.17. ſhipped. The Monkes and Prieſtes doe alſo abace themſelues both
Phil.3.18. in words & in geſture, but they may bee ſet amongeſt the order of
1.Tim.6.3. hypocrites, of whome our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte doeth warne vs :
Mat.7.22. And doe al their workes for to bee ſeene of men. Secondly, the
Rom.10.3. falſe Prophetes, and lying Doctours. Thirdly, thoſe are not, nor
Col.2.1. wil not bee contented with the puritie of the Goſpel, the which
Math.7.3. doeth preache vnto vs ſaluation in Ieſus Chriſte but will bee ſaued
Rom.2.1. by their workes. Fourthly, they which iudge others, and doe worſe
Luk.18.11 them ſelues, ſuch are like the Phariſees.

Heb.11.13
&.13.14.

3 *The vprightneſſe of the iuſt ſhall guide them : but the frowardeneſſe of the tranſgreſſours ſhall deſtroy them.*

Wee are all pilgrims in this worlde, but wee are ſo ignoraunt that we cannot guide our ſelues in our iourney, but are like vnto blinde men which preſume and take vpon them to walke in the way without a guide, they rather take the wrong way then the right, and doe ſtumble and knocke themſelues, and they fal & hurte themſelues, and are in danger to bee loſt. Suche is our ſtate if wee be leſt to our owne nature, wee wander out of the right pathe: and if wee be not ſet in againe, wee periſhe. For, for to guide our ſelues and to atchieue and come to the ende of our enterpriſe, we conſider and ſet before vs the greateſt number, and doe followe them: Mat.7.13. and in ſo doing wee enter at the wide gate, and walke in the broade way that leadeth to deſtruction. And in this ſort, wee doe cleane contrary to that which wee deſire: for naturally wee deſire to guide our ſelues, and ſo wel to diſpatch our buſineſſe, that wee ſhoulde haue no hurt therby. But it is neceſſary that we ſhould want of our deſire, ſeeing that in labouring to doe our buſineſſe, wee proceede therein by deceit and malice, by vnfaithfulnes, lying, and craftie packing, by hypocriſie and feignedneſſe, and doe not labour to enrich our ſelues, but with the hurt & hinderance of our neighbors, ſo that wee may well complaine with Dauid, Helpe me, Lord, for there is Pſa.12.1. not one godly man: for the faithful are diminiſhed frō among the Eſa.9.17.& children of men. And with Eſay, For euery one is an hypocrite, 59.3.9. and wicked, and euery mouth ſpeaketh folly. For your handes are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquitie: your lippes haue ſpoken lyes, and your tongue hath murmured iniquitie. After this Eſay.59.9.10. ſorte wee guide our ſelues as the blinde doe: and wee may ſay with the Prophet Eſay, in the ſame place: wee waight for light, but loe it is darkeneſſe, for brightneſſe: but wee walke in darkeneſſe. We grope for the wall, like the blinde, and we grope as one without eies, &c.

Likewiſe Solomon doth not deny, but that in this ſort wee may be guided, when he attributeth guiding and gouernance vnto integritie and vprightneſſe, and that he ſaith, *the vprightneſſe of the iuſt ſhall guide them*, and when contrarily, hee doth attribute deſtruction vnto frowardneſſe and vnfaithfulneſſe, ſaying, but the frowardneſſe *of the transgreſſour ſhall deſtroy them.* If then wee would keepe a good way, and doe well our buſineſſe, wee muſt bee indued with integrite and vprightneſſe, the which are vertues depending the one of the other, ſo that the one cannot be without the other, & it is very harde to be iudged which of them ſhould go before. Alſo we ſee here that Solomō doth ioine them together, when hee ſaith, the vprightneſſe of the faithſul or iuſt: as alſo they are

ioyned together by the Scripture. This man was an vpright and iuſt
Iob.1.1. man. Let mine vprightneſſe and equitie preſerue mee. Marke the
Pſal.25.21. vpright man, and beholde the iuſt. Noah was a iuſt and vpright
Pſal.37.37. man in his time, and walked with God, and did ſo well gouerne himſelfe
Gen.6.9. and his affaires, that he periſhed not by the flood. But to the
end that we ſhoulde not attribute any merite vnto his integritie, it
is ſaid that Noah found fauour before the Lord. And God willing
to inſtruct Abraham to gouerne himſelfe wel, ſaid vnto him, Walke
before mee, and be thou vpright. And to the ende that we ſhould
not attribute this guiding vnto Abrahams power, he ſaid vnto him.
I am God al ſufficient, or, almightie: and for to make him to vnderſtande
Gen.17.1. that Abraham of himſelf for al his integritie, could not bring
his matters to paſſe, he promiſeth him immediately, I wil make my
couenant betwene mee and thee, and I wil mutiplie thee exceedingly.
Therefore, when by integritie and vprightneſſe wee ſhal be wel
gouerned, let vs attribute nothing vnto our merites or power, but
to the onely grace of God, who by his goodnes and power worketh
in vs, and doeth giue vs both integritie and vprightneſſe. And ſith
that it is by his vertue that God doeth gouerne and leade vs, to the
end that we ſhoulde knowe whether we bee wel gouerned or no,
we muſt vnderſtand wherein conſiſteth integritie and vprightneſſe.
If we haue wel borne away and learned that which hath beene ſaid
in the places afore aledged, wee may gather that the integritie and
vprightneſſe ſtandeth in this, that by the grace and power of GOD
we ſhould be ſo led, that in al thinges we ſhoulde walke before him
according to his lawes: fearing him, and withdrawing our ſelues
from euill. If we thus walke, wee ſhalbe wel gouerned: our affaires
ſhal goe wel, and nothing ſhal hurt vs: but in ſpite of Satan and al
1.Pet.3.13. our enimies, we ſhal alwaies proſper. And who is it that wil harme
you, if ye folow that which is good? Albeit that the enimies of Iob
Iob.42.10. with Satan did labour diligently, to ouerthrowe and deſtroy him:
yet was he in ſuch wiſe gouerned by his integritie and vprightneſſe
Iam.5.11. that his enterpriſes and worke came wel to paſſe, & had a good ſucceſſe.
Contralily, albeit that as wee ſee in this worlde, the wicked, the
frowarde, the hypocrites, deceiuers, rebels, and diſobedient both to
God and their Superiours, doe diſpatch their buſineſſe well, and
that they proſper in outwarde ſight, yet ſhal they bee but a ſmoke,

and ſhall vaniſhe away, and ſhal periſhe eternally. For as Solo-
mon ſaith, *The frowardnes of the transgreſſours ſhall deſtroy thē.*
The tranſgreſſours ſhalbe deſtroyed together: and the ende of the *Pſal.37.38.*
vngodly is, they ſhalbe rooted out at the laſt. And becauſe the affli- *& 39.*
cted doe thinke the time long, becauſe of the infirmitie of the fleſh,
Dauid doeth exhorte them vnto pacience, ſaying: Hope then in the
Lorde, and keepe his way, and he ſhal promote thee, that thou ſhalt
poſſeſſe the Lande, when the vngodly ſhall periſhe, thou ſhalt
ſee it.

4 *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath: but righteouſneſſe deliuereth from death.*

It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that Solomon doeth contrary him- *Pro.10.15.*
ſelfe: for hee hath ſaide, The riche mans goods are his ſtrong hold,
and nowe hee ſaith, *Riches ſhall not auaile thee in the day of*
wrath. But if wee remember that which wee haue ſaide, howe
the former ſentence doeth not conteine any expreſſe commande-
ment or doctrine that ought to bee followed, we ſhall perceiue there
is no contradiction therein. For Solomon doth not graunt vnto
the riche that he doeth well, when he doeth aſſure himſelfe ſo much
in his riches, as to eſteeme them his ſtrong caſtle: only he doeth diſ-
couer and open the affections and thoughtes of the rich which doth
reioyce and truſt in his worldly goodes. Nowe hee ſetteth downe
a threatning, whereby hee ſheweth that it is vanitie and fooliſhnes
to truſt in riches, and that they ſhall not preſerue the vngodly from
deſtruction, when God ſhall powre foorth his wrath vpon them to
deſtroy them. That his threatening is not vaine, wee may knowe,
firſt of al by this, that in the dayes of Noe, through the great abun-
dance of riches they eate and dranke: but their goods ſaued them *Luke.17.27.*
not from the flood. Likewiſe in the dayes of Lot. The riches of *28.*
the Babilonians did nothing preuaile them, neither did it keepe & *Eſay.13.&*
ſaue them from the deſtruction of the *Medes* and *Perſians*. Long *14.*
time before whiles they were yet in glory and magnificence, and *Iere.25.*
that they made al quake before thē, the Prophets did foretel the day *1.Eſdras.1.1.*
of the Lordes wrath, which was to come, and according vnto their *Dan.5.30.*
ſaying, it came to paſſe: as may bee ſeene in Eſdras, and Daniel. The *Luke.16.23.*

riche

rich man, as recordeth Saint Luke, went to hell. The Pſalme 49.
ſheweth wel that riches ſhal not profite in the day of wrath. And
Pſal.62.10. therfore he doeth exhorte vs,not to truſt in oppreſſion, nor in rob-
bery: Be not vaine: if riches increaſe, ſet not your hart thereon.
Luke.12.15. And our Lorde ſaieth, Take heede and beware of couetouſneſſe,
&c. The riches then of the wicked ſhal not profit,but ſhal turne
Iam.5.1.2.3. to their loſſe and deſtruction: as they are threatened, Goe too now
yee rich men: weepe and houle on the wretchedneſſe that ſhal come
vpon you. I ſpeake expreſly of the wicked: for of them doeth Solo-
mon ſpeake: as he doth ſhew by the day of wrath, which ſhal fal
1.The.5.2.3. vpon them,and not vpon the righteous. For the day of the Lorde
ſhal come as a theefe in the night. Likewiſe the ſubſtance of the
righteous,wherewith they ſhal haue made them friendes and trea-
ſures in heauen, ſhal not bee vnprofitable vnto them, when GOD
ſhal declare his wrath,and execute his vengeance vpon the wicked:
Mat.25.34. but their good deedes ſhal come in remembrance before God. So-
lomon alſo doeth wel ſhewe it, when hee ſetteth heere righteouſ-
neſſe againſt *riches*,and deliuerance from death, againſt the *day of*
wrath: and that hee ſaieth, *but righteouſneſſe deliuereth from*
death. Heere according as the Antitheſis requireth, wee wil take
righteouſneſſe for the conſcience of man which is righteous and
vpright, whereby man abhorreth fraude and deceite, ſpoyling, op-
preſſion and extortion, iniurie and wrong, al iniquitie and wicked-
neſſe: and doeth in no wiſe deſire to doe wrong vnto his neighbor,
what pouertie or miſerie ſoeuer hee ſuffereth: but if hee haue
wherewith, hee is readie to diſtribute of it, and to helpe the neceſ-
ſitie of his poore neighbours, not as by conſtraint with griefe and
heauineſſe, but liberally with ioye, ſuch righteouſneſſe ſhal deliuer
Pſal.112.6. a man from death: for God wil remember it. When we thus ſpeake
2.Cor.9.9. we doe not attribute righteouſnes to workes to deſerue life before
God: for we bring workes,and drawe them out of a pure and right
conſcience,as out of a wel, whoſe ſpring and roote is fayth. For ex-
cept that a man be aſſured that God loueth him,and that he wil not
ſuffer him to want,but wil giue him ſufficient, he cannot haue ſuch
a conſcience: but before al other thinges hee hath temporal gaine,or
worldly honor in eſtimation,and careth not though he doth wrong

vnto his neighbours. It is enough for him that he come to the ende of his enterpriſe and obteine his deſire : but the certentie and aſſurance that wee haue of the goodneſſe, power , and prouidence of God, doeth frame the conſcience after ſuch ſort, that a man loueth rather to ſuffer hurt, then to bee an offence , or to doe any other hurt, or hinderance vnto his neighbours, he will rather reioyce to ſee his owne taken away from him , then to doe wrong to any other, after the example of the good ſeruantes of God, of whome the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, Ye ſuffered with ioy the ſpoyling of your goods, *Heb. 10.34.* &c. Now that the ſame proccedeth of faith, hee ſheweth, ſaying, knowing in your ſelues howe that yee haue in heauen a better, and an enduring ſubſtance. *35* And by following this righteouſneſſe, we are deliuered from death, hee doeth ſhewe it, when hee doeth exhort, ſaying, *&.38* Caſt not away therefore your confidence which hath great recompence of rewarde, And alſo when hee alledgeth out of the Prophet, that the iuſt ſhal liue by faith. When wee haue ſo many faithful witneſſes which doe alledge vnto vs that righteouſneſſe doeth deliuer from death, let vs not deſire to followe the wicked, which proſper, as it ſeemeth by their riches : for they ſhall not endure : but let vs followe iuſtice and equitie, and we ſhall liue eternally : not by our merites, but becauſe God is true in his promiſes. For to looke for the ſame goodneſſe in true righteouſneſſe, we haue neede of patience : And by this meanes wee ſhal bee partakers of theſe promiſes : as ſaith the Apoſtle, For you haue need of patience: that after you haue doone the wil of God, you may receiue the promiſe. *Heb. 10.36.* Wee ſee heere that the Papiſtes haue nothing for to build their merites nor freewil vpon : for ſeeing that it commeth of faith, it is the gift of God, the which maketh in vs both the will and the deed, euē of his good pleaſure. *Phi.2.13.* Euen ſo there is nothing for to eſtabliſhe the opinion of thoſe which aske the libertie of the fleſhe : for righteouſneſſe worketh not after his fantaſie, but according too the wil of God, the which he doth declare vnto vs by his law: which is the rule of perfite righteouſneſſe.

5 *The righteouſneſſe of the vpright ſhall direct his wayes:*
but the wicked ſhall fall in his owne wickedneſſe.

Wee wil take righteouſneſſe heere, as wee did in the former ſentence: that is to ſay, for a right and ſounde conſcience. This righteouſneſſe is not founde in the wicked, diſſemblers and hypocrites, in deceiuers and lyars, in flatterers and ſlaunderers, in theeues and vſurers: but it is proper vnto a righteous man, who walketh in integritie, ſuche is declared vnto vs. Pſal. 15. Likewiſe Solomon doeth attribute it vnto the vpright: and alſo hee denieth cloſely that it doeth not apperteine vnto the wicked. For to ſhewe the profite of this righteouſneſſe, hee hath ſaide heere before that it ſhall diliuer from death: wherevpon followeth that the perfect, right and iuſt man ſhall not dye, but liue for euer. But before that hee attaine the fruite of this life, it behoueth the perfect man to bee a Pilgrime in this worlde, and to walke in pathes which are not without great difficulties, and lets greatly painefull, the which man of himſelf cannot ouerpaſſe, in ſuch wiſe that oftentimes hee is tempted to forſake his way, and to wander vp and downe fieldes, and to enter into the brode way which leadeth to deſtruction. He is (I ſay) tempted through the ſtraightes that hee meeteth withall, the which happen from diuers partes: for in this way hee is beſieged and aſſaulted of the Diuell, by the worlde, and of his owne fleſhe, not onely weake, but alſo malicious. But his righteouſneſſe, his perfect and vpright conſcience ſhal ouercome al theſe difficulties, and ſhal paſſe ouer and eſcape al theſe ſtoppes: for by the guiding thereof the perfect man ſhalbee ſtrong in our Lorde. Hee ſhal fight by faith and hope (the guides and gouernours of his conſcience) againſt the worlde, and ſhall ouercome it. For albeit that hee ſhalbe greatly tempted to leaue his way for to followe the wicked which proſper, and in this life take their pleaſures, delightes, & eaſe, that they may bee partakers: yet is hee not carried away by ſuche temptation, but going forwarde in goodneſſe hee is pleaſed and ſatisfied with the bleſſing of God, as it is ſaide in the 37. Pſalme. Alſo though the worlde doe mocke, hate and perſecute him, yet careth hee not for it nor feareth it: but putteth his truſt in the Lorde, which hath power in heauen & in earth, he prayeth, Lord, leade me in thy righteouſneſſe. And truſting to bee heard, & to obteine his requeſt, hee ſaith, The way of God is vncorrupt, &c. The Lorde is my light, whome ſhall I feare? The Lorde is the ſtrength of my life, of whom

Eze. 3. 21. & 18. 5. & 33. 14.

Pſal. 5. 8.
Pſa. 18 30.
Pſal. 27. 1.

ſhal I bee afraide. The Lorde himſelfe doeth teache thus too fight, and to bee aſſured, ſaying, If the world hate you, knowe that it hated mee before you. John.15.18. Againe, And yee nowe therfore are in ſorrowe: John.16.22. but I will ſee you againe, and your heartes ſhal reioyce, and your ioy ſhal no man take away. As touching the fleſhe, which laboureth by his affections and vnbrideled luſtes, to make and holde him the ſlaue or ſeruant of ſinne, to make him goe aſtray, ſtumble and fall for to kill him, hee hath no care to fulfill the luſtes thereof, neither doeth hee ſuffer ſinne to reigne. In this ſorte, hee maketh ſtraight his waies, and taketh away all ſtops and lets: there ſhall nothing let him to come vnto life, neither will hee doe this onely for himſelfe, but alſo for his neighbours, to the ende that through his euill life, hee ſhoulde not turne them away, and be vnto them a ſlaunder and deſtruction. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame vnto vs in fewe wordes, when hee ſaith, *The righteouſneſſe of the vpright ſhall direct his way.* In this place Solomon taketh *direction*, for making ſtraight, and comming, for to take away all ſtoppes and lettes which hinder and hold vs from walking at our eaſe, and to attaine the place whether wee goe, without hurt. In this very ſignification it is taken, when Dauid ſaith, Make thy way Pſal.5.8. plaine before my face. This may bee ſo vnderſtoode by that which goeth before: for hauing ſaide, But I wil come into thine houſe in the multitude of thy mercies, and in thy feare will I worſhip towarde thy holy temple (and heereby declaring the great deſire that hee had to ſerue God according to his ordinance: for too obteine according to his deſire the which of him ſelfe he coulde not enioy) hee prayeth, Leade, mee O Lorde, in thy righteouſneſſe: hee alledgeth the difficulties and ſtoppes, ſaying, Becauſe of mine enimies: afterwardes he declareth it more at large, when he ſaith, For there is no conſtancie in their mouth, &c. It is alſo thus taken: The voice crieth in the wilderneſſe, Prepare yee the way of the Lorde: make ſtraight in the deſarte, a path for our God, Euery valley ſhalbe exalted, and euery mountaine and hil ſhal bee made lowe: and the crooked ſhall bee ſtreight, and the rough places plaine. Eſay.40.3.4. The Prophete doeth ſhew it, when hee ſaith, I will goe before thee, & make the croked wayes ſtraight, &c. Eſay.45.2.

Beſides this, that wee learne this ſignification by the places afore

fore alledged, Solomon doth ſhewe heere, that it muſt be ſo taken:
nowe againſt righteouſneſſe, hee ſetteth wickedneſſe ; and againſt
the vpright man, the wicked ; and againſt direction, he ſetteth falling,
ſaying: *But the wicked ſhall fall in his owne wickedneſſe.* Albeit
the cleane contrary appeare to outward ſight, and to the carnal
ſenſe, and that the Scripture doeth beare witneſſe of the proſperity
of the wicked, ſaying, For there are no bandes in their death, but
Pſal.73.4. they are luſtie and ſtrong: but it is of no continuance, the Prophet
Dauid doeth witneſſe in the ſame Pſalme. For hauing conſidered
verſe.18. their ende, he ſayth, Surely thou haſt ſet them in ſlippery places,
and caſteſt them downe into deſolation. Beholde hee ſhall trauel
Pſal.7.15. with wickedneſſe: for he hath conceaued miſchiefe, but he ſhal
&.16. bring foorth a lye. Hee hath made a pit and digged it, and is fallen
Pſal.9.16. into the pit that hee hath made. Againe, The wicked is ſnared in
the worke of his owne handes. But though the wicked deſerueth
to fall through his wickedneſſe, becauſe it commeth of himſelfe
and is his owne doeing, (for Solomon ſetteth his wickednes
againſt the righteouſneſſe of the perfect man) yet the perfect man
doeth not deſerue by his righteouſnes to haue his way directed to
winne eternal ioy and felicitie. This iuſtice is not properly his
owne, but it is the gift of God, that worketh in vs both will and
Phil.2.13 the deede euen of his good pleaſure. Not that wee are ſufficient
2.Cor.3.5. of our ſelues, to thinke any thing as of our ſelues: but our ſufficiencie
is of God. For I knowe nothing by my ſelfe, yet am I not
1.Cor.4.4. thereby iuſtified. A good and perfite conſcience then doeth not
iudge him ſelfe to bee worthie of, or to deſerue any thing at the
handes of God, but it holdeth it ſelfe aſſured, and is ſtayed vppon
1.John.3.21 the grace of God. Beloued, if our heart condemne vs not, then
haue wee boldeneſſe towardes God, and whatſoeuer wee aske, wee
receiue of him, becauſe wee keepe his commandementes, and doe
thoſe things which are pleaſant in his ſight. And in this boldneſſe
it is giuen vnto thinges which are pleaſaunt vnto GOD:
as it is ſhewed before in the two and twentieth verſe. The
righteouſneſſe then of the perfect man ſhall direct his way, becauſe
that beeing vnſeparably ioyned together with faith, it is
guided thereby vprightly to followe the will of GOD according

ding vnto his moſt holy woorde.

6 *The righteouſneſſe of the iuſt ſhall deliuer them: but the tranſgreſſours ſhall bee taken in their owne wickedneſſe.*

When wee are in a plaine and eeuen way, that is not crooked, nor vneaſie: and alſo wee take good heede where wee ſtep and ſet our feete: what ſnares ſoeuer are laid therein, may eaſily bee perceiued, and eſcaped with leſſe hurt: euen ſo as wee haue ſeene, the righteouſneſſe of the perfect man doeth direct his way. Albeit then that they lay ſnares in diuers ſorts, to catch and intrappe the faithful and righteous, and though they bee ſtrongly aſſaulted: yet foraſmuch as their righteouſneſſe doeth make plaine and direct their way, they eſcape, and are deliuered, in ſuch wiſe that they auoyd the threateninges of God, they haue a good iſſue of their temptations, and ouercome all perſecutions. Noe eſcaped the flood, wherewith God had threatened the worlde ſixe ſcore yeere before. Lot was not comprehended in the ouerthrowe of Sodome, though he dwelt in the mids thereof, the which God did foreſhewe vnto Abraham. Great are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lorde deliuereth them out of al. *Pſal.34.19.* God is faithfull, which will not ſuffer you to bee tempted aboue that you bee able to beare, &c. *1.Cor.10.13* The Lord knoweth to deliuer the godly out of temptation, &c. *2.Pet.2.9.*

Alſo though the perſecutours doe take away theſe temporal goods, and kill the body: yet wee eſcape ſafe out of their handes, when they can doe nothing to the ſoule: but for the worldly and tranſitory goods, wee obteine heauenly, and eternal, for a ſhorte life, and ful of miſerie, wee ſhall liue in eternall felicitie. It is as though the righteouſneſſe of the iuſt ſhoulde deliuer them. But yet let vs not attribute our deliueraunce vnto our righteouſneſſe, as ours properly: but let vs knowe and confeſſe that it is a ſingular gift of GOD through Ieſus Chriſte. For yee are of him in Ieſus Chriſte. *1.Cor.1.30.* And becauſe that this iuſtice is giuen and imputed vnto vs, the Scripture counteth it ours. For *2.Cor.5.20* hee hath made him to bee ſinne for vs, which knewe no ſinne, that

wee ſhoulde bee made the righteouſneſſe of God in him. Albeit then that the holy Scripture doeth attribute righteouſneſſe vnto vs, and alſo all felicitie and eternal proſperitie therevnto: yet let vs not thinke that it either magnifieth vs or our workes, or our power, or our free will: but it confeſſeth that God wil ſuffer his graces and giftes to bee loſt, but doth make them to bring foorth good fruite, which remaine for euer. Thus doeing hee rewardeth his gifts and graces in his faithful ſeruantes, encreaſing gift vppon gift, and grace after grace. Solomon doeth ſhewe it wel, when hee doth attribute vnto righteouſneſſe the guiding, and directing of the way, and deliuerance. Let him therefore which reioyceth, reioyce in the Lorde: as Ieremie ſaith, O Lorde, I knowe, that the way of man is
Iere. 10. 23. not in himſelfe, neither is it in man to walke and direct his ſteppes.
Iere. 31. 18. Againe hee prayeth, Conuert thou mee, and I ſhall bee conuerted.
Ezec. 36. 27. Againe, Ezechiel ſaith, And I wil put my ſpirite within you, and cauſe you to walke in my ſtatutes, and yee ſhall keepe my iudgementes and doe them. In this ſort, we wil walke and gouerne our ſelues in a ſounde conſcience, righteouſneſſe and vprightneſſe: by the which wee wil ſo direct our wayes, that wee ſhal not goe aſtray to bee loſt for euer, but ſhal eſcape al dangers: albeit that it ſeeme vnto the eyes of the wicked, and to the feeling of the fleſhe, that wee bee miſerable, and vtterly vndoone and loſt without remedie. Contrarily, the wicked and vnfaithful which haue no feare nor reuerence of God, which haue no hope in his goodneſſe and trueth, nor no humanitie or faithfulneſſe towardes their neighbours, doe nowe glory and reioyce in their vngodlineſſe, malice, wronges, and cruelties, wherein they walke without feeling of conſcience, and therein are very quicke and ſharpe, and thinke wel that they ſhal remaine vnpuniſhed, and ſhal enioy their wiſhe and deſire: the which for to attaine and enioy, they vſe ſubtilties and craftie dealing, maliciouſneſſe and crueltie, and doe ſettle and aſſure themſelues therein. But they are greatly deceiued: for they ſhall periſhe through their owne euil, by the whiche they thought to mainteine themſelues. Solomon hath alreadie pronounced it, in the thirde and fifth verſes: and nowe againe hee ſaieth, *But the tranſgreſſours ſhalbe taken in their owne wickedneſſe.*

The Pſalmiſt ſaieth, But malice ſhal ſlay the wicked. What maliciouſneſſe then, or crueltie ſoeuer that the wicked and vnfaithful doe inuent, yet the perfit and vpright men, which haue ſounde conſciences, and doe not ymagine any thing, either againſt the honour of God, or againſt the profite and ſaluation of their neighbours, ought not to bee afraide nor doute whither they ſhal eſcape out of their wicked enterpriſes: ſeeing that the faithful in al times haue experimented and tried the helpe and ſuccours of God, and his mightie deliuerance: ſeeing alſo (that which is the chiefeſt) that God who cannot lye, hath promiſed it, as the ſcripture doth often witneſſe.

Pſal. 34. 21.

7 *When a wicked man dyeth, his hope periſheth, & the hope of the vniuſt ſhal periſh.*

There is no man in this worlde but liueth in ſome hope, the which we al ſhewe foorth by the woorke wherevnto we apply our ſelues, and by the counſels and purpoſes that we intende and by the enterpriſes that we take in hande. For except wee tende to ſome ende, and do looke for ſome gaine of our works which ſhould continew and bring ſome profite, delite, honour or glory, wee ſhoulde be negligent, and not careful to apply our ſelues to ſomething. True it is, that ſometimes wee wil buſie our ſelues about ſome woorke, and wil take in hande ſome enterpriſe without hauing reſpect to the ende: but in purſuing the thing, wee conceiue ſome hope which maketh that man is more diligent about his woorke: and becauſe hee hopeth wel of his woorke, his harte and ſtomake increaſeth and hee goeth forewarde the more earneſtly and with greater affection. Nowe as the woorkes are diuers, and the purpoſes and the enterpriſes alſo, and that there are both good and bad, and that by the good wee tende vnto a good ende, and by the euil vnto an euil end: and that the one cometh of a good deſire, & ſounde conſciēce, and ſo is wel ruled, and the other from mallice and frowarde conſcience and thereby is peruerſe and miſgouerned: euen ſo alſo the ende thereof is contrarie: the one ſorte obteine according to their hope, and the other are void of their expectation. Solomon hath ſhewed it vs here aboue in the 10. chap. & in the 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29.

and 30.verſes. And nowe ſpeaking of them which are voide of their hope, he ſaieth, *when a wicked man dyeth, his hope periſheth, &c.* The firſt parte of this threatening may haue twoo meanings, and both true. For firſt of al, when the wicked doe ſee themſelues to proſper in this worlde, they delight and reioyce in themſelues, they promiſe vnto themſelues perpetual felicitie, and doe brag and boaſt ſo much as they can, hoping that al ſhal goe wel for them, and that no euil ſhal happen vnto them. Dauid ſaieth, For the wicked hath made boaſt of his owne hearts deſire, and the couetous bleſſeth himſelfe: but they feele the contrarie, as Dauid ſaith, The wicked ſhal turne into hel. And thus it is true that the hope of the wicked ſhal periſh, when hee dyeth. The hope of the vngodly is like the duſt that is blowne away with the winde, and like a thinne fome that is ſcattered abroade with the ſtorme, and as the ſmoke, which is diſperſed with the winde, and as the remembrance of him paſſeth, that tarieth but for a day. Secondly, when the wicked is mightie in credit, in autoritie, in riches, in Lordſhips, and in other things which are eſteemed of in this world, many do ſet in foote to commende him and flatter him: euery man laboureth to doe him ſeruice and to graunt his requeſtes: euery man boweth and humbleth himſelfe before him, and are at his commandement: for they hope to winne ſomething by him. The flatterers which were in king Sauls court, which ſerued him in perſecuting of Dauid, and incouraged him theretoo, hoped greatly that Saule would do them good, and promote them vnto honour: & thought not that Saule ſhould ſo ſoone haue beene taken away: but the miſerable ende of Saule hath made them voyde of their hope. Alſo al their like doe prooue that when the wicked dyeth, that the hope they had doeth periſh. This is an ordinarie thing, and therefore it hath no neede of probation. Theſe twoo interpretations are true, as hath beene ſaid, but to the ende that we ſhoulde not be compelled to ſay that Solomon vſeth heere a rehearſing, wee wil chooſe the ſeconde ſenſe for the meeteſt, to the ende that of the preſent ſentence wee might make thereof twoo contrary partes. And for the ſeconde which is, *alſo that the hope of the vniuſt ſhal periſh.* Wee will apply the firſt, after this ſorte, that the wicked doe not come to the

Pſal.10.3.
Pſalm.9.17.
Wiſd.5.14.

ende of their enterpriſes as they deſire and hope, but receiue the contrary, whereby they are confounded: and ſo their hope periſheth, and this is chiefly in death, wherein they ſhall remaine and bee vndoone for euer. For to ſhewe that it cannot otherwiſe happen, and that the wicked muſt needes bee fruſtrate and voide of their hope, Solomon vſeth a Verbe which doeth not ſignifie that which is or ſhal bee doone, but that which is already doone: & thus it doth ſignifie vnto vs, that we ſhoulde thinke the thing to bee loſt, which wee cannot obteine, and whereof there comes no good end. For if wee will giue the Verbe according to his time, wee ſhall ſay that the hope of the wicked is loſt and gone. And by this word we may ſay that Solomon doth ſignifie, that God doth not alwayes tary vntill death, to confound the wicked by making them void of their hope: as alſo it is the trueth, and diuers haue prooued it true and do ſtill feele it: as it is very expedient, for the reſt and tranquilitie of the ſeruantes, and children of God. Againe, wee haue not ſaid, that it is onely referred vntil death. But chiefly Pharao looked ſurely too holde the children of Iſrael in bondage, ſo did Roboam alſo, Zennacherib, and Nabuchodonoſar. They which inuent and ſtriue againſt the Goſpel, and doe perſecute the faithful from this life, they looſe their hope, and ſhall looſe the ſame in death, except they come to repentance, and that they ſettle their hope more ſtedfaſt. Saint Paul whẽ he perſecuted the Chriſtiãs, loſt his hope for this life: the which was helthful vnto him, they which haue receiued the *interim*, haue hope to obteine a counſel which ſhall refourme all errours. They haue beene for a certaine yeeres put off: GOD, for his mercy ſake, put them off ſtil, to the ende that they ſhoulde returne for to conſider from whence they are fallen, and that they ſhoulde change their hope.

Exo.1.
1.King.12.
Eſay.3.6.
Dan.4.

8 *The righteous eſcapeth out of trouble, and the wicked ſhall come in his ſteede.*

For to eſtabliſhe right iudgement, wee muſt not iudge according to the ſight of our eyes, nor after that that we ſee happen dayly: otherwiſe we ſhold eſteeme the righteous to be moſt wicked, & the moſt vngodly ſhould be in our opiniõ the beſt people. But we muſt take heede, to that which God pronounceth, and if wee iudge after his ſentence, wee ſhalbe righteous iudges. Nowe hee excepteth not the righteous man from troubles, as may bee ſeene both by examples and by witneſſes which haue beene already alledged: but in diuers places he promiſeth to deliuer the faithful man from miſery and calamitie. Solomon after the Pſalmiſt and others, doth giue vs witneſſe thereof, when hee ſaith, *The righteous eſcapeth out of trouble*. As the holy ſcripture doth not determine the time, ſo ought wee not too aſſeſſe ſpecial iudgement vpon this man or that man: but we muſt be certaine, that if we walke vprightly, and in ſoundneſſe of cõſcience, and that we be patient in aduerſitie (how long & harde ſoeuer they ſeeme vnto vs) that at time conuenient wee ſhalbe deliuered. *Heb.10.36.* For yee haue neede of patience, that after yee haue doone the wil of God, yee might receiue the promiſe. The iuſt doth not alwayes eſcape tribulation, but is taken out of the worlde. Contrarily what proſperitie ſoeuer we haue in this worlde, howe long ſoeuer it be, yet if we walke with an euil conſcience, we cãnot looke but for miſery and calamitie.

This is that which Solomon meaneth, when he ſaith, *But the wicked commeth in his place*: as if hee ſaide, the righteous which was counted vnhappy and miſerable through the trouble that oppreſſed him, doeth eſcape the ſame, and is placed happily: and the wicked which did oppreſſe him, falleth into the miſery wherein he laboured to bring and to keepe the iuſt: and ſo hee commeth in his place.

When Solomon calleth *trouble* the place of the righteous, it is not to ſay, that the righteous haue deſerued trouble (though wee bee all worthie to be afflicted, not onely with temporal ſorrow, but with perpetuall torments, if God ſhoulde enter into iudgement with vs) but hee meaneth the wicked (which thinke to yeelde vnto the righteous that which hee needeth, when hee troubleth and moleſteth him) ſhall at the laſt come into the ſame ranck and order, and ſhall not eſcape: as it is declared of Herode, Acts the 12. Chapter. Wee may alſo ſay that *in his place*, after the language of Solomon, importeth as much as for him, or aboue him: as if Solomõ woulde ſay, that the wicked ſhall come into trouble for the iuſt, whome hee hath oppreſſed, or in ſteede that he laboured to ſubdue the righteous, he ſhalbe placed aboue him, and the wicked ſhalbee as the footeſtoole of the righteous. The firſt ſenſe is true: ſo are 2.Theſ.1.6. theſe two laſt. For it is a righteous thing with God, to recompenſe tribulation to them that trouble you. We may ſee alſo in diuers pla- Mala.5.3. ces that God threateneth, and puniſheth the wicked for the righte- Pſal.47.4 ous, and that the wicked are ſet vnder the iuſt. The victories that Pſal.49.14 God hath giuen vnto his people of Iſrael againſt the infidels, haue bin a figure therof: when truly it is ſaid, They lie like ſheepe in the graue: death deuoureth them, and the righteous ſhal haue domination ouer them in the morning. This ſame ſhal be thus done, becauſe the iuſt are members of Ieſus Chriſt. But to the end, that none ſhould preſume of his owne worthines and excellencie, of his owne power or cunning, (becauſe it is ſaide, the iuſt eſcapeth from trouble, and alſo it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight, that Solomon doeth attri- Pſal.110.1 bute ſome vertue vnto the iuſt, as if hee did drawe him ſelfe out of miſerie: let vs know that Solomon vſeth here a verbe paſſiue: wherby hee ſignifieth that it is by an other, that the righteous eſcapeth: and truely we are like vnto a litle birde taken in the net, the which can not eſcape, except ſome other breake the net. For this cauſe we Pſal.124.1 muſt humbly confeſſe it, If the Lord had not bene on our ſide, when men roſe vp againſt vs, they had then ſwallowed vs vp quicke. But the wicked doeth wel deſerue trouble, neither ought the fault to be imputed to any other then to him ſelf: for it is he which falleth into it of his owne proper malice.

9 *An hypocrite with his mouth hurteth his neighbour: but the righteous ſhalbe deliuered by knowledge.*

The worlde doeth ſo flowe with hypocrites, that the Scripture Eſai.9.17. doubteth not to accuſe al the bodie of the people of God, of hypocriſie. For euerie one is an hypocrite and wicked, and euery mouth ſpeaketh follie. Now if the people of God is ſuch, what is the reſt of the world? For whereas there is no true knowledge of God, where his feare hath no place, and men wil be wel counted of, and iudged honeſt men, there muſt needes al bee filled with hypocriſie, fraude, and vnfaithfulnes. Whereupon it foloweth, that there are but fewe people which doe not hurte their neighbours with their

mouthes. As Solomon ſayeth, *The hypocrite with his mouth hurteth his neighbour,&c.* Heere Solomon compareth the mouth of the hypocrite vnto a ſworde, or an inſtrument wherewith men craftily vſe to hurt their neighbour, before he can take heede. And herein he ſheweth, howe dangerous the hypocrites are, and howe carefully we ought to take heede of them, to the ende that we may eſcape their ſnares, and not to ſuffer any hurt by them. Wee ſhal haue the care required hereunto, if by right knowledge of the truth wee reiect al wickednes, and abhorre the ſame: and do loue righteouſnes, giuing our ſelues to doe well. Solomon doeth ſhewe it vs, ſaying, *But the righteous ſhalbe deliuered by knowledge.* In al eſtates, there is ſome hypocriſie, as wee may ſee, but too much; but the moſt dangerous, is the ſame of falſe Prophetes, which come in ſheepes clothing, and by their lying and falſe doctrine, and by their long prayers, they bring temporal hurt, deuouring widowes houſes, & which worſt is, they ſhut vp the kingdome of heauen
Luke.12.1 from men. And therefore our Lord exhorteth earneſtly his Apoſtles to looke diligently to them ſelues for falling into it. And foraſmuch as God ſuffereth no hurte whereby wee haue laboured too hurt our neighbours to goe vnpuniſhed, let vs know that the warning which Solomō giueth, doth cōteine a priuie & ſecrete threatening, whereby hee foreſheweth vnto the hypocrites their deſtruction, to the ende that wee ſhoulde knowe that their faire ſhewe of
Mat.7.21. holyneſſe and religion, is abhominable before God: as our Lorde alſo ſheweth vs, Euery one that ſaith vnto me, Lord, Lorde, ſhal not enter into the kingdome of heauen. Nowe as they goe to deſtruction, euen ſo if we ſuffer our ſelues to be deceiued by them, wee ſhal periſh alſo: for if the blinde leade the blinde, both fal in the ditche.
Mat.15.14. Wherfore we muſt ſtand vpon our watch, as Solomon teacheth vs, & as we haue already touched, whē he ſaith, *but the righteous ſhal be deliuered by knowledge.* If in ſoūdnes of conſciēce we labour to walke vprightly, as the word doeth teache vs, what aſſaultes ſoeuer the hypocrites doe giue vs, yet ſhal they not hurte vs. Solomon doeth thus promiſe vs: But though there bee but fewe that enioy this promiſe, and though the hypocrites doe much hurte, wee neede meruaile thereat. For there is an infinite number

of hypocrites, and the righteous and they which haue true knowledge, are almoſt none, and yet the goodnes they haue is not theirs. Now foraſmuch as there is none righteous, but ſo farre as it pleaſeth God of his grace to iuſtifie and accept him for righteous, imputing vnto him the righteouſnes of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and though wee knowe nothing but ſo farre as the Lord teacheth vs by his holy Spirite, giuing vs the true vnderſtanding of his holie worde, and therby regenerating and renewing vs: it foloweth, that if we eſcape the danger of hypocrites, that it is of the only grace and goodnes of God, and that therein is nothing of our might or power, merit or free will. Wherefore, it is wel required that wee ſhould walke in humilitie, and ſhould be diligent to aske of God, that it might pleaſe him to guide vs in righteouſnes, and teache vs the ſame. Wee haue neede to continue in ſuche prayers, and chiefly againſt falſe Prophets: for they are the moſt dangerous hypocrites. Saint Paule *Pſal.5.9. & 86.11.* doeth diligently warne vs of ſuche falſe hypocrites. Nowe I beſeeche you brethren, *Rom.16.17.* watche diligently them which cauſe diuiſion and offences, contrarie to the doctrine which ye haue learned, and auoide them. Brethren, be ye folowers of me, *Phi.3.17.18* and looke on them, which walke ſo, as yee haue vs for an enſample. For many walke, of whome I haue tolde you often, and nowe tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the Croſſe of Chriſt. Beware, *Collo.2.8.* leaſt there bee any man that ſpoyle you through Philoſophie, and vaine deceit, through the traditions of men, according to the rudimentes of the worlde, and not after Chriſte, &c.

10. *In the proſperitie of the righteous the Citie reioyceth: and when the wicked periſh, there is ioye.*

The proſperitie of the righteous may be taken after two ſortes: firſt, for the ioye and proſperitie, the eaſe and reſt, the fauoure and defence, which the iuſt receiue and enioye by the grace and goodneſſe of God. Secondly, for the helpe and ſuccours that the righteous doe miniſter vnto them that haue neede, and the faithfulnes that they vſe towardes al them that they deale with, not hurting any man, but doing good to al men ſomuch as they can. But after what ſorte ſoeuer Solomon ſpeaketh of the proſperitie of the righteous, whither it be of it which they do, or of that which they receiue, it ſeemeth, that they feele and prooue the cleane contrarie of that which he ſayeth. Abraham was verie riche in Cattel, in ſiluer, and in golde. *Gen.13.2 & 14.15. & 18.3. & 21.25.* Hee proſpered in battel againſt the Kings which had taken his coſen Lot captiue, &c. And as, God did aſſiſt him, ſo was he ready alſo to do wel. The deliuering of Lot doth witneſſe it, & the hoſpitalitie vſed to the Angels, &c. And yet wheras he arriued, they enioyed not the ſame, as may be knowne by the two rauiſhments of his wife: and by that, that the ſeruants of Abimelech had violently taken away a Wel of water. *Gen.13.5. Gen.19.1 2.Pet.7.8.* Lot was riche and dwelt in Sodome, and yet did wel, as witneſſeth his hoſpitalitie: and albeit hee was righteous, yet the citie did not enioy the ſame. And nowe there is no people that are ſo muche and ſo cruelly purſued in al countries, cities and villages as are the righteous. *Eſay.59.14* Therefore iudgement is turned backewarde, and iuſtice ſtandeth farre of: for trueth is fallen in the ſtreete, and equitie cannot enter. And if the righteous labour to helpe their neigbours after their power, and to bee a good enſample, they are iudged to bee hypocrites and ambitious. Euen ſo then it ſeemeth that the citie doeth not reioyce at the proſperitie of the righteous. If they bee riche, they are enuied therefore, and if it bee poſſible they ſhalbe ſpoyled thereof: If they would make any riche, they are iudged, they would be ſeene of men, & be praiſed and honored therfore. For to anſwere this, let vs firſt know that after this preſent Antitheſis or compariſon, wherein the proſperitie of the righteous is ſet againſt the deſtruction of the wicked, wee muſt take the *proſperitie* in the firſt ſignification. Secondly there is no rule ſo general but that there is ſome exception: or elſe that Solomon doeth heere take the *Citie* for chiefe and beſt part thereof, which are the honeſt people dwelling therein, which deſire and ſeeke the peace and proſperitie of the righteous, and are glad when the righteous doe wel, and bee voyde of trouble, or elſe, better to ſpeake, and more agreeing with the Antitheſis (ſeing that God reioyceth not at the deſtruction of the wicked, as hee witneſſeth, and that the children of God for to folowe their heauenly Father, ought not to reioyce at the perdition of the wicked) we wil take reioycing, and alſo the crie of *ioye*, for the cauſe that bringeth them foorth. Wee doe not willingly reioyce at our euil ſucceſſe and loſſe, but when our affaires doe proſper wel, then it cauſeth vs to reioyce and to ſing for ioy. Solomō therfore meaneth, that the citie is happy & bleſſed, whē the righteous doe proſper in the midſt thereof: and yet more happie, when the wicked are rooted out of it: as Solomon doeth ſignifie it when hee is not contented to ſay there is ioye, but hee ſayeth, there is a crie or ſong of ioy. This is after a ſorte ſhewed vs, when God promiſeth Abraham that hee wil not deſtroy Sodome, if there may be founde tenne righteous in the midſt of it. If then wee deſire that our Citie ſhould proſper and be happie, and that for the happineſſe and proſperitie it doeth reioyce, wee muſt ſtudie and be giuen to righteouſnes, and worke, ſo much as wee can, that the righteous may dwel without any trouble, without contempt, and alſo without perſecution: and not to hinder nor turne them away from doing their duetie. As touching the reſt, for to take our profite of this preſent ſentence, and of the expoſition thereof, we muſt beware of truſting and leaning vppon our owne diligence, but rather that by Fayth wee looke vnto God, who teacheth vs by his worde, that it is he onely which prouideth good Magiſtrates and rulers, and he alone that ruleth countries and Cities. And thus if we wil reioyce at the proſperitie of our countrie, we muſt wiſhe and deſire the good ſucceſſe and aduancement of the righteous: and foraſmuche as it is a worke depending vpon the prouidence of God, wee muſt pray vnto him that it would pleaſe him to raiſe vp iuſt and righteous men, and to make them goe forwarde, and to proſper them in the vocation whereunto hee hath called them, and that he would hinder and ſtoppe the wicked from comming forward, and to roote out them which goe forward.

Eze.18.23 & 33.11. Luk.15.4

Gen.18.32.

11 *By the bleſſing of the righteous, the Citie is exalted: but it is ſubuerted by the mouth of the wicked.*

Foraſmuch as Solomon ſetteth here the bleſſing of the righteous againſt the mouth of the wicked, it is not needeful to examine

after howe many ſortes bleſſing is taken in the Scriptures, for the
vnderſtanding of this place. For the Antitheſis doeth ſhew vs that
Solomon by the bleſſing, meaneth the gratiouſnes and goodnes that
proceedeth from the mouth. The righteous out of their good trea-
ſures, doe bring foorth good things : they gladly folowe the counſel
of Saint Paule : Let no corrupt communication proceede out of
your mouthes : but that which is good, to the vſe of edifying, that
Ephe.4.29 it may miniſter grace vnto the hearers. And bee yee not drunke
& 5.18.19 with wine, wherein is exceſſe but be ye filled with the Spirite,
Col.3.16. ſpeaking vnto your ſelues in Pſalmes, and Hymnes, and ſpiritu-
& 4.6. all ſonges, &c. Againe, Let the worde of Chriſte dwell in you
plenteouſly, in al wiſedome, teaching and admoniſhing your owne
ſelues, in Pſalmes, and Hymnes, and ſpirituall ſonges, &c. Let
your ſpeeche bee gracious alwayes, and ſeaſoned with ſalt, that
1.Pet.4.11 yee may know howe to anſwere euerie man. If any man ſpeake,
let him ſpeake as the wordes of God. The bleſſing therefore of
the righteous ſtandeth in good counſels, in holie exhortations and
corrections, in vnfayned prayers, in prayſe and thankeſgiuing,
proceeding from a good and pure affection of the heart. By this
bleſſing *the Citie is exalted*, as Solomon ſayeth, and alſo as ex-
Gen.41.33 perience ſheweth. Egypt was exalted by the counſel of Ioſeph: for
inſteede to be ſuppreſſed and conſumed by famine, it had prouiſion
to ſuſtaine it ſelfe, and therewith it was the refuge of other poore
hungrie ſtarued people, and chiefly of the houſholde of Iacob. The
Exo.1.11. children of Iſrael were in great diſtreſſe, and were mightily oppreſ-
ſed by the cruel bondage that Pharao layde vppon them : but by
the counſels, exhortations, prayers, and ſupplications of Moyſes
and Aaron, they were ſo preſerued and exalted, that they were
made victors and conquerers ouer them that had oppreſſed them:
they robbed them, and eſcaped out of their handes : they were ſa-
ued by the redde ſea, through the which they went with drie foote,
but their enemies were ouerwhelmed and drowned in the bottome
thereof. So long as the children of Iſrael woulde beleeue the coun-
ſels of their good Iudges and Kinges, and woulde receiue and fol-
lowe the doctrine, admonitions and corrections, and trembled at,
and feared the threatenings of the Prophets, they were preſerued
and

and exalted: for they were deliuered from their enemies, and made conquerers. The Eccleſiaſtes or Preacher ſayeth: I haue alſo ſeene this wiſedome vnder the ſunne, and it is great vnto mee. A little Citie, and fewe men in it, and a great King came againſt it, and compaſſed it about, and builded fortes againſt it: And there was founde therein a poore and wiſe man, and hee deliuered the Citie by his wiſedome. Nowe that by wiſedome, hee meaneth the words ſpoken wiſely, it is manifeſt by this that hee ſayeth, That the wiſdome of the poore wiſe man was deſpiſed, and his words not heard.

Eccle. 9. 13. 14. 15. 16.

Wee had al deſerued by our ſinne to bee oppreſſed with eternall damnation, but when by Fayth and repentaunce, wee haue receiued the doctrine of the Goſpel, which is the chiefe part of the bleſſing of the righteous, we haue bene exalted vp into heauen.

Ephe. 2. 6.

We ſee then how profitable, yea & neceſſarie it is, to heare and folow them which ſpeake rightly: and that Solomon ſayeth the trueth, when hee pronounceth that the Citie *is exalted, &c.* euen when it receiueth quietly the bleſſing. Noe was righteous, and nothing ſpared his worde, in admoniſhing, reproouing, threatening, and condemning the worlde by the building of the arke: and is called the eight perſon, a Preacher of righteouſnes, and yet the worlde was not exalted, &c. Iuſt Lot, both with ſight and hearing exhorted diligently the Sodomites, and rebuked them, and yet they were not exalted, &c.

Hebr. 11. 7
2. Pet. 2. 5.
Gen. 19. 2.

The moſt righteous, and righteous of al other, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte ſpared not his bleſſing, but beſtowed it both in words & miracles, which were the deſtruction of many vnfaythful and indurate. Then began he to rebuke the Cities wherein many of his miracles had bene done. &c. The like we may ſee nowadayes, in diuers places. We muſt therefore vnderſtande, that the Citie which with feare and reuerence receiueth the bleſſing of the righteous, ſhalbe exalted therby, that is to ſay, it ſhal obteine peace, reſt, and felicitie, and ſhal remaine firme & ſtable for euer, though the world iudge otherwiſe. Contrarily, if wee giue eare to the wicked, and delight in theyr ſpeaking, wee runne to deſtruction: as Solomon ſheweth, ſaying, *But it is ſubuerted by the mouthe of the wicked.*

The children of Iſrael haue often tried it in the wilderneſſe, and after when they were come into the lande of Canaan. They which giue credite vnto Mahomet and to the Pope,haue their part therin: ſo haue they alſo which haue receiued the blaſphemous interim. The leaſings, flattering ſpeeches, ſlanderings, idle and wanton wordes, and filthie communication bring great deſtruction: but in *Mat.16.18.* the meane while, the gates of hell cannot preuaile againſt them that are builded vpon the rocke.

12 *Hee that deſpiſeth his neighbour, is deſtitute of wiſedome: but a man of vnderſtanding wil keepe ſilence.*

Wee count a man to be verie couragious, and to haue an vpright and ſtout heart, when hee goeth boldly forwarde with his enterpriſe, be it right or wrong,not caring for any man, and without feare of offending, and is readie to beare iniuries and wronges,diſpraiſe,and diffamation, reproches,and cauillations, violences and crueltics, if it appeare vnto him, that he cannot otherwiſe come to the ende of his purpoſe and enterpriſe. This is the iudgement of the carnal, and worldlings, which thinke that their neighbours doe nothing belong vnto them. But if by the worde of God wee beholde that wee al come from one Father Adam, wee ſhal knowe how we belong one vnto an other, and that wee are al one fleſhe and one blood. Thus muche for the carnal coniunction, whereby wee are taught that we are faintharted, and without courage, fooliſhe and voide of care, vnderſtanding and right iudgement, if wee deſpiſe our neighbours: and chiefly when we ſhewe openly the contempt, in being mooued and raiſing noyſe and vprores vpon them, in driuing them away, and reiecting them through impatiencie, or arrogancie,or choler.Solomon ſheweth it,whē he ſetteth diſdain againſt ſilence; *and want of wiſedome, vnto a man of vnderſtanding:* and that hee calleth him which is deſpiſed,neighbour. Nowe in his language which hee vſeth, *Neighbour*, ſignifieth him which pleaſeth vs, him that wee deſire, him that wee loue, and whoſe companie wee keepe, or hee to whome wee owe ſuche gentlenes, familiaritie and louing kindneſſe. Whoſoeuer therefore doeth deſpiſe him, doeth ſhewe him ſelfe verie weake, and wanting good wil and pure

affection: for he ſtriueth againſt his nature, and doeth againſt that
which hee oweth by right of kindred and ſtocke. Nowe if for the
reſpect that we are al of one carnal parentage, it is not laweful for
vs to deſpiſe our neighbours, except wee woulde haue men to iudge
of vs by the woorde of God, that wee haue a faint hart: by a more
ſtrong reaſon, they which bragge and woulde bee counted Chriſti-
ans, ought wel to beware from deſpiſing their neighbours, nor
giue any token of contempt, either by woordes or geſture: & that
in folowing the great humilitie and modeſtie of their head, which Eſa.42.2.
wil not cry nor ſtand vp againſt them, &c. But ſeeing they are mem-
bers of one body, vnder one head Ieſus Chriſt, they ought to bee
careful the one for the other, without any contempt of the vileſt and
baſeſt, and without enuie againſt the moſt excellent: As Saint Paul Rom.15.1.
doeth ſhewe it. Thus much for the ſpiritual parentage, in the which 1.Cor.12.1
the coniunction is farre more ſtraight and more neere, then is the Gal.6.1.
knitting togither of carnal kindred. Wherfore, the true Chriſtians
ſhoulde bee very careful to mainteine this coniunction, by follow-
ing the exhortation of Saint Paule, Nowe therefore as the elect of
God, holie and beloued, put on tender mercy, kindneſſe, hum-
bleneſſe of minde, meekenes, long ſuffering, &c. Beholde, howê
good & howe comely a thing it is, brethren to dwel euen togither. Pſal.133. 1.
Let them mark this, fulfilled in vs, They ſhal breake their ſwords al- Eſay.2.4.
ſo into mattockes, and their ſpeares into ſithes: nation ſhal not lift
vp a ſword againſt nation, neither ſhal they learn to fight any more.
Againe, The woolfe alſo ſhal dwel with the lambe, and the Leopard & 11.6.
ſhal lye with the kidde and the calfe, and the Lyon, and the
fat beaſt togither, and a little childe ſhal leade them. Thus doo-
ing, wee will not diſdaine our neighbours, neither ſhal bee
faintharted, but wee ſhalbee wiſe and of vnderſtanding, wee
ſhalbee quiet and peaceable, gentle and kinde: and this which Solo-
mon ſaith ſhalbe fulfilled in vs, *But a man of vnderſtanding wil
keepe ſilence.* The ſilence or ſecretneſſe whereof Solomon ſpeaketh
ſtandeth not in ſpeaking neuer a word, and to be as it were dumbe:
but becauſe that in ſilence al things are quiet, and without noyſe,
without vprores, and without contention, the Scripture taketh ſi-
lence for peace, gentleneſſe, and lowly behauiour, ſweete and louing

conuerſion: and alſo for abſtinence, when we forbeare to doe any
thing, and that wee abſtaine from it, and that wee vexe not our
ſelues, or that we bee not grieued for any thing which happeneth,
Gen.34.5 and that we ſtriue not as the amaſed and witles doe. Silence is ſo
taken in ſome places, as foloweth: Nowe Iacob hearde that hee had
defiled Dinah his daughter, &c. Therfore Iacob helde his peace, vntil
they were come. The Lorde ſhal fight for you: therefore holde
Exo.14.14 your peace. So they deſpiſed him, and brought him no preſents: but
1.Sam.10.27 he held his tongue. Keepe ſilence before mee, O Ilands, and let the
Eſa.41.1. people renewe their ſtrength, &c. Nowe to bee wiſe, and to be thus
Eſa.11.2. ſilent, we muſt learne it of our Lord and receiue it from him. For on
him it is that the ſpirite of the Lorde reſteth: the ſpirit of wiſdom
and vnderſtanding, the ſpirite of counſel and ſtrength, the ſpirite
Eſa.42.4. of knowledge, and of the feare of the Lorde. Hee ſhal not faile
nor be diſcouraged, til he haue ſet iudgement in the earth. And alſo
Mat.11:29. hee himſelfe exhorteth vs to learne of him, and promiſeth reſt vnto
our ſoules.

13 *Hee that goeth about as a ſlaunderer, diſcouereth a ſecret: but he that is of a faithful heart, conceileth a matter.*

There is no man but deſireth to haue a priuie friend which is no talker and babler, to the ende that if hee haue any thing in his hart which doeth trouble and grieue him, that hee may ſafely open the ſame vnto his friend, & that he may be ſomwhat eaſed & relieued: hee hopeth alſo that that which he hath declared, ſhalbe kept ſecret, or at leaſt wiſe that the thing ſhal not be expounded otherwiſe then it was ſpoken: and that hee wil not labour to hurt him nor to
bring him into hatred with his neighbour, in folowing the commandement,
Exo.20.16. Thou ſhalt not beare falſe witnes againſt thy neighbour:
Leu.19.16. Thou ſhalt not walke about with tales among thy people.
There are ſome which thinke and beleeue, that it is not euil done to reueale ſecretes, to condemne their neighbours and to proclaime their imperfections: but Solomon doth condemne them, calling the ſlaunderers, when hee saieth, *hee that goeth about as a ſlaunderer,*

doth

doeth reueale a ſecret. And it is for good cauſe that ſuch people are Mat.7.5. condemned. For firſt of al they are hypocrites. Secondly, they are tranſgreſſors of the lawe. Thirdly, they ſet themſelues before the lawe in condemning it. Speake not euil one of another, brethren. Iam.4.11. Hee that ſpeaketh euil of his brother, or hee that condemneth his brother, ſpeaketh euil of the lawe, and condemneth the lawe: and if thou condemneſt the lawe, thou art not an obſeruer of the lawe, but a iudge. Infidelitie and vnfaithfulneſſe hath taken roote in their hartes, wherby they are led to betray their neighbours, in diſcouering that which they ought to keepe ſecret. Solomon ſheweth this vnfaithfulneſſe, when hee ſetteth, the faythful heart, againſt the ſlaunderer, ſaying, *Hee that it is of a faythfull heart, conceileth a matter.* Hee that inuenteth no treaſon againſt his neighbour, wil keepe his mouth that it ſhal not hinder his neighbour, for to publiſhe his imperfections, or ſpeake leaſing of him: otherwiſe he ſhould not be of a faithful hart, from the aboundance whereof the mouth ſpeaketh. Solomon is not contented to ſay *faythful* ſimply, but addeth, *of heart:* not that there is any faithful which are vnfaithful of heart, but it is for a more greater expreſſion, and for to ſhewe vs that what fayre countenance or goodly face that we beare to our neighbours, except it proceede with good and true affection of heart, that there is none but al deceipt in vs, treaſon and vnfaithfulneſſe, as we know it, and that our conſcience doth ſo iudge and condemne vs, though wee labour to counterfaite and diſſemble it with our ſelues, & that we ſtriue to make our ſelues beleeue that we proceede faithfully, when by counterfayting wee mock our neighbors. Further let vs note, that the 2. part of this ſentence agreeth with the ſame that is conteined in the 10. chap. & 12. verſe. But loue couereth al miſdeeds. For if wee be not led by loue, we cannot bee faithful vnto our neighbours, for to diſſemble 1.Cor.13.1. their imperfections: there is no ſtrength in vs that is woorth any thing except it bee exerciſed by loue. Nowe if by loue wee muſt exerciſe faithfulneſſe the which is ſet againſt ſlaunder, it foloweth that the ſlaunderer is ledde with hatred to diſcouer the ſecret, and conſequently that hee is a murtherer. Whoſoeuer hateth his brother, is a manſlear. 1.Iohn.3.15. Whereof it followeth that Solomon

1.Iohn.3.14. & .15. doeth cloſely condemne him vnto eternal death which reuealeth ſecrets. He that loueth not his brother, abydeth in death: againe, You know that no manſlayer hath eternal life abyding in him. Contrarily, wee know that we are tranſlated from death to life in that that we loue the brethren. Yet neuertheleſſe let vs not feare to be accuſed of ſlaunder, though wee accuſe them which lead a ſlaunderous life, though wee rebuke them, reprooue and threaten them, either priuately or publikely, and though we labour to get them puniſhed and chaſtened, to the ende that ſlaunders may bee taken away from the people of GOD, and the offenders brought againe vnto GOD by true repentance ſo much as wee can. Otherwiſe wee *Mat.18.17. 1.Tim.5.20. 2.Tim.4.2.* ſhoulde bee vnfaythful vnto God and to his Churche, wee ſhoulde bee like them which ſuffer the ſheepe to be deuoured in ſparing the woolues. Let vs knowe therefore that this ſentence of Solomon ought not to hinder vs from folowing the doctrine of our Lorde, and of Saint Paule.

14 *Where no counſel is, the people fal: but where many counſellers are, there is health.*

Albeit that a nation or a people is compounded of many perſons which haue their fantaſies and counſels, their woorkes and deedes not only diuerſe, but alſo very often contrary, and that the one tende vnto one ende, and the other to the contrary, ſo that the one conſpire to vndoe and deſtroy that which the others doe, and builde, yet for al this are but one body: therefore when there is ſuch diuerſitie, yea rather contrarietie, the people muſt needes goe vnto deſtruction and bee ſcattered. Euery kingdome diuided *Mat.12.25.* againſt it ſelfe ſhalbee brought to nought, and euerie citie or houſe, deuided againſt it ſelfe, ſhal not ſtande. And therefore the Lorde which hath created the people and nations, and hath placed them on the earth, as he hath ſeene good, making a great ſimilitude to dwel togither, not willing to haue his woorke broken and hindred, but deſiring the increaſe & conſeruation thereof, hath conſtituted and appointed heads and ſuperiours, for to guide and gouerne many vnder one lawe and ordinances, and to cauſe al the people by thẽ to

tend

tende al to one ende, though it haue many and ſundrie members, and that their ſtates and vocations are diuers. But ſuch a gouernement is not of ſmal weight, neither the charge of eaſie execution, ſo that it is not in the power of euery one to occupie if hee will ſuch adminiſtration and office. Al braines are not ſettled nor wel aduiſed: but for the greateſt parte are wandring and amaſed, and fewe there bee which knowe howe to gouerue themſelues, much leſſe howe to gouerne others. If euery man therefore ſhoulde meddle in gouernement, there ſhould bee greate diſorder & confuſion and al ſhoulde fal into decaye. Wherefore, it is needful that none ſhoulde take in hande this adminiſtration, except hee were called of GOD, and that by his grace hee be endewed with wiſedome, for to knowe wel to mainteine peace and vnitie amongeſt them which ſeeke no warre nor diſſention, and deſtroy them which are at debate and diſcorde together, and make them yeeld to peace and quietneſſe which deſire nothing but tumultes and ſeditions: otherwiſe al things goe to deſtruction. Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame, when hee ſaieth, *Where no counſell is, the people fal.* The counſel which heere hee meaneth is that which chiefly is requyred in Kings and Princes, that they may rule woorthily, whereof hath beene ſpoken heere aboue in the 8. chapter, 14. 15. and 16. verſes. I haue ſaide chiefly: for to them is this woorde directed. Bee wiſe nowe therefore, O yee Kings: bee learned yee that are iudges of the earth. It is they to whome GOD doeth this honour to cal them Gods. They are they that exerciſe the iudgementes of God. And alſo when Kings and Magiſtrates are deſtitute of godly counſel, the people whoſe eyes are ſet vpon them, and doeth folowe them, doe runne into deſtruction. The children of Iſrael haue truely prooued it, when they wanted good iudges and good kings: and alſo for to foretel them their deſtruction, the Lord doeth threaten to depriue them of good and wiſe gouernours, and counſellers, ſaying, I wil appoint children to be their Princes, and babes ſhal rule ouer them. But what counſel ſoeuer the ſuperious giue, except the people doe attend to folowe them, they ſhal fal. Noe gaue good counſel, wherby hee laboured to reduce the worlde, and to teache it the way of righteouſnes: but the worlde ceaſed therfore neuertheleſſe to fal. Moyſes was a wiſe counſeller, and executed his office faithfully, but

Pſal. 2. 10. & 82. 6.

2. Chro. 19. 6

Eſay. 3. 4.

yet the people of Iſrael did often fal vnder his gouernement. The people of Iſrael had many good iudges and kings replenished with diuine counſel, vnder whoſe gouernement they fell. The ſame people alſo had many good Prophetes: but becauſe they hardened their heartes, and woulde not receiue their doctrine, but contemned their exhortations, warnings, reprehenſions and threatenings, and perſecuted them, they fel: And yet to this day remaine ſo decayed, becauſe they refuſed our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles. &c. We ought to feare leaſt we happen into lyke fal, not only corporal, but alſo ſpiritual and eternal, if hauing good Princes & faythful Paſtours which doe truely teache vs, wee refuſe and diſdaine their counſel: but if wee wil auoide falling, we muſt bee diligent folowers of counſel, I ſay the good and holy counſels of ſuch as haue the charge to guide and gouerne vs, that wee become ſubiect and obedient vnto our Lordes and ſuperiours in that which is not againſt God, and that in feare and reuerence wee receiue the wholeſome doctrine of our Paſtors and Miniſters, and that wee bee not ſo lightly and eaſily caried away to folowe the fooliſh and falſe opinions of ſome troubleſome perſon. Thus doing we ſhal remaine ſtedfaſt and ſtable, and ſhal neuer periſh. Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame ſaying, *But where many counſellers are, there is health.* Whereupon let vs firſt of al note that except wee folowe both the ſpiritual and temporal gouernement of ſuch as are appointed and ordeined of God, for to counſel and leade vs, wee haue no ſtedfaſtneſſe nor ſure abyding, but ſhal fal. For it is aſmuch as if wee were deſtitute of wiſe and good counſellers. Secondly foraſmuch as wee haue no manner of ſaluation, but from the grace and goodnes of GOD, it foloweth right that it is he which prouideth men of counſellers that can giue good counſel: as alſo wee may ſee by the the confeſſion of Ioſeph. Likewiſe in Exodus, where Moyſes confeſſeth that hee is ſent of God. The Prophetes alſo doe ſhewe it, when they ſpeake nothing but the woorde of God, and pronounce that hee hath ſent them. God doeth teache vs it, ſaying, Then wil I turne myne hande vppon thee, and burne out thy droſſe, til it bee pure, and take away al thy tinne. And I wil reſtore thy iudges as at the firſt, and thy counſellers as at the beginning. &c. Thirdly, ſeing that

Gene.41.16.
Eſa.1.25.26

that among a number of men of counſel there is health, one man alone ought not to preſume that by his wiſedome hee is ſufficient to leade and gouerne a nation: but if hee be called vnto ſuch an office and adminiſtration, he ought to looke and prouide, for honeſt and faithful men to bee his helpers, for to eaſe him and to order the people with him, by folowing the counſel that Iethro gaue vnto Moyſes.

Exo.18.18.

15 *He ſhal be ſore vexed that is ſuretie for a ſtranger: and he that hateth ſuretieſhip, is ſure.*

Albeit that Solomon doeth thus ſpeake, yet it is not to ſay, that hee alloweth a man ſhoulde doe according as he ſaith heere. For as touching the firſt parte, hee ſhoulde allowe the carefulneſſe of the fleſh, and worldly ſorowe, the diſtruſt and extreeme feare of pouertie, the which hee ſignifieth by *ſhalbe ſore vexed:* as wee may vnderſtande, when againſt to bee ſore vexed, hee ſetteth, *to be ſure.* Such affliction ought to be farre from the mindes and hartes of the faithful, which are the children of God their father, who hath care ouer them: and ought to be aſſured of him without al doubte: as Chriſt and the Apoſtle S. Paule do giue warning, the which is meete for to comfort them that are bounde for other: for that which doth moſt of al vexe them, is that they feare to bee preſſed and conſtrained to pay the debt of the ſtranger whom they haue pledged, without recouering payement, and ſo they come to pouertie. Seeing then that GOD by his woorde doeth warne vs, not to afflict our ſelues after this ſort, nor to feare what hurt man can doe vnto vs: let vs know that Solomon doeth not allowe ſuch afflictions: but doeth declare how for the moſt part they which become ſuretie for others, are affectioned and vexed, when afterwards they ſee they cãnot obteine payement of him for whome they are become ſuretie: then they are troubled & greatly vexed in their mindes. Solomon doth wel expreſſe it, when he is not contented ſimply to ſay, hee is afflicted: but he is ſore vexed or afflicted. And by this expreſſion hee ſheweth vs that it is not good, ſodenly and eaſily to become ſuretie for ſuch as wee knowe not. As touching the ſecond parte, which is, *Hee that hateth ſuretieſhippe, is ſure.* If hee allowed that which hee pronounced, he ſhould allowe twoo vices:

Mat.6.
Heb.13.5.6.

The firſt is, hatred, whereof the childrẽ of God ought to be ſo void, that they ſhould hate no man for any hurt they ſhal doe to them: but ſhould loue their enemies, and be ready to helpe them. Solomõ then doth not allow that we ſhould hate the notaries & ſcriueners which do bind vs & require vs to be bound for another, albeit that often by ſuch obligations wee ſuffer much euil: but hee painteth vs out the affection of the greateſt parte of them which binde themſelues when they ſee themſelues troubled, and are areſted vpon the obligation, then they hate the notaries and ſcriueners, and do curſe them, and cannot behold them with louing countenance: & if they could, they would prooue them falſe and counterfaite men: for often they ſpare not to ſay, they are ſuch. The ſecond vice that hee ſhoulde allow, were a vaine confidence & hope that they haue neuer to want when they haue ſome riches, and haue not bene ſuretie for other. Albeit that in what eſtate ſoeuer we bee, howe miſerable ſoeuer the ſame bee before our eyes and in the feeling of the fleſh, we muſt neuer miſtruſt nor feare to want, but that we muſt be aſſured of the prouidence, carefulneſſe and goodneſſe of our heauenly father, and ſay with Dauid, The Lorde is my ſheephearde, I ſhal want nothing: (otherwiſe wee pray not in true fayth when wee pray, giue vs this day our dayly bread) notwithſtanding what great worldly proſperitie ſoeuer wee haue, wee muſt not truſt theretoo: for it is not in our power to mainteine our ſelues therein, but the Lorde hath changed it, as hee doeth ſee good: for al thinges are in his hande, and hee doeth diſpoſe as hee pleaſeth, without that any man can reprooue him of vniuſtice, or crueltie, or of tyranny. Iob hath wel tryed the change, and hath confeſſed that it came of God. When the wicked doe feele it, they grinde their teeth, and murmur thereat, and doe deſpite GOD in blaſpheming him. Let vs followe righteous Iob, if wee haue any wealth, let vs not bee neuerthemore aſſured, nor reioyce any whit the more in them, but in the onely goodneſſe of the Lorde and in his knowledge. Let not the wiſe man glorie in his wiſedome, nor the ſtrong man glorie in his ſtrength, neither the riche man glorie in his riches. And if wee looſe let vs take patience, on what ſide ſoeuer the loſſe commeth, knowing that nothing hapneth vnto vs but by the prouidence

Pſal. 23. 1.

Iere. 9. 23.

uidence of God. The Lorde killeth, and maketh aliue, bringeth downe to the graue, and raiſeth vp. The Lord maketh poore.& maketh riche. Moreouer beſides this, let vs note, that albeit that Solomon doeth not allowe that any man ſhoulde be aſſured becauſe hee is not bound, yet hee doeth ſomewhat teache vs that it is farre better to enioy our goods freely & at libertie, then to bee bounde for other, and chiefly when hee is vnknowne, as alſo it hath bene handled in the ſixt chapter. Furthermore let vs note that Solomõ doth teache vs, that if wee loue our neighbours as wee ought, that wee wil not require them to be ſuretie for vs, except it be neceſſarie, and alſo that we haue wherewith to anſwere them and to keepe them from ſorowe, and to mainteine them that they may poſſeſſe their goods and ſafely enioy them.

1.Sam.2.6. & 7.

16 *A gracious woman atteineth honour: and the ſtrong men attaine riches.*

Whiles wee liue in this life, and keepe a houſe, and walke with our neighbours and acquaintance, wee haue neede of reputation, not that wee ſhoulde ſeeke the glorie of the worlde, but that wee ſhoulde ſo liue, that they amongeſt whome wee dwel, may finde no faute in our kinde of liuing, but that it ſhoulde bee ſo quiet, honeſt, iuſt, and holy, that they may bee conſtrained to glorifie GOD, and to eſteeme and iudge wel of vs, to praiſe and commende vs. Solomon doeth ſhewe vs the way to come vnto ſuch reputation, when hee ſaieth, *a gracious woman attaineth honour*. He teacheth vs to be gracious, if wee would attaine honour: albeeit that hee nameth but the woman, and doeth promiſe her honour, if ſhe be gracious. Hee ſpeaketh thus, becauſe that man in the houſhold is the head and ſuperiour, and that the woman oweth him ſubiection and obedience. Man is not of the woman, but the woman is of the man. Wiues, ſubmit your ſelues vnto your huſbands, as vnto the Lord. Nowe for to be ſubiect and giue obedience as it behoueth, ſhe muſt bee gracious, that is to ſay, that ſhe ſhoulde gouerne the houſholde after her huſbands deſire, without contrarying him in any wiſe: that ſhee doe nothing in the houſe with trouble and vprores, but that ſhee gouerne her houſholde in al,

1.Cor.11.8.
Ephe.5.22.

ſoftneſſe, humilitie, peace, and gentleneſſe: and that without ſhee be not an offence vnto his neighbours, neither by word nor deede: but that ſhe be ſober, modeſt, humble, and gentle towardes al men, and chiefly towardes his neighbours, amongſt whome ſhe is moſt conuerſant. This is the graciouſneſſe that Solomon requireth heere of the woman: and Saint Paule, I wil therefore that the yonger women marie, and beare children, and gouerne the houſe, and giue none occaſion to the aduerſarie to ſpeake euil. The elder women likewiſe, that they bee ſuch in behauiour as becommeth holineſſe, not falſe accuſers, not ſubiect too much wine, but teachers of honeſt thinges. Likewiſe, let the wiues bee ſubiect to their huſbandes, that euen they which obey not the woorde; may without the woorde bee wonne by the conuerſation of the wiues. The women which are thus gracious, ſhal attaine honour. Firſt of al towardes their huſbandes, except they bee out of their wits, furious and madde. Honeſt and good men hauing ſuch wiues, wil make great account of them, and wil earneſtlie loue them, and wil ſhewe al humanitie and gentlenes to them. Secondly, the houſholde, as the children and ſeruants, wil loue them, wil honour and reuerence them, wil obey them, and feare to offend them. Thirdly, their neighbours wil eſteeme wel of them, they wil ſpeake wel of them, and wil beholde them with great admiration, and wil bee at their commandement in al honeſtie. And ſeeing that Solomon promiſeth vnto gracious women, honour: when women ſee thẽſelues diſdained, let them confeſſe that they are not ſo gracious as they ought to bee, or that for their ſinnes God doeth humble and make them contemptible, or elſe that they haue to doe with vncourteous and churliſh men, whereby God wil prooue their patience. For alſo this is the manner of the worldlings, to contemne and perſecute the true ſeruants of God. Notwithſtanding God ceaſeth not therefore to performe his promiſe towardes women, ſo farre as is expedient for their ſpiritual health. What contempt then ſoeuer they be in, yet let them not ceaſe to ſhew themſelues gracious. And if women which are the weakeſt veſſels, ought to ſtriue to ſhewe themſelues gentle for to attaine honor: by a more ſtronger reaſon ought men (which are the heads and ought to be more ſtronge, & ſhewe by their example the way to the women) to be gentle for to obtain

1.Tim.5.14.
Titus.2.3.
1.Pet.3.1.

honour,otherwiſe they are wel worthy to be deſpiſed.But although the churliſh,whether they be men or women,deſerue wel to be deſpiſed and depriued of al honour, the which Solomon doeth attribute but vnto the gracious women, yet becauſe God hath cōmanded children to honour their fathers and their mothers, they muſt honour their parents,of what manners ſoeuer they be,when obeying and being at their commandement, they breake not the lawe of the Lorde.Children obey your parents in al things:for that is well pleaſing vnto the Lorde. The men and maide ſeruantes for to doe their duetie wel,ſhoulde not take heede vnto the manners of their maiſters and dames, but they ſhoulde looke to be ſubiect and giue obediēce in al things,not only to the good, but alſo vnto the ſharpe and rigorous.By a more ſtrong reaſon then muſt wee obey thē that are good and gracious,otherwiſe, ſo much as in them lyeth,they aboliſh the promiſe. *And the ſtrong men attaine riches.* With eſtimation wee haue need of riches for to ſuſtaine this corporal body during this lyfe.And therefore, after that Solomon hath ſhewed vs how we ſhal attaine honor,he teacheth vs how we ſhal get riches. Wherein wee ſee it is neceſſarie that a father of houſhold ſhould be ſtrong,and that therewith hee ſhoulde exerciſe him ſelfe to labour, and to put foorth his ſtrength: for if hee bee ydle,ſlacke and ſlouthful,and doeth not beſtowe the tyme about good woorkes,after his eſtate whereto hee is called, it is aſmuch as if hee were feeble and weake,and were deſtitute of ſtrength and might, yea and much worſe.For the man which cannot labour, ought not only to bee excuſed from labour,but alſo vpholden, and the ſtrong ought for to aſſiſt him,and to diſtribute vnto him his dayly bread, according as his neceſſitie requireth.But foraſmuch as God hath ordeined from the creation of the worlde that man ſhould labour: for the Lorde God tooke man and placed him in the garden of Eden, for to dreſſe and keepe the garden,and that ſince the fal of Adam, neceſſitie hath bin laid vpon him to worke,and that S.Paule agreeing to this ſcripture,doeth admoniſh vs,let him that ſtoale, ſteale no more.but let him rather labour,&work with his hands the thing which is good, that he may haue to giue vnto him that needeth.This wee warned you of,that if there were any, which would not woorke,that hee ſhould not eate.

Collo.3.20. & 22.

Ephe.6.1.5. & 2.9.

1.Pet.2.18.

1.Tim.6.2.

Gen.2.15. & 3.17.

Ephe.4.28.

2.Theſ.3.10.

Wee doe not vnderſtande thereby that it is neceſſarie that euery
one ſhoulde imploye himſelfe to the labour of the bodily handes
in the earth, or any other handie woorke. For as the powers are
diuers, ſo are the ſtates and vocations, and ſo alſo are the labours
diuers. And the mightie which imploy their might to labour
either with body or with minde, or with preaching, according
as they are called, doe gather riches. They get ynough,
for to mainteine them in this preſent life, and are contented with
that which it pleaſeth GOD to ſende them, and thus they are
riche: for as it is commonly ſaide, a contented minde is greate
riches, and there is no greater riches nor more commodious
Pſalm.37.11 then is contentation. But meeke men ſhal poſſeſſe the earth,
& 16. &c. Againe, a ſmal thing vnto the iuſt man is better, then greate
riches to the wicked and mightie. If then wee wil get riches,
let vs ſtudie for righteouſneſſe, and thereby let vs imploy the
ſtrength that GOD hath giuen vs either corporal or ſpiritual vnto
goodneſſe, euery man according to his vocation. For it is
not neceſſarie that all men occupie themſelues in bodily labour.
For as our Lorde ſaieth of the miniſters of his woorde, The
Mat.10.10. labourer is woorthy of his hyre. The Lorde alſo hath ordeyned,
1.Cor.9.14. that they which preach the Goſpel ſhoulde liue of the Goſpel. The
1.Tim.5.17. elders that rule wel, are woorthy of double honour, ſpecially they
Act.18.3. which labour in the worde and doctrine. But ſome wil ſay that S.
& 20.33. Paule was an Euangeliſt, and yet hee ate his bread with the labour
& 34. of his hands. Againe, hee ſaith, I haue coueted no mans ſiluer, nor
golde, nor apparel. Yea, ye knowe that theſe handes haue miniſtred
vnto my neceſſities, and to them that were with me. I anſwere, that
1.Cor.9.12. it is lawful for them which alſo are aſwel able as S. Paule to doe as
& 2.11. he did. If others with you be partakers of this power, are not we rather?
neuertheleſſe, wee haue not vſed this power. Likewiſe it is
lawful for them to liue of their calling and miniſtery, as it appeareth
by the places alledged before. But when the riches are attributed
vnto the mightie, let vs firſt of al note that it is not to ſay that
our power deſerueth riches, otherwiſe we ſhould not neede to aſke
our dayly bread: but let vs know that the Lord doth giue vs power,
and the vſe thereof, as by an inſtrument to helpe our neceſſitie. And
2.Cor.9.8. God is able to make al grace to abound toward you, that ye alwaies

hauing al ſufficiencie in al things, may abounde in euery good work. Pſal.128.& 62.11. Secondly that in liuing ydlely, we ſhoulde not deſire to liue at the coſt of other, but folowing the commandement of God, we ſhould eate of our owne labour, and we ſhalbe bleſſed. Thirdly, that it is lawful for vs to poſſeſſe riches, ſo that wee come not to them by vnlawful meanes, and that wee doe not ſet our hartes vpon them. Saint Paule alſo doeth not commande vs to caſt away riches, but that wee ſhoulde not waxe proude of them. Charge them that are 1.Tim.6.17. riche in this worlde, that they bee not highminded, and that they truſt not in vncertaine riches, but in the liuing God, which giueth vs abundantly al things to enioy. And albeeit that our Lorde doeth ſay vnto his diſciples, Verily I ſay vnto you, that a riche man ſhal Mat.19.23. hardly enter into the kingdome of heauen: yet doeth hee not condemne riches, but them that put their truſt in them. Children, howe Mark.10.24. harde is it for them that truſt in riches, to enter into the kingdome of God. Fourthly when wee imploye our ſtrength to labour according to our vocation, though we do not heape together aboundance of goods, and that wee doe not greatly gaine in outwarde ſight: yet if wee bee contented with that which it pleaſeth God to ſende vs, wee enioy riches and obtaine greate gaine. 1.Tim.6.6. Fiftly, if wee bee poore and miſerable, let vs acknowledge that wee doe not beſtowe our labour, after the ſtrength that God hath giuen vs, but do hyde and burie the talent of the Lorde in the earth, by liuing in ſlouthfulneſſe and careleſneſſe: or that wee doe not faythfully, and truly our woorke: or that we labour exceſſiuely and too earneſtly to gather riches together. Or elſe let vs learne that the Lorde knoweth it is more expedient for vs to bee poore then to be riche. Sixtly, let vs confeſſe the goodneſſe of GOD, which is not contented to giue vs ſtrength, but woulde that the ſame ſhoulde profite vs, and that it ſhoulde get and obteine for vs riches to keepe vs. In the ſeuenth place, although it ſeeme like that the worldlinges are riche, and that the faythful are tempted with their proſperitie, Pſal.73.12. and to ſay, Loe, theſe are the wicked, yet proſper they alway and increaſe in riches: yet doe they not properly attaine to riches, for they are ſooner depriued of them then they woulde, neither are Luke.12.16. they partakers of the heauenly. Surely thou haſt ſet them in ſlip- Pſa.73.18.

perie places,and caſteſt them downe into deſolation. But the faithful doe truely attaine riches, for they are alwaies readie to forſake them for to winne the true and heauenly.

17 *He that is merciful,rewardeth his owne ſoule: but hee that troubleth his owne fleſh,is cruel.*

Though a man doeth giue but a litle,if the ſame bee according to his abilitie, yet doeth hee truly helpe the neceſſitie of his neighbour(as ſaith S.Iames, If a brother or a ſiſter be naked and deſtitute of dayly foode, and one of you ſay vnto them, departe in peace, warme your ſelues,and fil your bellies, notwithſtanding yee giue them not thoſe things which are needful to the body,what helpeth it? And whoſoeuer hath this worldes good, and ſeeth his brother haue neede, and ſhutteth vp his compaſſion from him, howe dwelleth the loue of God in him?) It foloweth ſeeing that Solomon calleth him merciful, that *rewardeth his owne ſoule,* that in this place, *the ſoule* is taken for the neighbour, whome although that God hath commanded vs to loue as our ſelues, wee ſhoulde eſteeme as our owne ſoule:ſeeing alſo that we are members one of another and one ſelfe body,wee ought to eſteeme the ſoules of our neighbours, as our owne,and to folowe that which is ſaide, for by one ſpirit are we al baptized into one body. And al that beleeued, were in one place , and had al things common. And the multitude of them that beleeued,were of one hart,and of one ſoule. Thus doing, wee ſhalbe merciful to our ſoules,for wee ſhal ſuccour the neceſſitie of our needie members and in the ende wee ſhal obteine rewarde. Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhal obteine mercie. Make your friendes with the riches of iniquitie &c. Hee hath diſtributed and giuen to the poore: his righteouſneſſe remayneth for euer:his horne ſhalbe exhalted with glorie. Contrarily,he that taketh care but of himſelſe,is not merciful vnto his neighbor, nor to his owne body,though he haue great aboundance of riches, and is mery and doeth make good cheere. Wo be to you that are rich:for ye haue receiued your conſolation. O foole,this night wil they fetch away thy ſoule from thee: then whoſe things ſhal thoſe bee which thou haſt prouided? We ſee therſore that the world iudgeth

Iam.2.15.
1.Iohn.3.17.
Rom.12.5.
1.Cor.12.13.
Ephe.4.4.
Acts.2.44.
& 4.32.
Mat.5.7.
& 25.34.
Luke.16.9.
Pſa.112.9.
Luk.6.24.
& 12.20.
& 16.19.

geth amiſſe, when it iudgeth that men are merciful vnto themſelues when they make great cheere. Seeing then that the ſcripture doeth not cal him merciful that is good to himſelf, it is neceſſarie that the *ſoule* muſt heere ſignifie our neighbour: but chiefly them of houſholde, as the wife, the children, the men and mayde ſeruantes. 1.Tim.5.8. Theſe are they to whome wee muſt firſt of al ſhewe mercy. If there bee any man that prouideth not for his owne, and namely for them of his houſholde, hee denyeth fayth, and is woorſe then an infidel. Gen.12.5. And alſo the ſcripture calleth them ſoules. Then Abraham tooke Sarah his wife, and Lot his brothers ſonne, and al their ſubſtance that they poſſeſſed, and the ſoules that they had gotten in Harran. &14.21. Then the king of Sodom ſaide to Abraham, Giue mee the perſons or ſoules, and take the goods to thy ſelfe. Notwithſtanding, if wee wil take *ſoule,* for the perſon of the merciful, there ſhalbe none inconuenience, except in place of ſaying,

Hee that is mercifull, rewardeth his owne ſoule, we muſt ſay, The merciful man aſſureth or pleaſeth his ſoule: that is to ſay, that he is ſo wel affectioned towards his neighbours, that hee forgetteth himſelfe, and wil not take his delightes, but ſuffereth rather then he wil forſake his neighbours in their neceſſitie, ſo that if hee hath ſworne though it were to his owne hinderance, hee wil not breake his othe. Pſa.15.4. It is eaſie for a man to occupie himſelf to doe his neighbours pleaſure and ſeruice, when he may conueniently do it without hinderance. But true charitie, which is heere briefly deſcribed vnto vs, according to this ſenſe, is ſtirred vp with the feeling of anothers miſery, and with the euil that another ſuffreth, as with his owne aduerſities. 1.Cor13.5. Loue ſuffereth long: it is bountiful: loue enuieth not: loue doeth not boaſt it ſelfe: it is not puffed vp. Rom.12.9. It is the ſame whereunto the Apoſtle exhorteth vs, Let loue bee without diſſimulation. Col.3.12. Nowe therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloued, put on tender mercie, kindneſſe, humbleneſſe of minde, meekeneſſe, long ſuffering, &c. The loue which he requireth, is not a colde thing: but they are true affections ſuch as the fathers and mothers beare towardes their Children. Our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte hath exerciſed this charitie more then all John.15.13.

other, when he hath ſuffred ſo much for our ſinnes. Greater loue then this hath no man, when any man beſtoweth his life for his friendes. Heereby haue wee perceiued loue, that he laide downe his life for vs. 1. Iohn. 3. 16. Beholde theſe are twoo expoſitions vpon the firſt part of this ſentence, which are diuers and not contrary. They agree with the compariſon that Solomon maketh of the merciful and the cruel, when hee ſaieth, *But hee that troubleth his owne fleſh, is cruel.* Heere hee ſignifieth vnto vs that the wicked, rather then hee wil bee put by of his deſires, and hindred of his purpoſe, wil not abſtaine to inuent againſt his parentes and kinſfolke, and to hurt them, euen to put them to cruel death if it bee poſſible. Hereof might be brought many examples.

18 *The wicked woorketh a diſceitful woorke: but hee that ſoweth righteouſneſſe, ſhall receyue a ſure rewarde.*

If we would not loſe our labour, but haue our work to profit as it is the deſire of thoſe that labour, and apply themſelues to ſome woorke, let vs take heede from folowing the wicked, to doe as they doe: They make greate ſhewes of their dooings, but the iſſue and the ende, is not according theretoo. Some of them haue great apparance of continual proſperitie, and ſeemeth vnpoſſible that they ſhould come vnto pouertie and beggerie: other ſome ſeeme to bee of ſuch power and authoritie, that it is vnpoſſible they ſhoulde bee humbled: and other ſome againe, haue ſo faire a ſhewe of religion and holineſſe that it ſeemeth right that G O D is ſtraightly bounde vnto them, and that they deſerue the ſame, that it is not poſſible for them to be damned. But as it is ſaide, al is not golde that gliſtereth, euen ſo the goodly ſhewes of the wicked are vaine and falſe. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee ſaieth. *The wicked woorketh a diſceitful woorke.* By the which woordes wee muſt vnderſtande that not onely they deceiue others, but alſo thẽſelues, they perſwade themſelues they cannot fal from their degree and ſtate, and that al muſt happen as they woulde haue it, but whatſoeuer they take in hande and doe, commeth to nought againſt their expectation.

The woorde of *diſceite* doeth ſhewe it vs very wel: ſo doeth the ſeconde part of the Antitheſis or cōpariſon alſo, when immediatly hee ſaieth,

Pſal.5.18.

But hee that ſoweth righteouſneſſe, &c. Hee ſetteth the ſeed of righteouſneſſe againſt the woorke of the wicked: and the ſure rewarde againſt lying or diſceitfulneſſe. Wherein wee may vnderſtande that the ſowing of righteouſneſſe is by aſſurance wee haue in the goodneſſe of GOD, and by the feare and reuerence that wee haue of his woorde, and the greate deſire wee haue for to obey him, and giue our ſelues to liue according to his commandementes: whereby hee woulde that wee ſhoulde liberally and with a good wil helpe the neceſſitie of our neighbours. The ſcripture exhorteth vs thus to ſowe, Breake vp your fallowe grounde and ſowe not among the thornes: bee circumciſed to the Lorde, and take away the foreſkinnes of your heartes, &c. Sowe to your ſelues in righteouſneſſe: reape after the meaſure of mercie: breake vp your fallowe grounde: for it is time to ſeeke the Lorde, til hee come and raine righteouſneſſe vpon you. Hee which ſoweth ſparingly, ſhal reape alſo ſparingly, and hee that ſoweth liberally, ſhal reape alſo liberally. Bee not deceiued: GOD is not mocked: for whatſoeuer a man ſoweth, that ſhal he alſo reape. For hee that ſoweth to his fleſhe, ſhal of the fleſhe reape corruption: but hee that ſoweth to the ſpirit, ſhal of the Spirit reape life euerlaſting.

Iere.4.4.
Oſeas.10.12
2.Cor.9.6.
Gal.6.7.8.

Thus by theſe ſcriptures wee ſee what it is to ſowe, and that the rewarde is not diſceitful, but true. For they which ſowe doe not looſe their paines, they receiue the fruite which is ſayde, *a ſure rewarde*, becauſe it doeth not faile nor neuer ſhal, but the righteous ſhal poſſeſſe it for euer. It is the trueth that Solomon ſetteth againſt diſceite: but although that the wicked which doe abuſe and deceiue others, are wel woorthy to be againe deceiued, and not to enioy that which they thinke and looke for, & that they deſerue to be deſtroyed: yet notwithſtanding if contrary to them, wee giue our ſelues to ſowe righteouſneſſe, let vs not therefore challenge any merite: but let vs altogither waite vpon the grace and mercie of GOD, not deceiuing our ſelues by and about his woorde, rewarde, and wages, as if God were bounde vnto vs for

to recōpēce vs for our ſeed of righteouſnes. For albeit there is a couenant
Leui.19.13. & bande betwene man and man, to giue reward vnto them
Deu.24.14. which labour for vs: (The workmans hire ſhal not abyde with thee
Col.4,1. vntil the morning. Yee maiſters, doe vnto your ſeruants, that which
Iam.5.4. is iuſt, and equal, knowing that ye alſo haue a maiſter in heauen. Beholde
the hyre of the labourers, which haue reaped your fields
(which is of you kept backe by fraude) crieth, and the cryes of them
which haue reaped, are entred into the eares of the Lord of hoſtes)
yet what righteouſneſſe ſoeuer we ſowe, we cannot make GOD
bounde to giue vs any rewarde, no more then the toole or inſtrument
can for the goodneſſe and fineneſſe of metal, make the workeman
bounde to it. If we do any good woorke, it commeth of the
grace of God which guideth vs, and ſtirreth vs vp: wee are no more
but his inſtruments. Not that we are able of our ſelues, to thinke
2.Cor.3.5. any thing, as of our ſelues: but our ſufficiencie is of God. For it is
Phi.2.13. God that woorketh in you, both the wil and the deed, euen of his
good pleaſure. Moreouer we are ſlaues and bonde men: therefore
our God who hath redeemed vs with the precious blood of his
Sonne, cannot ſtand bounde to vs: what righteouſnes ſoeuer wee
Luke.17.10 worke, we are vnprofitable ſeruants: we haue done that which was
our duetie to doe. Therfore when the ſcripture doeth offer and ſet
before vs a rewarde or hyre, let vs make no account of merite, but
let vs magnifie the grace and bountifulneſſe of God, whereby wee
obteine eternal life, the which is called a rewarde, not becauſe wee
winne the ſame, but for that that Ieſus Chriſt hath gotten it for vs,
& that after al our laboures the ſame is giuen vnto vs. It is the gift
of GOD, and not of woorkes, leſt any man ſhould boaſt
Ephe.2.8.9. himſelfe.

19 *As righteouſneſſe leadeth to life: ſo hee that foloweth euil, ſeeketh his owne death.*

What worke ſoeuer we take in hande in this world, our intent & deſire is to profite thereby, and by the meanes wherof we may liue and bee at our eaſe: and thus we labour to obteine a good rewarde of our worke, which we would not miſſe and looſe. And the which for to attaine, Solomon hath ſhewed vs howe wee muſt

forſake the worke of the wicked, and folow righteouſnes by doing
good vnto our neighbours. Nowe when he ſaieth, *As righteouſnes
leadeth to life,&c.* he ſheweth what this ſure reward is, that is
to ſay, life. And foraſmuch as the wicked do liue in this world, euen
with greater carnal ioy, then the righteous, the which doe ſeeme often
in the ſight of the eyes, to be rather dead then liuing, for the
troubles and pouerties, miſeries, and perſecutions that they ſuffer:
(whereupon alſo through the weakeneſſe of their fleſhe they doe
complaine and ſay, Haue mercie vppon mee, O Lorde: for I am in Pſa.31.9.10
trouble: mine eye, my ſoule, and my bellie are conſumed with Pſal.88.1.
griefe. For my life is waſted with heauineſſe, and my yeeres with 2.3.
mourning. O Lorde God of my ſaluation, I crye day and night before
thee. Let my prayer enter into thy preſence: encline thine eare
vnto my crye. For my ſoule is filled with euils, and my life draweth
neere vnto the graue) it foloweth that the life which is here ſpoken
of, is not the temporal life (although it commeth of the gifte and
grace of God, howe miſerable ſoeuer it bee, as the faithful doe vnderſtande: .22
for they confeſſe God to be their Creator) but it is the
euerlaſting life whereof the wicked are depriued for euer, as Solomon
doeth affirm ſaying, *So he that foloweth euil, ſeeketh his own
death.* Foraſmuche as the temporal death is common to al men: Eccle.9.2.
and al thinges happen alike to al men: and alſo that temporal death
is an entrance vnto life: it foloweth wel, that the death which they
ſeeke which folow euil, is not the temporal death, though it be vnto
the wicked a part of their euil, as an entrance vnto eternal death,
whereof here is mention. Wherein Solomon wel ſheweth, that
there is deceit in the worke of the wicked: For though Solomon Pſal.10.6.
did not here ſpeake but of temporal death, yet were it an argument
ſtronge enough for to ſhewe that the wicked worketh a deceitfull
work. For albeit the wicked, according as he ſeeth happen to others,
knoweth he ſhal die, yet he laboureth to make himſelf beleeue that
he ſhal neuer die. He ſaith in his heart, I ſhal neuer be mooued, nor
be in danger. And in whatſoeuer he doeth, hee laboureth to liue alwayes,
if he could: and when his works do not proceed to his purpoſe,
it foloweth wel, therin is deceit, & that he laboureth in vaine.
His intent is, to doe his workes for to liue, and he by them runneth
vnto death, & ſeeketh for that which he would not gladly finde.

20 *They that are of a froward heart, are abhomination vnto the Lorde: but they that are vpright in theyr way, are his delight.*

Solomon heregiueth a reaſon of the former ſentence, ſhewing
wherfore they which folow euil, doe ſeeke death, and the righteous
life. They which folow euil, are ledde with the frowardneſſe of
their heartes,the which delight in no goodnes, but inuent all euil,
though none occaſion be giuen them.Now foraſmuch as in God lieth
Pſal.5.4. al goodnes,from whence life commeth to vs : and hee is not a
God which loueth wickednes: it foloweth wel,ſeeing that the wicked
are in abhomination to the Lorde, who is the authour of lyfe,
that they muſt needes goe to death: ſith they are ſeparated from life,
they muſt needs remaine in death. the which they doe wel deſerue:
for it cōmeth of their corruptiō & purpoſedmalice,that peruert their
2.Cor hearts.Their feete runne to euil,& they make haſt to ſhed innocent
Phi.2 7. blood: their thoughts are wicked thoughts: deſolation and deſtruction
is in their pathes. And herewith alſo it is of maliciouſnes,& ſo
much as lieth in them,they ſpoile al: wherupon they wel deſerue to
finde nothing wherin they may haue ſuccour, & ſo muſt needes periſhe.
As touching the righteous, ſeeing that of themſelues they
are no better then the moſt wicked, ſo farre is it of, that wee may
finde any cauſe in them for the which they ſhoulde bee worthie of
life,that they deſerue death aſwel as the other: yet doe they liue,&
it is not without reaſon: The reaſō is not found in them, nor in any
other creature,but in God onely, & in his grace & fauour, becauſe
it pleaſeth him to accept them, and delight in them.Solomon doeth
ſhewe it verie plainly,when he alledgeth nothing for their excellencie
and dignitie,that they attain life : *But they that are vpright in
their way,are his delight*. Whereto Saint Paule agreeth,alledging
Rom.9.15 howe God ſaith to Moſes, I wil haue mercie on him, to whome
Ephe.1.5. I wil ſhew mercie. And in an other place alledging, Who hath predeſtinate
Tit.3.4.5. vs, to be adopted through Ieſus Chriſte vnto him ſelfe,according
to the good pleaſure of his wil. But when the bountifulnes
and loue of God our Sauiour towarde men appeared, not by the
works of righteouſnes which he had don,but according to his mercy,
he ſaued vs,&c. The faithful ought to haue their ioye ſet in

this good wil and pleaſure which is ſo healthful. For thou Lorde wilt bleſſe the righteous, and with fauour wilt compaſſe him, as with a ſhielde. But let vs note, that it is not without cauſe that wee haue ſaide, that the reaſon for the which the righteous doe goe into life, is not in them, as hath bene alreadie touched, concerning the malice of their nature, which they haue common with the wicked. And herewith, albeit that the Scripture giueth them this honour to cal them perfect or vpright in their way, as indeede they are, ſeeing that God accepteth them ſuche, becauſe that in their affaires, they proceede vprightly in ſimplicitie and innocencie, without diſſimulation and hypocriſie, without enuie and ſet malice, and without deceit and craft: yet are they not ſo perfect in their manners and kinde of doings, but that they feele many imperfections, and much to be amended in them, if God woulde ſtraightly examine them. Surely, there is no man iuſt in the earth, that doeth good and ſinneth not. Therefore what vprightnes ſoeuer is in vs, let vs pray, Enter not into iudgement with thy ſeruant: for in thy ſight ſhall none that liueth be iuſtified.

Pſal. 5. 12.

Eccle. 7. 22

Pſal. 143. 2

21 *Though hand ioyne in hand, the wicked ſhal not goe vnpuniſhed: but the ſeede of the righteous ſhal eſcape.*

Becauſe that Solomon hath threatened the wicked which ſeeke nothing but to doe euil, with death: and it ſeemeth well vnto the worldly, that if they be accompanied and ioyned with a great multitude of people which haue power & authoritie, that no hurt can happen vnto them: for this cauſe, for to keepe vs from ſuch vaine & deceitful confidence, Solomon doth ſhew vs, that what bandes and couenants ſoeuer there are betwene the wicked, yet ſhal they not be ſafe enough, nor mightie, for to exempt them ſelues from death, whẽ he ſaieth, *Though hand ioyne in hand, &c.* Albeit that the wicked doe giue their handes one to an other, and do conſpire together, yet can they neuer ſo wel, nor ſtrongly arme and fortifie them ſelues, that they can exempt them ſelues from hurt, and to woorke that they ſhoulde not goe vnto deſtruction, out of the which they ſhall neuer ariſe. Before the vniuerſal flood, the worlde and multitude of the wicked was ſurely ioyned, and except the houſe and

familie of Noe, they al agreed together to worke wickednes, without
remorſe of conſcience, euen with an vnbrideled luſt : but their
agreement ſaued them not from periſhing by the flood of waters:
Gen.19. Wee alledge Sodome and Gomorrhe, with the Cities adioyning:
Num.16.31. The conſpiracie of Corath, Dathan, and Abyram: The deſtruction
Ioſu.10. of Median, The fiue Kinges, Ioſua the tenth chap: & likewiſe diuers
Pſal.2.&.3. others. We haue alſo witneſſes that ſuche bandes & leagues
&33. are vaine and vnprofitable. Woe to the rebellious children ſaieth
Eſai.30 the Lorde, that take counſel, but not at mee, and couer with a couering,
&31. but not by my Spirite, that they may laye ſinne vpon ſinne.
Againe, Woe vnto them that goe downe into Egypt for helpe, and
ſtaye vppon Horſes, and truſt in Horſes, and truſt in Charets, becauſe
they are many, and in Horſemen, becauſe they are verie
ſtrong.

Contrarily, though the righteous bee but ſmal in number, and
that the worlde doeth not deſire their agreement, but doe ſcorne
the ſame, reiect and perſecute them, and that they are eſteemed
as the dunge and filthineſſe of the earth, and alſo that it ſeemeth
they can not eſcape, but muſt needes goe to deſtruction, yet are
they ſo wel ſaued and defended, ſo wel holpen and ſuccoured, that
how violent aſſaultes ſoeuer they haue, yet can they not bee beaten
downe and ouercome. For the Lorde wil preſerue both them
and their poſteritie after them. Solomon doeth ſo promiſe it,
when hee ſayeth, *But the ſeede of the righteous ſhal eſcape.* Hee
ſpeaketh thus firſt, by folowing the promiſe made to Abraham:
Secondly, vppon experience which is ſhewed to Noe, Abraham,
Gen.12. Lot, Iacob Ioſeph, Moyſes, Dauid, and others. But at the
&17. firſt ſight it might appeare, that this promiſe ſhoulde not bee ſtedfaſt.
Gen.22. For Noe was righteous, and yet his ſeede was not preſerued
Deut.28. from the curſe. Curſed be Canaan, a ſeruant of ſeruants ſhall
Pſ.33.&34. he be vnto his brethren. If wee ſhoulde make a diſcourſe through
Gen.6.9. al the holie Fathers, wee ſhal finde in their ſeede many wicked ones,
Gen.9.25 &c. Againe, Ezechiel ſaieth, If the righteous beget a ſonne, that
Eze.18.10 is a thiefe, or a ſhedder of blood, &c. Againe, the Prophet Eſay
Eſai.1.4. ſaieth, Ah ſinful nation, a people laden with iniquitie: a ſeede of
Mat.12.39. the wicked, corrupt children, &c. And our Lorde calleth them,

an euil and adulterous generation, &c. To the former obiection
I anſwere, As the righteous, inſomuche as they are the children *Ioh.3.5.*
of Adam, they are the children of wrathe, and haue no entraunce *Ephe.2.*
into the kingdome of God: but truely and indeede to be the children *Ioh.1.12.*
of God, they muſt bee regenerated, but ſo many as receiued
him, to them he gaue prerogatiue to be the ſonnes of God, euen
to them which beleeue in his name.

Moreouer, ſo far as the righteous are fleſh, and born of fleſhe, &
haue great poſteritie, yea a great poſteritie of carnal children, yet
are they not al the ſeede of the righteous, but of men truely. The
holie Scripture calleth none of the ſeede of the righteous, by the
name of the children of God, but ſuche as are regenerate and re- *Rom.8.15.*
newed by the holie Ghoſt, who maketh them to crye, Abba, Father.
Saint Iohn Baptiſt doeth ſomewhat ſhewe it vs, when hee *Mat.3.7.*
ſaieth, O generation of Vipers, who hath taught you to flye from *Ioh.8.37.*
the vengeance to come? And our Lorde ſayeth, I knowe that ye
are Abrahams ſeede, but yee ſeeke to kil mee, &c. And Saint Paul *Rom.9.6.7.*
doeth plainly ſay it, For al they are not Iſrael, which are of Iſrael:
neither are they al children, becauſe they are the ſeed of Abraham.
Albeit then that the Iewes which ſlew Ieſus Chriſt, and perſecuted
his Apoſtles, and remained harde harted, did come of the holy Fathers,
yet are they not the ſeede of the righteous: but baſtard children,
a curſed ſeede, and children of the Deuil. Likewiſe they which
Mahomet and the Pope haue corrupted, which are deſcended of
them that receiued the Goſpel by the miniſterie of the Apoſtles,
Diſciples, and true Euangeliſts.

Contrarily, they that are come after the fleſhe from the heathen
Idolaters and wicked, the which they haue not folowed,
but beeing conuerted from their iniquities and filthineſſe, haue
receiued the Worde, and thereby were regenerated, ſo that
beeing aſſured of the good pleaſure of God towardes them, agreed
not, nor framed them ſelues to the wicked worlde, but
haue faſhioned theyr mindes anewe, are not the ſeede of the
wicked, but of the righteous. They are truely and indeede
the children of Abraham. Saint Paule doeth well ſhewe it, when
hee ſayeth, But to him that worketh not, but beleeueth in him *Rom.4.5.*
that iuſtifieth the vngodly, his Faith is counted for righteouſnes:

& 11. and a litle after he ſaieth, After he receiued the ſigne of circumciſion,
as the ſeale of the righteouſnes of Faith, which hee had, when
hee was vncircumciſed, that hee ſhoulde bee the Father of al them
& 16. that beleeue, &c: Therefore it is by Faith. Suche ſeede ſhalbee
Eze. 18. 14 deliuered from death and deſtruction. But if hee beget a ſonne, that
ſeeth al his fathers ſinnes, which he hath done, and feareth, neither
& 17. doeth the like, &c. Hee ſhall not dye in the iniquitie of his father,
but hee ſhal ſurely liue, &c. Therefore wee muſt feare the Lorde
and keepe his commandements, and from what ſtocke or roote ſoeuer
we come, we ſhalbe the ſeed of the righteous, and ſhal obtaine
according to this promiſe of Solomon, the which is more largely
declared, by Dauid, in his 112. Pſalme.

22 *As a iewel of golde in a Swines ſnout: ſo is a faire woman which lacketh diſcretion.*

When Saint Paule ſaith, That God hath placed euerie of the
members in the bodie, as it hath pleaſed him: albeit, that by theſe
wordes hee woulde ſhewe the vnitie of the bodie, and the coniunction
of the members together which are diuers, yet the ſame
hindereth not, but that by theſe verie wordes wee may learne that
our bodies haue neither forme nor beautie, except God hath giuen
it, and that God is the authour of the beautie as wel of men as of
women: for alſo there is none but he, that doeth make and faſhion
them. Our mother Eue doth wel confeſſe the ſame, ſaying, God
Gen. 1. & 2 hath appointed me an other ſeede for Abel, becauſe Caine ſlewe
& 4. 25. him. Iacob alſo did confeſſe it, ſaying, Am I in Gods ſtead, which
& 30. 2. hath withholden from thee the fruite of the wombe? Foraſmuch
Iob. 10. 8. then as beautie is the gifte of GOD, wee muſt take heede to
vſe it well, leſt it happen, that through inſolencie and diſſoluteneſſe,
wee profane this beautie, and that by the euil gouernment
of it, wee doe not drawe our neighbours to commit vncleanneſſe
and diſhoneſtie with vs, whereof proceedeth great puniſhment,
Gen. 6. ment, and horrible vengeance of God. If then God hath giuen vs
& 34. 2. beautie, let vs take heede to maintaine our ſelues honeſtly, and
deſire not to bee ſeene, but in all modeſtie and ſoberneſſe: and

lea:

and let vs looke wel to our ſelues: for albeit we holde an holy countenance, and as becommeth them, euen ſuch as S. Paule demandeth of women, that they may inſtruct the yonger women: and they ſhould not be like vnto yong womé, which being ydle learne to go about from houſe to houſe, &c: yet ſhal it bee very harde but the carnal wil labor to abuſe the beautie that God hath giuen vs. We may ſee the ſame in Sara: againe alſo in Thamar the ſiſter of Abſalon. But foraſmuch as both men and women ought to be careful to walke ſoberly and modeſtly, and not not to be deſirous to ſet forth their beautie to be ſeene and regarded, yet becauſe women are the weaker veſſells, and becauſe alſo that they deſire much to be ſeene, they ought to bee diligently admoniſhed to flye gorgiouſneſſe and ſumptuouſneſſe, al behauiours and doings, al woordes and lookes, that doe not ſerue but to ſhewe their beautie, and to drawe the worldlings, couetous and vndiſcreete to gaze at them, for to bee led away with euil luſtes to committe wickedneſſe, and to abuſe their company: alſo the holy ſcripture, for to aduertiſe women of their behauiour, and what countenance they ought to holde, doeth teache them howe they ought to behaue themſelues in al their kind of life, whether it be in publike, or in priuate, whether it be in mariage, or in widowhood. If women doe otherwiſe, they defile the beautie that God hath giuen them, and doe deſpiſe this honeſt and pleaſant gift of God: and ſo they become vnthankeful, not eſteeming the beautie which God by his grace hath beſtowed vpō them, as they ought. Solomon doeth wel ſignifie it, when hee ſayth, *As a iewel of golde in a ſwynes ſnout, &c*, The ſwyne is ſo much giuen to wroote with her nuſſel or with her ſnout in the earth, euen in the myre and durte, that the faire ornamantes and precious iewelles doo nothing become her: if they beſtowe any vppon her, it is in vaine, for ſhee doeth defile them without any diſcretion: euen ſo the woman which doeth reiect the former holy admonitions, and doeth guide her ſelfe without wiſedome, counſel, reaſon, and honeſtie, by giuing her ſelfe to be light and gadding, and folowing the diſſoluteneſſe and intiſementes, for to liue in pleaſures, and luſtes and deſires of the fleſhe, ſhe hath in vaine receiued beautie. For being of ſo wanton behauiour and countenance, ſhee defileth and deſtroyeth, ſo much as ſhee can, the precious iewel of beautie

Tit.2.3.
1.Tim.5.13.
Gene.12.4.
&.20,2.
2.Sam.13.1.
1.Cor.11.5.
&.14.34.
Ephe.5.2
1.Tim.2.9.
&.5.4.
Tit.2.4.5.
1.Pet.3.1.

that God hath giuen her. Heere we may ſee that the whores which delight in their beautie, are much deceiued: they make them ſelues beleeue that they are faire and gorgeous: and haue ſo long wallowed and plundged in the mire and filth, that there is no ſtink in the world ſo infectiue as they are, ſo that the ſauour of them aſcendeth vp to heauen, and maketh them abhominable before God. We know *Eſay.3.15.* it by his lawe, when he forbiddetth to commit whoredome, and al- *1.Cor.6.9.* ſo by his threateninges that hee maketh againſt the adulterers and *Heb.13.4.* whores in the thirteenth to the Hebrewes.

23 *The deſire of the righteous is onely good: but the hope of the wicked is indignation.*

Solomon doeth wel ſhewe vs heere, that we muſt not truſt to the iudgement of the worlde, nor to that which wee ſee outwardly, for as it hath beene alreadie handeled, the righteous in this worlde are in ſo miſerable eſtate after the outwarde apparance, that it ſeemeth God hateth them, and that hee ſeeketh to deſtroy and kil thẽ: and therefore if they hope that any good ſhal happen vnto them, yet is their hope nothing worth: for, it ſeemeth, there can happen nothing vnto them but euil, ſeeing that in the iudgement of the worlde they haue God againſt them. But as hath beene ſaide, Solomon will not haue vs to bee of ſuche an opinion, when he ſaith, That the *deſire of the righteous is onely good.* They deſire that God woulde bee merciful vnto them in al their affaires and needes, and ſhould aſſiſt them, and ſhould neuer forſake them, but that after hee hath deliuered them from al miſery, hee would giue vnto them of his meere liberalitie and grace, euerlaſting felicitie in the kingdome of heauen: and as they deſire and hope, ſo they obteine. The *Pſal.9.9.10.* Lorde alſo wil bee a refuge for the poore, a refuge in due time, euen *& 37.* in affliction. And they that knowe thy name, will truſt in thee, *Pſal.145.18* for thou Lorde, haſt not failed them that ſeeke thee. Truſt thou in the Lorde and doe good: dwell in the lande, and thou ſhalt bee fed aſſuredly. The Lorde is neere vnto al that call vppon him: yea, that cal vpon him in trueth. We plainely ſee that there happeneth nothing but good vnto the righteous according to their wiſhe and hope. Wherefore caſting aſide the iudgement of the worlde, let vs giue our ſelues vnto righteouſneſſe, deſiring the aide and helpe of god, for to guid & hold vs in the ſame: & in what ſort ſoeuer we be ſhaken, wee ſhal not fal but vpon our feete. Contrarily, the wicked doe proſper in ſuche wiſe, that it ſeemeth that God doeth fauour them: and with open mouth they are called honeſt men. And therfore they make themſelues beleeue, and haue this vaine hope, that they ſhall not periſhe: and in the meane while they care not what they doe: they abounde in wickedneſſe, and ſpare neither God nor their neighbours: whereupon they prouoke the Lorde vnto wrath againſt them: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, ſaying, *But the hope of the wicked is indignation.* The Pſalmes before alledged doe ſhewe it wel, and alſo many examples of the Scripture. Let vs not then enuie the ſtate of the wicked, but let vs pray that it woulde pleaſe God to direct vs in his way, and that al our deſires may reſt in the ſame. In this manner wee ſhall auoide the indignation and diſpleaſure, and ſhall obteine the good that wee wiſhe for. Wee ſhal auoid indignation by two kinde of waies: for not being made voide of our deſires and hope, we ſhal not diſpite our ſelues againſt God, and ſhal not blaſpheme as the wicked doe, and we ſhal not alſo prouoke his indignation againſt vs.

24 *There is that ſcattereth, and is more encreaſed: but he that ſpareth more then is right, ſurely commeth to pouertie.*

After the iudgement of the worlde, and feeling of the fleſhe, the manner to abound in worldly wealth, is to get and lay vp for himſelfe and to keepe and holde it, and not to diſperſe the fruites which come there of, but to make a treaſure of them, and to ſpende them warily for his owne vſage. For wee ſee by experience that they which doe ſo vſe thẽ, become ſoone rich, or at leaſtwiſe are eſteemed ſuch: for we ſee them to poſſeſſe much goods. Cõtrarily, they which make great coſt, though they greatly abound, doe conſume them by litle & litle: and ſpecially they which diſpend riotouſly & prodigally where there is no need, but in pomp, in delicacie, pleaſure, & oſtẽtation. Wee ſee this almoſt daily come to paſſe: but alſo on the other ſide, there be which are liberal, & diſtribute their goods plentifully, and yet ceaſſe not but ſtill to abounde, and doe greatly encreaſe: contrarily, there are which bee ſo ſparing, that they wil not vſe nor ſhew mercy where need requireth: and yet they waſt, & come vnto pouertie. Although the firſt is of the greateſt ſhew and that it is commonly ſeene with the eye, yet is it not ſo certaine as the contrary. For this cauſe Solomon not ſtaying himſelſe by the ſight of the eies, doubteth not to ſay, *There is that ſcattereth, and is more encreaſed.* And heerein hee agreeth with the ſaying of the Pſalme, A ſmal thing that the righteous hath, is better then great riches of the vngodly. Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lorde. &c. Riches and plenteouſneſſe ſhalbe in his houſe: and his righteouſnes endureth for euer. When the ſaints did ſpeake in this ſorte, they were more ſtayed vpon the promiſes of God, & ſeared his threatenings, then that which they ſawe outwarde with their eyes, being aſſured that the worde of the Lorde neuer faileth. Wherefore let vs not tary at that which wee ſee with our eies, but let vs leane vpon this worde, the which our Lorde doeth ſtrongly confirme vnto vs in diuers places: and let vs note that hee ſaith not, that all they whiche ſcatter, ſhal encreaſe: for the prodigal which diſpende without reaſon, doe decreaſe. Againe alſo hee ſaith not ſimply, *Hee that ſpareth*, for it behoueth a father of houſhold to be ſober & temperate, not making exceſſiue & ſuperfluous expenſes, but honeſt and reaſonable, for to mainteine his family, and to helpe the neceſſitie of the poore: and therefore hee addeth without equitie, or *more then is right*, or aboue meaſure: as doe the vſurers and couetous, which haue no pitie vpon the poore: and euen the greateſt parte of ſuch people are ſo cruell and vnmercifull, that they ſuffer their family to endure much hardneſſe: wherefore they are wel worthie to come to pouertie. Giue, and it ſhalbe giuen vnto you, &c. And therefore though we do not alwaies ſee the neceſſitie of ſuch people, yet let vs know that they are miſerable and poore: for the couetous are alwaies needie. Hee that loueth ſiluer, ſhal not be ſatiſfied with ſiluer, and he that loueth riches ſhall be without the fruite thereof. But that which is the greateſt pouertie of al, & which ſurely ought to feare the niggardes, and couetous, and cruel vſurers, is the depriuation and looſing of the true and heauenly riches.

Pſal.37.16.
Pſal.112.1. &.3.&.15.2 &.28.4.
Math.6.& 19.
Luke.6.&. 12.&.16.
2.Coa.9.
Gala.6.
Luke.6.38.
Eccle.5.9.
Math.25.4.
Iam.5.3.

25 *The liberall perſon ſhall haue plentie: and he that watereth ſhall alſo haue rayne.*

Solomon doeth heere confirme the firſt parte of the former
ſentence, and giueth a reaſon thereof: for the which to vnderſtand
wel, let vs firſt note, the Hebrue hath, *The ſoule of the bleſſing ſhal
bee made fat.* The which is expounded after this ſort, The liberall
perſon, is he that of freewill and good minde doeth bleſſe his neighbours,
not with worde, but in trueth and deede, and in worke, helping
and ſuccouring them according to their neede. *Bleſſing* is
taken in this ſignification in the holy Scripture, The ſoule then of *1.Sam.25.*
bleſſing, is the liberal perſon: vnto whome Solomon promiſeth *27.*
fatneſſe, that is to ſay, that hee ſhall liue at his eaſe, and ſhall haue *2.Cor.5.9.*
his pleaſures, and ſhal proſper in aboundance of wealth. Fatneſſe *Deut.32.15.*
is thus taken in diuers places. And when hee addeth, *And he* *Iob.36.16.*
that watereth, &c. Hee repeateth the ſame thing againe for a *Pſal.22.30.*
greater expreſſion: for as a peece of lande wel watered, bringeth *&.23.5.*
foorth eaſily his fruite, euen ſo when wee doe helpe the neceſsitie of
the poore, ſo much as in vs is, wee make them fruiteful, for they fare
the better for it, and are more apt to doe their duetie. Thus doing
wee ſhall not looſe our labour, for the Lorde by his grace and goodneſſe,
doeth recompence and yeelde vs the like: as Solomon doeth
ſignifie it, ſaying, *ſhall alſo haue raine.* As the raine watereth
the earth, and maketh it to ſpring and bring foorth fruite: euen ſo
the Lorde augmenteth the goods and riches of the merciful and liberal.
If thou powre out thy ſoule to the hungry, and refreſhe *Eſay.58.10.*
the troubled ſoule: then ſhal thy light ſpring out of the darkeneſſe, *11.*
and thy darkeneſſe ſhall bee as the noone day. And the Lorde ſhall
guide thee continually, and ſatiſfie thy ſoule in drought, and make
fat thy bones, and thou ſhalt bee like a watered garden, and like a
ſpring of water, whoſe waters faile not. And their ſoule ſhal bee as *Iere.31.12*
a watered garden, and they ſhal haue no ſorow. Furthermore, let vs
note, that ſeeing the goodneſſe that wee doe to our neighbours, is
compared vnto watering and ſprinckling, that wee muſt not ſpare
them no more then water, when wee haue ſo to doe and neede requireth.

26 *Hee that withdraweth the corne, the people will curſe him: but bleſſing ſhall bee on the head of him that ſelleth corne.*

For to turne vs away from vſury, catching, theeuery, and couetouſnes, Solomon is not cōtented to haue threatened him which ſpareth more then is right, with pouertie: but to make vs the more to abhorre ſuche wickedneſſe, hee ſheweth vs in what eſtimation they are with the people which ſpare againſt equitie, and how they deſerue to bee ſpoken of, when hee ſaith, *Hee that withdraweth the corne, the people will curſe him:* We doe gladly bleſſe them which wee haue in good reputation, and whome wee eſteeme honeſt men, and wee doe not curſe them: wherevppon followeth: the people doe iudge them wicked men, which withholde the corne, ſith they doe curſe them, as they deſerue. But albeit that in curſing ſuche people, the people doeth but that which they deſerued, yet is it not to ſay that Solomon alloweth ſuch curſing, nor yet that it is lawful for the people to curſe them that heighten the price of victuals, the which are ſignified vnto vs by the wheate or corne, which is the moſt ordinary and common meate, euen the moſt neceſſarieſt. The making deare and alſo the depriuation of the ſame is ſignified vnto vs by this withdrawing. For theſe couetous and wicked ones, vſurers, and theeues, yea cruel murderers, doe gather on al ſides ſo muche as they can, the victuals, that none may come by them but at their commandement, and ſhoulde paſſe through their handes: and chiefly they locke vp the corne, deſiring that it might bee deere, too robbe the poore people of gold & ſiluer, and alſo of poſſeſſions, and that they might rake al to them ſelues, and that in this ſorte they might waxe riche, to the hurt of their neighbours, whom they make ſorowful. Suche folke are ſomewhat acquainted with great men, which treade downe the people, who are threatened by the iudgement of God. The Lorde wil enter into iudgement with the elders of his people, and princes thereof: for yee haue eaten vp the vineyarde: the ſpoyle of the poore is in your houſes. &c. And are like vnto them of whome Amos ſpeaketh. Heare this, O yee that ſwallow vp the pore, that ye may make the needy of the land to faile, ſaying,

Eſay. 3. 14.
Amos. 8. 4.

When wil the newe moneth be gone, that wee may ſel corne? and the Sabboth, that we may ſet foorth wheate, and make the Ephah ſmal, and the Shekel great, and falſifie the weightes by deceipt? &c. If they deſerue the iudgement and puniſhment of God, euen eternal, they are wel worthie that God ſhould ſet them in contempt & ſhame, and in temporall curſe, the which is the beginning of their hel and eternal paine. For when curſing is ſpoken of, Solomon doth not meane in wordes onely, but alſo the people feeling them ſelues too ſore oppreſſed with neceſsitie and ſcarcitie by the raking of them which withdraw the corne, ſhal rebel, and riſe vp againſt them for to ſpoyle and robbe, as experience ſheweth. Notwithſtanding, as hath beene ſaide, it is not to ſay that Solomon doeth promiſe any ſuch thing: yea, and the Magiſtrates ought to puniſhe ſuch rebels, what pouertie ſoeuer they ſuffer by the ſpoile of them which labour to enriche them ſelues by locking vp the corne: and ſith that they are puniſhable by men, it foloweth alſo that they offende God with curſing. The people then what wrong, iniurie, and outrage ſoeuer they ſuffer, muſt be patient, and not render euil for euil.

Mat.5.39.

And although it be not lawful for the poore people to curſe them which withholde the corne, yet ſuche couetous perſons ought well to feare ſuche curſing of the people, and to wit, that it is not without cauſe that Solomon doeth threaten them with this curſing. For albeit the curſe of the people is not iuſt, yet for to puniſhe the couetous, wicked, and vſurers, it ſhal take effect. The Lorde wil heare ſuch a curſing for to deſtroy and ouerthrowe theſe wicked men: for aſmuch as God vſeth the common people as inſtrumentes and organes for to curſe them: and not that the people in ſo curſing deſerue to bee hearde: for they are ledde with the deſire of their owne profite, whereunto the faithful ought to haue no regarde, but ought to bee led with charitie, which is patient, and ſuffereth long. Nowe that the curſe is hard, wee may gather it out of that which is ſaide, Beware that there bee not a wicked thought in thine heart, to ſay, The ſeuenth yeere, the yere of freedom is at hand: therfore it greeueth thee to looke on thy poore brother, & thou giueſt him nought, and he crie vnto the Lorde againſt thee, ſo that ſinne bee in thee. For if hee curſe thee in the bitterneſſe of his ſoule, his prayer

1.Cor.13.4.

Deut.15.9.

Eccle.4.6.

ſhalbe

ſhalbee heard of him that made him. And as for to turne vs away from vſury, ſpoyling and extortion, euen ſo alſo for to leade vs to bee liberall, and to exerciſe mercy, hee ſaith vnto vs, *But bleſſing ſhall bee on the head of him that ſelleth corne.* For by theſe wordes he teacheth vs in what eſtimation they are which ſell their corne reſonably, and what men ſpeake of them, alſo howe well they are beloued and honoured, and euery man is ready to doe them pleaſure, and ſeruice, and to bee at their commandement. Solomon ſignifieth this ſame by the bleſſing of the head: for in place that the people would gladly haue the regraters head, where his feete are, & would gladly braine them, he beareth honor and reuerence vnto the liberal & merciful, & deſireth their conſeruation, where about they occupy them ſelues ſo much as they can. Heereof we haue an excellent example in Ioſeph. But ſome wil ſay againſt it, that it ſeemeth that Ioſeph, after the ſentence of Solomon, deſerued to be curſed of the people: for hee ſhut vp the corne, and during the famine, none had any but by his commandement. I anſwere, That it was by diuine reuelation that hee gathered the corne together, not to make it deare, neither to make him ſelfe riche with the ſale thereof, but for to helpe the neceſſitie of the countrie of Egypt, & of them which dwelt about it. And ſo he was not a withdrawer of the corne, but a ſeller: not like vnto the ſellers at this day, which doe rather deſerue to be called exactours, flears of men, and murtherers, then ſellers: for as they proceed therein they drinke the blood, & ſucke out the mary of the bones of the poore. It is not of ſuch ſellers that Solomon ſpeaketh, but of them which are like vnto Ioſeph. And as the curſe of the people is heard of God, and ſo the withdrawers of corne are not curſed only of men, but alſo of God: euen ſo the bleſſing of them which bleſſe the ſellers, is hearde: and ſo they haue not only the bleſſing of men, but they haue alſo the ſame of God. Wherevpon it foloweth that in this ſentence there is not a threatening & promiſe preſently, but alſo for to come. Wherefore the cruel couetous ought to bee greatly feared, and the merciful and liberal ought to be comforted. And we ought to vnderſtande that if the ſeller bee bleſſed, that by a greater reaſon hee which giueth, ſhal obteine bleſſing: not that his almes can deſerue it, but becauſe that Chriſt hath

Gen.41. & 42. & 43.

ſo promiſed: Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhal obteine mercie. *Mat. 5. 7.*

27 *He that ſeeketh good things, getteth fauour: but he that ſeeketh euill, it ſhall come to him.*

Solomon heeretofore hath pronounced ſentences, whereby hee hath taught vs to abhorre couetouſnes: and namely he hath ſaid it. He ſtil purſueth nowe the ſame argument, when he ſaith, *Hee that ſeeketh good things, getteth fauour, &c.* When Solomon, for to induce vs vnto liberalitie and mercy, ſaith ſimplie, he that ſeeketh good thinges: and addeth not, of his neighbours: he ſheweth vs, that they which haue none other deſire and affection but to doe their worke, and care not to helpe the needineſſe of the poore, doe not procure the good, but alſo their ſtudie is vpon euil, to doe hurt and to deſtroy. For as wee wil not ſay of a tree, that it bringeth foorth good fruite, except wee haue taſted thereof: euen ſo if a man doe not communicate his worke vnto his neighbours, and make them partakers of his labour, wee cannot ſay truely, that he ſeeketh good things: for he that hath care but for him ſelfe, hath no loue, without the which al is nothing worth. Likewiſe Saint Paul conioineth the procuring of thinges good and honeſt with charitie. Likewiſe ſhewing the care that he hath for his poore neighbors, he ſaith, We prouide for honeſt thinges not onely before the Lorde, but alſo before men. Nowe for to ſhewe vs howe wee muſt ſeeke for good thinges, Solomon vſeth a word in his tongue, which is taken of the ſpring of the morning, and ſignifieth, to ſeeke early. Wherein wee are taught, that we muſt not be ſlacke and ſlouthful, when neceſſitie requireth to doe any thing for them which haue neede of our helpe & ſuccour: but that wee muſt be careful and diligent. Our Lorde doth teache vs the very ſame, when hee commandeth vs to watche continually, and that wee ſhould be like vnto the faithful and wiſe ſeruant. Again, by the ſimilitudes of the virgins and the talents, &c. And if in the corporal neceſſitie wee muſt be watchful, and carefull to doe well vnto our needie neighbours, by a more ſtronge reaſon wee muſt diligently watch and trauaile for to edifie the conſciences of the weake, of the ignorant, and vnbeleeuing, which are void

1. Cor. 13. 1.
Rom. 12. 17.
2. Cor. 8. 21.
Mat. 24. 42.
& 25. 1. 14.

of ſpiritual goodneſſe , which is the good that al Chriſtians ſhoulde procure, and chiefly the Miniſters and the paſtours of the church. Likewiſe the Magiſtrates ought to procure the welth of the people, ouer which they are committed of God, whoſe authoritie & power they haue. But to procure good things wel, we muſt followe the inſtructiõs that are giuẽ vs. If euery mã in his eſtate would procure good things as they ought, they ſhould get fauour, as Solomon doeth promiſe it : that is to ſay firſt of al, that hee ſhal bee pleaſing and acceptable, and ſhal worke loue to himſelfe : he ſhalbe wel welcome, and men wil labour to do them pleaſure, ſeruice and honor: and which is the chiefeſt, and the moſt to bee deſired, is that God wil beare him fauour, loue him, & wil delight in him, wil aſſiſt him and be merciful vnto him, and wil keep that no euil ſhal happen vnto him, which ſhal deſtroy him : but he wil preſerue him, that he make him bleſſed for euer : The Lorde delighteth in them that feare him, and attende vpon his mercy. Bodily exerciſe profiteth litle : but godlineſſe is profitable vnto al thinges, which hath the promiſe of the life preſent, and of that that is to come. It is very expedient for vs that in ſeeking the good, wee ſhoulde chiefly get the fauour of God : for it happeneth moſt commonly, that if wee doe our dutie in the eſtate wherein wee are called, that men in ſteede of being fauourable, as they ought, doe hate & perſecute vs. Whereupon we muſt not be abaſhed, nor ceaſſe for al that to ſeek for good things: for the like hath happened to our predeceſſours, and aboue al vnto our Lorde and maiſter Ieſus Chriſt. But although the getting of fauor is here ſpoken of, and chiefly of god, let vs not ſet God in equal degree with mẽ, the which we may bind to ourſelues to beare vs fauour by our wel doinges. It is not ſo with God, for hee cannot bee bounde to vs, whatſoeuer wee can doe. And ſo, when wee obteine fauour of him without any permutation, and without receiuing any rewarde of vs, becauſe that wee receiue of him, of his onely grace, giſt, and liberalitie : yet doth it not ceaſſe vnto vs to bee true getting. For if we ſay that there is not better getting, then that which is gotten by giſt, we muſt not thinke ſtrange though wee call that which god giueth vs of his meere liberalitie getting. Beſides the common maner of ſpeaking, wee haue the Scripture which exhorteth

Exo.18.21
Pſal.2.10.
&.82.3.
2.Chro.19.6
Rom.13.
Pſa.147.11.
1.Tim.4.8
Pro.4.5.6.7.
Eſay.55.1.

teth vs to get without any permutation. Moreouer, beſides this, let vs note that as they which procure good things, haue promiſe of fauour: So alſo they whoſe wealth wee ſeeke, are admoniſhed of their duties, euery one in his degree. And therefore let vs not followe the opinion of fantaſtical felowes, which are not thankful for a good turne receiued of their neighbours. But as for to induce vs vnto liberalitie, Solomon doth ſet before vs this promiſe: alſo for to turne vs away from doing hurt vnto our neighbours, hee ſetteth a threatening, ſaying: *But hee that ſeeketh euill, it ſhall come vnto him.* Foraſmuch as Solomon hath ſet ſeeking of euill, againſt the ſeeking of good: hee doth ſignifie vnto vs, that hee ſpeaketh of the hurte that wee procure vnto our neighbours, & calamities, and miſeries, whereto wee endeuour to bring them, and of the deſtruction and ouerthrowe that wee goe about to ſeeke for them, for to make our particular profite, and to come vnto the end of our purpoſes and intents. And when againſt getting of fauour, hee threateneth euill to come, hee ſignifieth that the wicked which ſeeke for nothing but the hurte of their neighbours, ſhalbe depriued of al fauour, and chiefly towards God, who wil beate them downe, from the which they ſhal neuer eſcape. Beholde hee trauelleth with miſchiefe: he hath conceiued ſorowe, and brought forth vngodlineſſe. Hee hath grauen and digged vp a pit: and is fallen himſelfe into the deſtruction that he hath made for other. Of this nũber were Caine, Saule, Abſolon, Iudas, and others, who after the ſight of the eyes haue gotten fauour, the which ought not to be accounted of, ſeeing that it did not preſerue them from wickedly periſhing. *Pſal.7.15.16.*

28 *He that truſteth in his riches, ſhall fall: but the righteous ſhall floriſhe as a leafe.*

Solomon pronounceth heere a ſentence which is very harde to bee beleeued, and as it ſeemeth, the experience is in the contrary: and therefore the worldlinges and carnal men, which are couetous, do deſpiſe it, and mocke thereat. This ſame is but too too common, and hath no neede of probation: notwithſtanding there ſhalbe no inconuenience to bring forth one example, it is rehearſed that after Ieſus Chriſt had admoniſhed his diſciples by the act of the ſteward, to be liberal, & not to ſet their harts vpõ riches, it is ſaid *Luke.16.*

that the Phariſees which were couetous did mocke at him. Nowe of our own nature we are no better then the Phariſees: it ſeemeth vnto vs that riches are very profitable, and that they are of great power and excellencie,and that they which haue them with abundance,are well ſtayed and vpholden : and in this ſort wee make riches our God,and caſt behinde vs, and deſpiſe the true God,which giueth abundantly al things for to vſe. The couetous which would bee eſteemed ſaints and deuout perſons, doe make them ſelues beleeue that to ſet our heartes on the goods of this worlde,doeth not let vs to ſerue God : and euen the greateſt theeues and vſurers doe iudge that they haue doone a great act,& very much for God,when of their rauening they haue laide aſide ſome parte, for to beſtow in the ſeruice of God,fained by men,or els that they haue made godly Legacies by teſtament, not departing with any thing whiles they liue,for feare they ſhould want themſelues. But our Lord doth pronounce vnto vs, No man can ſerue two maiſters. &c. Hee ſheweth it alſo by the ſeed caſt amongſt thornes: forif the word which doth teach vs,& guide vs to ſerue god,be choked,it is vnpoſſible for vs to ſerue God: but we do deſpiſe and reiect him, to become riche, and to encreaſe in temporal goods : yea and there are ſome that are ſo vnſhamefaſt,and ſo ouercome with vnbrideled luſtes, that they determine wholy to forſake god for a time,that they may become rich and are not aſhamed to teach others to do the like. In ſuch manner
1.Tim.6.9. of folkes is fulfilled that which is ſaide,That they which woulde be rich.fal into temptation. They which vſe them after ſuch a ſort, deſerue wel deſtruction,and damnation, for they deſtory them ſelues wittingly : they are like vnto them which haue no ſtrength, nor power to ſtande vpright of themſelues, and yet they deſpiſe and reiecte him which doeth offer them a ſtay, and wil vpholde them. For albeit wee are, mooue,and haue our being in God : as hee onely is our Creator, euen ſo hee onely doeth guide vs, main-
Actes.17.2 teineth and gouerneth vs,& he onely is our ſtay and vpholder: and the couetous reiecting him,it followeth neceſſarily that they muſt fall . If wee haue true knowledge of this ſame , and that wee haue not the eyes of our vnderſtanding and ſenſes blinded with the brightneſſe of the glory and pompe of the

proſperitie and triumphe of the worldly riches, it ſhall not be very
eaſie to beleeue that he which truſteth in his riches, ſhall fall, as Solomon
doth here pronounce. And before him Dauid, As for the vngodly, *Pſal.37.20.*
they ſhall periſhe, and the enimies of the Lorde ſhal conſume
as the fat of lambes: yea, euen as the ſmoke ſhal they conſume away. *Pſal.49.11.*
Againe, And they thinke that their houſes ſhal continue for
euer. And albeit that wee alwaies ſee not with the eie the fal of the
couetous and of them which haue ſet their heartes vppon riches,
yet neuertheleſſe let vs not deſire to bee like them, but let vs knowe
for certaine that they ſhal fal ſo downe, that they ſhal neuer more
ariſe from the ſame. They well deſerue ſuche a fal: for too make *Mat.19.23.*
themſelues riche, and for to mainteine them in their wealth, they
vſe wicked meanes and are led with vngodly affections, and paſſe
not though they doe wrong vnto their neighbours, but the greateſt
parte of ſuche people doe ſtudie and delight to doe iuiurie & wrong
vnto their neighbours. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when againſt
him which truſteth in his riches, he ſetteth the righteous: to whom
he maketh a very pleaſant promiſe, whē he ſaith, *But the righteous
ſhall floriſhe as a leafe*: but the ſame is no leſſe harde to be beleued
then the former threatening: for the wicked ſo muche as they can,
do bring the righteous, into ſo poore eſtate and caſe, that it ſeemeth
they ſhal neuer riſe vp more: and therefore they mocke at the hope
of the righteous. But not ſtaying our ſelues vpon the opinion of the
worlde, nor in the ſenſe of the fleſhe, let vs truſt vnto the promiſe
of Solomon, before whome the Pſalmiſt hath ſaide, that the righteous *Pſal.62.11.*
ſhal floriſhe like a palme tree. Let vs then bee cettaine that
what miſerie ſoeuer wee ſuffer, the Lorde wil reſtore vs vnto a proſperous
and pleaſant ſtate: as the ſame is ſignified vnto vs, by ſpringing,
bringing foorth, and floriſhing, heere and in other places. As *Eſay.27.6.*
heereafter, Iacob ſhal take roote: Iſrael ſhal floriſhe and growe, and *&.35.1.*
the worlde ſhalbe filled with fruite. The Deſert and the wildernes *Oſe.14.6.&*
ſhal reioyce: and the waſt ground ſhalbe glad and floriſh as a roſe. *6.*
I wilbe as the dewe vnto Iſrael hee ſhal growe as the Lilly, and
faſten his rootes as the trees of Lybanon: his branches ſhal ſpread,
and his beautie ſhalbe as the Oliue tree, and his ſmel as Lybanon.
Solomon alſo in this place doeth wel ſhew it, when againſt falling
which ſignifieth miſery and deſtruction, hee ſetteth *floriſhing*.

And in them both, he vſeth the future tence or time to come, wher-
by he doeth ſomewhat ſignifie that there ſhal be no ende of the fal-
ling of the wicked, nor yet in the proſperitie of the righteous. Ie-
Iere.17.5. remie doeth likewiſe ſignifie it, when he ſaith, Curſed bee the man
that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arme, and withdraweth
6 his hart from the Lord. For hee ſhal be like the heath in the wilder-
neſſe, and ſhal not ſee when any good commeth, but ſhal inhabite
the parched places in the wilderneſſe, in a ſalt lande, and not inhabi-
7 ted. Bleſſed be the man that truſteth in the Lorde, and whoſe hope
the Lorde is. For hee ſhalbe as a tree that is planted by the water,
8 which ſpreadeth out her rootes by the riuer, and ſhal not feele whē
the heate commeth, but her leafe ſhalbe greene, and ſhal not care
for the yeere of drought, neither ſhal ceaſſe from yeelding fruite.
And in the firſt Pſalme, when hee compareth the ſtate of the wic-
ked with him that delighteth in the lawe of the Lorde.

29 *Hee that troubleth his owne houſe, ſhall inherite the winde: and the foole ſhalbe ſeruant vnto the wiſe in hearte.*

Albeit that (as wee haue ſeene) it is a dangerous thing to truſt in riches, and a profitable thing for vs to be giuen vnto righteouſnes: yet to poſſeſſe and to vſe riches for to ſuccour our houſhold at need, is not againſt righteouſnes: they rather ſerue to bring foorth fruits of righteouſneſſe and equitie. Many of the olde fathers did abound in wealth, and yet ceaſſed not to bee righteous: As Abraham, Iob, and the good kinges of Iuda, for they did not ſet their heartes vpon them, but vſed them as though they enioyed none. Abraham hath wel ſhewed it in dwelling in the promiſed lande as a ſtranger, and in patiētly bearing many remouings & pilgrimages which it behoued him to make. Iob alſo hath ſhewed it by the great pacience that he had in the loſſe of his children, & of his goods, & of his health. The holy fathers which haue thus vſed them, had alwaies enough, and were neuer voide of riches, but were contented, and by wiſedome did gouerne houſholders quietly, and did keepe their family in ſubiection and obedience, and had authoritie & preheminence ouer their childrē and houſhold ſeruants. If wee follow them (as is very neceſſary for al heads and fathers of houſhold) our buſineſſe ſhal be quietly gouerned, we ſhal poſſeſſe ſo much goods as ſhalbe neceſſary, we ſhal haue credite and authoritie with our familie, the which ſhal be at our commandement for to giue vs al obedience, and pleaſe vs in al things. But contrarily, if we burne with couetouſneſſe, & thereby we ſpare more then is right and reaſon, not helping the needes of our family, & ſo do trouble it, making the ſame ſorowful, & giuing it occaſion of ſorrow, and to ſpite vs, and to worke our deſtruction, and labour to take, ſteale, and to pul from vs what they can, we muſt looke for a great pouertie, through which we ſhal be ſo aſtoniſhed, that we ſhal looſe our ſenſe, and ſo we muſt be faine to become ſubiect vnto them which can tel how to gouerne themſelues wiſely: ſo beaſtly and feareful ſhal we be by our miſery. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame ſaying, *He that troubleth his owne houſe, &c.* In the firſt part of this ſentence he compareth the couetous foole vnto him which breaketh & pearſeth through the walles of an houſe, ſo that the wind entereth in on al ſides. Now as the wind vaniſheth & cannot be holdē back: euen ſo they which ſpēd their riches to the hinderance of their family, ſhal not enioy them at their deſire, but ſhalbe depriued of them miſerably, and ſhal receiue no profite of thē. The *winde* is taken after this ſignification in Oſeas, For they haue ſowen the winde, and they ſhal reape the whirle wind. Againe, Ephraim is fed with the wind, and foloweth after the Eaſt wind. Alſo ſuch as are prodigal & riotous ſpenders of goods, ſhalbe heires of wind. For as in conſuming their goods without diſcretion and good aduiſe, they doe looſe them, if they did caſt chaffe in the winde, the which doeth carry and ſcatter it ſo farre abroade, that it cannot be recouered: but they are worthy to be heires of wind, that is to ſay to haue nothing: for alſo they trouble their owne houſe bringing their family into neceſſitie of begging their bread: and they them ſelues likewiſe conſtrained to beg: and for to obteine that which they deſire either in al, or in part, they muſt humble themſelues before good houſkeepers which haue the diſcretion & wiſdome to gouern and to ſpend their goods with reaſon. We may ſee this ſame by experiēce in folowing that which Solomon in the ſecond part of this ſentence ſayth, *The foole ſhalbe ſeruant to the wiſe in heart.* The prodigal childe hath proued his part. &c. Furthermore, they inherite the wind which are ſo much giuen vnto quarrelling and law, that they care not againſt

Oſeas.8.7.
&.12.1

Luke.15.14.

whome they begin ſute: and for to get peace and loue, they will quit, neither forgiue any thing howe little ſoeuer it bee that they thinke doeth belong vnto them, but rather then they woulde want of their purpoſe to obteine the victorie, they become enimies vnto al men. Such kind of people are worthie to haue nothing but wind: for they trouble their owne houſes, experience doeth alſo ſhew it, that not only their houſes, but alſo the kingdomes through braules and quarrels are ouerthwrone, and they which poſſeſſe them are driuen out, and are faine to become ſubiect vnto them whiche before were leſſe then they. I haue ſeene the ſeruantes on horſeback, and the Princes trot on foote as ſeruantes. And if the maiſter of an houſhold ought to be wiſe, by a more ſtrong reaſon thē ought kings & princes to be wiſe, which haue the townes, prouinces, & kingdomes in gouernmēt, to the end that they ſhould not trouble their ſubiectes, nor guide them as becommeth: and that it doeth happen that their lordſhips & kingdomes muſt be tranſported vnto others: and that in this manner beeing ſpoyled, they inherite winde: and in ſteede of ruling, are brought vnder the power of another, by the ſufferance of the Lorde, vnto whome it belongeth to remoue kingdomes, and to giue them vnto whome ſoeuer it pleaſeth him. As
Dan. 2. 21. the Prophets do teach vs, declaring that ſuch mutatiōs do oftē hap-
& 4. 14. 29. pen for the contempt of the Word, as hath bin ſeene amongſt thoſe miſerable poore men which haue receiued that deuiliſh *interim*.

30 *The fruite of the righteous is a tree of life: and hee that winneth ſoules, is wiſe.*

The righteous is not like vnto the couetous niggarde, neither vnto the witleſſe prodigal, neither the quarrelling rufler, who doe profite no body, but doe trouble al men, and doe ſet all in diſorder ſo that they deſtroy them ſelues, and doe not bring profite vntoo their neighbours, but hurte. But as the righteous hath not his truſt in men, but doeth depende vppon the goodneſſe of GOD which taketh care of his, and as hee prouideth what ſoeuer is neceſſary, giuing him al thinges aboundantly for to vſe, euen ſo doeth hee diſpoſe them in ſuch wiſe to the profite of his neighbours, that hee bringeth foorth fruite the which doth quicken his neighbours. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame: firſt of all, when he calleth the workes of the righteous, *fruit*: as alſo the holie Scripture doeth often in other places. For as the tree doeth not bring foorth his fruit for it ſelfe, but for another: euen ſo the true righteous, doeth not regard his own particular profite, but theirs which haue to doe with him. And as the fruite of the tree doeth nouriſhe and giue ſtrength, euen ſo the righteous laboureth by his works to refreſhe and quicken. Solomon doeth wel expreſſe it, when hee is not contented to ſay, *is as a tree*, but he addeth, *of life*, wherein hee alludeth vnto the tree of life which was planted in the midſt of the garden of pleaſure. For as if Adam in ſteede of eating of the tree of knowledge, had eaten of the tree of life, hee had not dyed, but had bene quickened for euer, and had reuiued his poſteritie, the which hee hath made ſubiect vnto death: euen ſo the righteous doth profite his neighbours for the benefite of life, not onely temporal, but alſo eternal. For hee hath not care of the bodie onely, but alſo, and that chiefly of the ſoules. Hee doeth his workes for to helpe the neceſſities of his neighbours: and therewith and by the ſame, he tendeth to edifie them to ſaluation, giuing them a good example, that they may be warned to prayſe God, and to giue him praiſe, for that that he leaueth them not vnprouided of good ſuccour and helpe, and are taught that after their power they ought to doe vnto their neighbours as they would their neighbours ſhould doe vnto them. Beeing thus builded, they ſhall liue eternally, and alſo they who ſo doe build them. Beholde howe the fruite of the righteous is as the tree of life.

Pſal.1.3.
Iere.17.8.
Mat.7 & *12.*
Gen.2.9.

Secondly, Solomon doeth ſignifie vnto vs, that the righteous doeth bring foorth fruite which doth giue life vnto his neighbours, when he ſayeth, *And he that winneth ſoules, is wiſe*. Wherein for to ſignifie, that the righteous by his good deeds and wel doing, doth drawe vnto him and winne mens ſoules, and doeth not ſuffer them to periſhe: but doeth ſaue them according vnto the wiſedome that God hath giuen him. Solomon compareth the iuſt man vnto a fiſher. For as the fiſher, to take fiſhe, is faine to vſe deceit and craft, ſuttletie and diſcretion, otherwiſe, hee taketh no fiſhe, but doeth driue them away, and ſo doth ſpende his time in vaine, and looſeth his labour: euen ſo the righteous hath neede of wiſedome, the

which may guide him ſo wiſely in his affaires, that hee may winne
his neighbours. And alſo becauſe our Lord ſaieth vnto his Apoſtles,
Mat.4.19. Folow me, and I wil make you fiſhers of men. Feare not, henceforth
Luk.5.10. thou ſhalt take men: hee doeth endue them with great wiſedome,
filling them with his holie Spirite, for to guide and gouerne them in
the taking of men. And in this we muſt learne, that Miniſters of the
Church chiefly ſtande in neede of wiſdome, for to learne wel to take
ſoules by good example and ſounde doctrine. Theſe are the nets that
ought to be caſt ouer the ſea of this world, &c. Beſides this, let vs
note that Solomon comparing the righteous and wiſe man vnto a
fiſher, ſecretly admoniſheth vs to bee watchful and careful. Wee
ſee that they which occupie the trade of fiſhing, are vpon the water
at al houres, except the winde be contrarie and doe let them: euen
ſo alſo muſt we not let paſſe any occaſion of time, for to do wel and
ſay wel, for to drawe our neighbours vnto our nettes and ſnares.
And the ſame muſt bee done with a great affection and maruellous
deſire: for if the fiſhermen for a temporal gaine, and that ſoone vaniſheth
away, are ſo careful, that they care not for their owne lyfe,
the which they often put in danger: by a more ſtronge reaſon, no
man ought to ſpare his owne perſon, when it is required to take
ſoules, & to make a perpetual gain. For if they alſo proceede therein
faithfully, they ſhal neuer looſe their labour, nor forgo their reward.
Eze.31.9 It is not like vnto fiſhing: for if the fiſhers do not take ought, they
& 33.9. looſe their gain, & ſo haue laboured in vaine: but they that fiſhe after
ſoules, are not depriued of gain, though they take nothing, prouided
that they do their duetie faithfully. When you enter into an
Mat.10.12. houſe, ſalute the ſame: and if the houſe bee worthie, let your peace
come vpon it: but if it be not worthie, let your peace return to you.
And herein we are admoniſhed not to be vnthankful towardes the
Lord, which ceaſeth not to reward vs wel, though we bring nothing
to him: and not to forget the honour that he do vs when he doeth
attribute vnto vs the taking of ſoules, the which is his worke, & not
mans: this ſame is after a ſort ſignified, when our Lorde ſaieth, Symon,
Luk.5.4. launch foorth into the deepe, & let downe your nets to make
1.Cor.3.6. a draught: &c. And S. Paul doth plainly ſhew it: Who is Paul then?
2.Cor.3.5. and who is Apollo, but the Miniſters by whom ye beleeued, and as
Ephe.2.10. the Lord gaue to euerie man? Not that we be ſufficient of our ſelues,

to thinke any thing, as of our ſelues: but our ſufficiencie is of God. We are his workmanſhip created in Chriſt Ieſus vnto good, which God hath ordained that we ſhould walke in them. Phi.2.13. For it is God which worketh in you, both the wil & the deede, euen of his good pleaſure. Finally, let vs note, that though we be neither iuſt nor wiſe, but ſo muche as wee are gouerned by the worde, it foloweth, that there is neither fruit of life, nor taking of ſoules in Poperie: for they are without the word: inſteed of fruit, they haue deadly poiſon, the inuentions & doctrines of men, ſuperſtitions & idolatries: and inſteede to be taken and caught, they are more drowned in the myre of this world. We may alſo adde, that ſith that Solomon ſpeaketh by ſimilitude & compariſon, we may apply this ſentence vnto an other meaning, to wit, that the righteous doeth not inherite winde, as doeth hee that troubleth his houſe, but of his righteouſnes hee gathereth excellent fruit: and the wiſe is not like the foole, which hath no wiſedome to drawe others vnto him ſelfe, and to make them to agree vnto him: but muſt him ſelfe conſent, and be as it were made captiue and ſubiect vnto the wiſe, which hath knowledge ſo to gouerne him ſelfe, that hee draweth his neighbours vnto him by ſoftneſſe and gentlenes, and other honeſt meanes.

31 *Behold, the righteous ſhalbe recompenſed in the earth: howe much more the wicked and the ſinner?*

We all naturally deſire to haue recompenſe of our labour and trauel, and are glad when wee are promiſed we ſhalbe paide for that which is owing vs, and that none wil withholde our labour: and againe, more ioyful when we haue our deſires granted, and promiſe perfourmed in deede. Neuertheles when Solomon ſpeaketh heere of recompenſe, & doth ſhew it preſent, ſaying, *Behold*, if we vnderſtād wel this meaning, he giueth none occaſion vnto our fleſh for to reioyce: for he doth not promiſe ſuch reward as it deſireth, as temporal riches, worldly honours, fauour of men, delights & pleaſures, peace and reſt: but he doth threaten vs with the contrary, as we may ſee. Firſt of al, when he ſheweth the ready recōpēſe of the righteous, ſaying, *Behold*, or lo, here it is. Secondly, whē he ſaith *in the earth*. For the conſideration and eſtate of the righteous in this life & world, is that they pay thē euil for good, they are afflicted & perſecuted, they are ſubiect vnto pouertie and miſerie, vnto ſickneſſe, cold and heate, hunger and thirſt, to ſorowes and griefes: and moſt commonly they ſuffer ſuch thinges ſo long as they liue in this world: as the holy ancient fathers haue tried, the Prophets, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte and *Pſal.35.11 & 38,20.* his Apoſtles alſo. Wherevpon doe proceed theſe complaintes, Falſe witneſſes did riſe vp: they laide to my charge thinges that I knewe not. They rewarded me euil for good: to the great diſcomforte of my ſoule. They alſo that rewarde euil for good, are againſt me: becauſe I folowe the thing that is good. And alſo other complaintes, as may be ſeene in the 3.6.10.and 13. Pſalmes, &c. Thirdly, when he denounceth rewarde vnto the righteous, as vnto the wicked & ſinners, and doeth not put difference, but onely that by interrogation hee ſheweth that there is a greater reaſon that the wicked & ſinners ſhould haue more greater recompenſe. For albeit, that al afflictions doe proceede from ſinne, as from their firſt cauſe (for if Adam had not ſinned, we ſhould haue bene ſubiect vnto no afflictions) for the trueth is, there is no righteous man but ſinneth, and conſequently, which doeth not deſerue the foreſaide rewarde: but becauſe the wicked doe ſinne more, they deſerue greater recompenſe. When Solomon declareth vnto the righteous this recompenſe or paiment, hee doeth admoniſhe them that they ſhould arme themſelues with patience: and what aduerſities ſoeuer doeth happen vnto them, yet doe they not murmure, nor deſpight God which doeth afflict and chaſten them. For albeit that the Deuil and the wicked doe perſecute them, yet doe the righteous ſuffer nothing but ſo farre as God ſlacketh the bridle to Satan and to the wicked, and maketh them executioners of his righteous iudgement, the which he doeth not exerciſe with rigour againſt the iuſt, as they doe wel deſerue, what righteouſnes ſoeuer they haue. Beholde Iob which hath witnes to be a perfect and vpright, and fearing God, yet God did afflict him by Satan, and by robbers his miniſters and inſtrumentes: the which Iob confeſſeth verie wel, ſaying, *Iob.1.21. & 4.17. & 9.2.3.* The Lorde hath giuen, & the Lord hath takē: the name of the Lord be bleſſed. Shal man be more righteous then God? For howe ſhoulde man compared vnto God, bee iuſtified? If hee would diſpute with him, he could not anſwere him one thing of a thouſande. Nowe that it is not the rigour that God exerciſeth his iudgement againſt the righteous, Solomon ſignifieth it after a ſort, when he doeth declare that they ſhalbe recompenſed in earth. The righteous of themſelues are neuer a whit better then the wicked and ſinners, the which doe not onely deſerue a temporal rewarde, but eternal: yet God is contented to chaſtice them in the earth, ſo long as they liue here, and wil not deſtroy them with the wicked, which ſhal periſh eternally: and in this maner they ſhalbee more recompenſed then the righteous, as they do wel deſerue, when with al their might and ful courſe they folow wickednes, and without remorſe of conſcience they giue them ſelues vnto vnſhamefaſtnes, for to commit al vncleannes euen with greedines. But the righteous are diſpleaſed at their tranſgreſſions and faultes, the which as they are not exempted in this worlde, euen ſo the Lord doeth chaſten them onely in earth: and therefore that they deſerue wel correction, Solomon doeth cal *recompenſe it*, or paiment. And for to ſhewe that the chaſtiſement is ſweete, and that it doeth not tende to deſtruction and damnation, he ſaieth, *on earth*. Wherin we muſt obſerue: firſt of al, that the righteous ought to walke in feare and humilitie, when they vnderſtand that they are not ſo innocent but that they doe wel deſerue that God ſhoulde correct them for their faults, and that he beginneth to execute his iudgements with them. The which he doth for their trial: and therefore Saint Peter doeth admoniſhe vs, Dearely beloued, thinke it not ſtraunge concerning the fierie tryal, which is amongſt you, to prooue you, as though ſome ſtrange thing were come vnto you. Secondly, the righteous haue here iuſt occaſion for to reioyce & to be comforted, whē they vnderſtande that God doeth not puniſhe them, for their faultes after this life, but here in earth hee doeth chaſtiſe them gentlely, in compariſon of that which they haue deſerued: and that to the ende that they ſhould not periſhe with the wicked worlde. Let vs then remember the admonition: My Sonne, deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lorde loueth, he chaſteneth. Albeit then, that it is for our ſinnes that God doeth recompenſe vs, ſending vs afflictions, neuertheleſſe hee doeth not proceede through hatred, but by loue and good affection that hee beareth vs, as a good father his children. Thirdly, when the righteous are ſet againſt the wicked, we knowe that notwithſtanding that the righteous of themſelues are no more worth

1.Pet.4.17
12.

1.Cor.11.32
Hebr.12.5

then the wicked, yet their faultes are not imputed vnto them, and
for the ſame they ſhal not periſh: as alſo it is ſignified after a ſorte,
when they are not ſo much recompenſed as are the wicked. This re-
2.Sam.7.14. compenſe of the righteous is the rod of man, whereof God ſpeaketh
vnto Dauid. But there is here a verie feareful threatening for them
which hate the good, and haue bent al their deſire vnto euil, by the
which they ſuffer themſelues to be ſo caried away, that they are gi-
uen vnto diſſolute and ſlanderous life, without any ſhame or hone-
ſtie. Theſe are they which Solomon calleth wicked and ſinners. The
righteous doe ſinne in deed, and doe commit verie grieuous faltes,
1.Pet.4.15. but they abhorre them, they are greeued for them, and do take heed
to be ſlanderous: as Saint Peter doeth admoniſh. Let none of you
ſuffer as a murderer or as an euil doer, &c. This is not without cauſe
that this threatening ought to be feareful to the wicked. For if they
haue the afflictions of the righteous in abhomination, iudging thē
to be perſecuted of God, & doe feare the like aduerſities: by a more
ſtrong reaſon they ought to be greatly afraid of the rewarde which
Shlomō ſetteth forth vnto thē. For it ſhal be greater then that which
they ſee happē vnto the righteous, the which they wold not receiue,
ſo much doe they thinke it harde & ſharpe. The Lord ſtriketh his
firſt of al, & ſeemeth to ſpare the wicked: wherevpō after the feeling
of the fleſh, the ſtate of the righteous ſeemeth to be miſerable in cō-
pariſon of the ſame of the wicked. Solomon doth after a ſort ſignifie
this ſame, whē he ſetteth the recōpēce of the iuſt preſent, ſaying, *Be-
hold*, and maketh mētion of it before the ſame of the wicked. And S.
Peter declareth plainly, ſaying, It is time that iudgemēt begin at the
1.Pet.4.17. houſhold of God. But the long ſufferāce doth nothing profit the ob-
ſtinate wicked: as Solomō doth here ſhew, ſaying. *How much more
&c*. Eſay ſaith, But when the Lorde hath accōpliſhed al ſtis worke Eſay.10.12.
vpon mount Syon & Ieruſalem, I wil viſite the fruite of the proude
heart of the king of Aſſhur, &c. And if it firſt begin at vs, what ſhall
the end be of thē which obey not the goſpel of God? Albeit thē that
1.Pet.4.17 the wicked ſeeme to be without feare in afflicting the faithfull: yet
ſhal they not faile of their paiment. For it is a righteous thing with
God, to recōpence tribulation to thē that trouble you, &c. Contra-
2.The.1.6. rily, in our afflictiōs, let vs take courage, ſaying with Paul. Therfore
2.Cor.4.16. we faint not, but though our outward man periſh, yet the inwarde
man is renewed dayly.

1 *He that loueth inſtruction, loueth knowledge: but he that hateth correction, is a foole.*

WE are al of this nature, that wee boaſt our ſelues to haue great deſire to be inſtructed, & we perſuade our ſelues that we loue knowledge: and alſo we commonly ſay, that knowledge is a goodly thing: as it is in deede: and not only goodly, but of great profite and pleaſure. For thereby wee rightly gouerne our ſelues and our affaires in this life: and al our enterpriſes do proſper wel when they are gouerned by knowledge: and therin we receiue profite, and alſo great delectation: for by knowledge we are ſo aſſured, that we proceede in doing our duetie without doubting or feare: knowing and confeſſing that whatſoeuer we doe (be it in word or deed) is wel done, and it is that which we ſhould do. Now when we doe thus bragge, we do giue ſignification that we abhorre ignorãce: as in deed it ought to be deteſted, ſeeing not only that it is troubleſome, but alſo vnprofitable and hurtful. From the tyme that Adam ſinned, darkneſſe entred into the world, and men loued darkneſſe more then light: and ſo haue they walked in ignorance, whereby they were giuen to al wickednes, and in this manner haue depriued them ſelues of life, & are fallen into death. But it is not enough to bragge of theſe foreſaide thinges: the chiefe point is, that indeed *Pro.2.1.* we ſhould abhorre ignorance, and loue knowledge, not that which hath but a vain ſhew, and is only praiſed of men: but that which is allowed before God, the which is giuen vnto vs of him, when hee teacheth vs by his word, & are diligent to receiue it. And to the end that we ſhould not deceiue our ſelues, perſuading our ſelues that we loue knowledge, wheras we do abhorre it, Solomon doth giue vs a certaine marke, for to iudge rightly whether we loue knowledge or no: This is inſtruction: when it pleaſeth and is acceptable vnto our minde. For he ſaith, *He that loueth inſtruction, loueth knowledge.* Albeit thẽ that we do vſe to ſermõs, & read the ſcriptures, & that we

can talke finely of them, yet if wee be ſo high that it ſeemeth vnto vs we can learne no more, and wil not ſuffer our ſelues to be admoniſhed,that we ſhould be taught,corrected,and reprooued where it is needful,wee doe not loue knowledge. But if confeſſing our ignorance,our faultes and imperfections, we take wel in worth that we be taught, admoniſhed, and reprooued, we loue inſtruction, and cõſequently knowledge. Now that inſtruction importeth teaching, exhortation, ſhewing,correction, and reprehenſion, firſt of all wee may vnderſtande it by the deriuation of the worde which Solomon vſeth here in this place. Secondly,when in the firſt Chapter & eight verſe,inſtruction & doctrine are ioyned together,& in the two and twentith verſe, by the complaint of wiſedome, and 23.verſe,by his admonition: & the 4.Chap.& 1.verſe,Children, heare the inſtruction *of a Father*. Thirdly,when here againſt to loue inſtruction,he ſetteth to hate correction,& againſt the louer of knowledge,he ſetteth *the foole*,ſaying,*But he that hateth correction,is a foole:* hee doeth ſhew vs that the fooliſh are the contemners & ſcorners of God,and of his word, the obſtinat & ſtifnecked which harden them ſelues in their wickednes,for al the exhortation that is made them. It is ſaide
Pſal.5.5. of them,Such as be fooliſh,ſhal not ſtande in thy ſight: for thou hateſt al them that worke vanitie: but for their contempt and obſtinacie,they ſhal periſh with the fooliſh: as aboue in the 1.Chapter and 22. verſe. To the end thẽ that we may not periſh with the foliſh, let vs loue inſtruction, & let vs not hate correction: and for to do this, let vs be armed with patience,that willingly and with a ioyful hearte we may ſuffer al afflictions & aduerſities,& let vs beare the Croſſe, mortifying our fleſh,by diuers tribulations. For inſtruction or correction, lyeth not onely in wordes of admonition, reprehenſion and threatening: but alſo in al ſufferinges whatſoeuer it ſhal pleaſe God to ſend vs. Solomon hath exhorted vs vnto this patience of the
Hebr.12. Croſſe,aboue in the 3.Chapter,verſes 11.12. The Apoſtle doeth expounde it after this ſort,ſaying, Let vs runne with patience the race that is ſet before vs.

2 *A good man getteth fauour of the Lorde: but the man of wicked imaginations,wil he condemne.*

Luk.17.10 What good workes ſoeuer we do,yet muſt we confeſſe that wee are vnprofitable ſeruants: and alſo that there is no man liuing that

doeth

doth good and ſinneth not. Let vs not think that by our good deeds we can deſerue to drawe the fauour of God vnto vs. Notwithſtanding, ſith it is ſaide, *That a good man getteth fauour: &c.* it is neceſſarie that wee ſhoulde giue our ſelues vnto weldoing, if wee will drawe vnto vs the fauour of the Lord. For as it is neceſſarie that the good tree ſhould bring forth his good fruit in his due ſeaſõ, euẽ ſo, if we be good, we muſt giue our ſelues vnto goodnes, aſwel in deeds and workes, as in words. Thus doing, we ſhal haue witneſſe that we are good, and ſhalbe aſſured of the good wil of God towards vs: hee wil make vs certaine that wee are acceptable vnto him, and that hee loueth vs, and that of his only grace and mercy. Wherefore, let vs know, that when Solomon ſaieth, *A good man getteth, or ſhal get,* hee ſpeaketh after the maner of men, for to accommodate him ſelfe vnto our weaknes, and to ſhew vs that we ſhal not labour in vaine, if we giue our ſelues vnto goodneſſe: for the Lorde wil not refuſe vs, nor forſake vs, but wil gather and drawe vs vnto him ſelfe, of his onely goodnes, without any thing of ours: yet muſt we not thinke it ſtrange, though Solomon doeth attribute vnto man, that which is proper vnto God alone. This is for to ſhewe vnto man that hee ought not to be ſlouthful, & without care: but that he ſhould ſolicite God to be fauourable vnto him. For as it is not without cauſe that the Scripture doeth exhort vs vnto good workes, and doeth cal them ours, (and notwithſtanding it is ſaide, We are his workemanſhip, created in Chriſt Ieſus vnto good workes, which God hath ordeined, that we ſhould walke in them: For it is God which worketh in you, both the wil & the deed, euen of his good pleaſure.) euen ſo alſo it is not without cauſe that Solomon promiſeth that the good ſhal draw the fauour of the Lord, though it is the Lorde onely that draw vs vnto himſelf. No man can come vnto me, except the Father, which hath ſent me, draw him. Again, No man cõmeth vnto the Father, but by me. Therefore, when we heare that the Scripture doeth attribute vnto vs any goodnes or vertue, let vs take heed frõ boſting our ſelues therof, as thogh we had it of our ſelues: but let vs acknowledge that God reckoneth that ours, which he of his only goodnes & mercy worketh in vs. Therfore thogh that he alone doth draw vs by his fauor, let vs not think it ſtrange, that Solomon ſaith, that the good doeth drawe the fauour of the Lorde. Touching the reſt, let vs note, that we haue had the like promiſe here aboue in the 11. Chapter,

Mat. 12.33.

Ephe. 2.10.

Phi. 2.13.

Ioh. 6.44.

Ioh. 14.6.

ter, He that ſeeketh good things, getteth fauour, &c. ſauing that in that ſame he maketh mention of fauour generally, & hereof the fauour of the Lord. Wherin we ought to bee aduertiſed that the fauour of men is nothing but winde and ſmoke, except it proceede of the fauour of God, and that it be ioyned vnto the ſame, ſo that it be for the honour of God, and becauſe that hee loueth vs, that men ſhould beare vs fauour. And therefore let vs not haue our eye vnto the fauour of men, but let vs content our ſelues that God fauoureth vs. We are alſo aduertiſed, that if we be good, we haue great neede of the fauour of the Lord: for moſt commonly they which do wel, are out of fauour with the world. Yet the Lord doth not ſuffer that they ſhould be wholly caſt off, and forſaken of men, but doeth raiſe vp ſome for to fauour them ſo much as is expedient for their ſaluation. And in this ſort, it is not properly men which fauour them, but God alone. And therfore, let vs confeſſe that Solomon ſaieth verie properly, That a good man doeth drawe vnto him the fauour of the Lorde: and let vs comfort our ſelues in this vnfaithfull promiſe, knowing that if we be good, though al the world ſhould ryſe vp againſt vs, yet their enterpriſes ſhal nothing hurt vs, for God fa-

Pſal.27.1. uoureth vs. And therefore let vs ſay, The Lorde is my light, and my
Pſal.119.6 ſaluation, whome then ſhal I feare? The Lorde is the ſtrength of my life, of whome then ſhal I be afraide? The Lorde is on my ſide: I wil not feare what man doeth vnto mee. Againſt this promiſe, hee ſetteth a threatening for to feare the wicked, ſaying, *But the man of wicked imaginations wil he condemne.* Here Solomon ſetteth the man of wicked imaginations, againſt the good man: and ſo, though the word which he vſeth, doeth in his tongue ſignifie the thoughts, whether they bee good or euil: yet by the Antitheſis, hee ſheweth that he ſpeaketh of him whoſe cogitations and thoughtes, whoſe purpoſes and enterpriſes doe tende but to euil and hurt, the which hee ſignifieth alſo in condemning the man of wicked imaginations. For if his thoughtes were good, he ſhould not bee condemned, but

Pſal.72.12 ſhoulde get fauour of the Lorde, whoſe office is not to condemne him which hath good cogitations, whereby hee tendeth to doe wel vnto his neighbours, but to iuſtifie and abſolue him, when the wicked doe condemne him. Hee ſhal deliuer the poore when he cryeth: the needie alſo and him that hath no helper. It is the manner

of the worlde to oppreſſe the good, and to iuſtifie and abſolue, and to quit the wicked. For the worlde is ſo blinde, that it counteth the wicked imaginations for pollicie and fineſſe of wit, wiſedome, and good counſel, for watchfulnes, and care. It is commonly ſaide of the wicked, that they are woorthie to liue, becauſe they diſpatche their affaires wel at the coſt and hinderance of the poore. But ſuch iuſtification ſhal not profite them before the Lorde, before whome wee muſt al appeare. Nowe hee knoweth them to be wicked, and therfore he wil not be fauourable. For thou arte the God that haſt no pleaſure in wickedneſſe: neither ſhal any euil dwel with thee. *Rom.14.10* *2.Cor.5.10* *Pſal.5.4.*
But as God is righteous, ſo wil he condemne their deſert. This condemnation ſhalbe declared in the laſt day, in the meane while, the Lord doth often diſſipate the enterpriſes of the wicked, and ſo they come not to the end of their imaginations, but are fruſtrate: as experience hath taught, and doeth daily teach.

3 *A man cannot be eſtabliſhed by wickednes: but the roote of the righteous ſhal not be mooued.*

This preſent ſentence may ſeeme to be a recital of the former. For it foloweth wel, (if God doe condemne man, which doeth imagine euil, and none can reſiſt his iudgement,) that the wickednes of man ſhal not profite him for to keepe him ſtedfaſt in one eſtate, and to make him proſper as he deſireth, and as him ſeemeth, becauſe hee ſeeth him ſelfe vpholden with ſuch as fauour him, that he hath credit, and aboundeth in temporal wealth: and as him ſeemeth, the poore doe tremble vnder him, becauſe of the wrongs and oppreſſions that he committeth: but hee is farre of from his reckoning, as Solomon doth here pronounce: and alſo Dauid in his 9. Pſalm, ſaying, The vngodly is trapped in the worke of his handes. Contrarily, albeit that the godly & righteous are ſharpely toſſed with diuers temptations, and that often it ſeemeth they are loſt & deſtroyed, yet becauſe they get the fauour of the Lord, it foloweth that they are ſo wel rooted, that their roote ſhal not remooue, but ſhal proſper for euer, though it ſeeme contrarie vnto the world. *Pſal.9.16.*

4 *A vertuous woman is the crown of her husband: but ſhee that maketh him aſhamed, is a corruption in his bones.*

Solomon doeth here ſhew vnto the woman what ſhe ought to be amongſt her houſholde, and in her conuerſation with her neighbours, for to be ioyful vnto her husband, & an ornament & honour vnto him, and not to vexe nor grieue him. And therefore the wiues which loue their husbãds, & haue good deſire to do their duety towards them, ought diligently to hearken vnto this leſſon, that they may vnderſtãd what they haue to do, or what to auoid for to ſhew their loue, and to put their good deſire in execution. Firſt of al, when Solomon ſaieth, *A vertuous woman:* hee doeth ſhewe vs that the wiues ought not to deſire nor ſeeke the delights & pleaſures, reſt, & idlenes of the fleſh, but to carrie the armour for to reſiſt & fight againſt the cõcupiſcences of the fleſh, by the which women are naturally drawne to become ſubiect vnto the former things: and ſo of themſelues they ſhew thẽſelues to be weak & faint hearted: yet doe they not think ſo, but do think thẽſelues to be very valiãt whẽ they can get their deſires, be they good or euil, & doe thinke to bee verie ſtrõg, when by loud crying, by curſing & railing, by ſcratching & biting, or other like violẽce, they withſtãd thẽ which do hinder thẽ to obtain their wil, & do as they would. Behold, what is force & power of the greateſt part of women. But the ſtrength that Solomon demandeth of women, is ſpiritual, the which ought to be exerciſed by the holie Ghoſt, who doth teach & guide them to their duetie, according as it is ſhewed them in the holy ſcriptures, wherin women haue faire glaſſes to looke in, what they ought to bee, & howe they ought to behaue themſelues: as for example, Sara, Rebecca, Abigail, and others. They haue therin alſo exhortations, laws, & commandements, to the end, that in ſolowing them, & doing their duetie, they ſhould ſhew themſelues vertuous & ſtrõg. The places of Scriptures ſeruing therto, haue bene alledged. Nowe that this vertue or power ought to be exerciſed as hath bin ſaid, Solomon doth ſhew it, when
Pro.11,16. & 22. hee calleth *A vertuous woman, the Crown of her husband.* For as we cannot reioyce of a tree, neither glory nor boaſt of his goodneſſe and excellencie, except it bring vs forth good fruit: euen ſo, if a woman doeth not exerciſe her power, and ſhewe the ſame by honeſt and godly conuerſation, ſhe cannot be the crown of her husband. For he cannot reioyce nor glorie in the vertue of his wife, as of an excellent and honourable veſſel, except that this vertue be ſhewed outwardly by godly exerciſe.

When we thus ſpeake, we ſhew that Solomon doth heere take *the crowne, for ioy*, glory, honor & precious ornamēt: after as crownes are vſed: and alſo the ſcripture vſeth this woorde crowne in the like ſence. And if we loke narrowly to what end the womā was created, we ſhal find that ſhe ought to be to her huſband, a ioyful, glorious, honorable and precious iewel. For the Lord ſaith, it is not good that man ſhould be by himſelf alone: I wil make him an helper meete for him. Thy deſire ſhalbe ſubiect to thine huſband, and he ſhal rule ouer thee. And S. Paul ſaith that the woman is the glory of the man. When the ſcripture ſpeaketh thus, it teacheth vs that if the woman wil folow the ordinance of God, ſhee ſhalbe an excellent ornament vnto her huſband. For we muſt not doute but that God hath ordeined the woman to be a great honor vnto man, for to be a fellowe & ayde vnto him, and that he hath made her ſubiect vnto man, as the reſt of the body vnto the head. But beſides this ſame, let vs note that Solomon ſaith not of her huſbands, or of her neighbours. For as it is not lawful for man to haue many wiues, but one alone: euē ſo alſo the wife cannot haue diuers huſbands, but one onely: as it may wel be gathered. Likewiſe as man ought not to ioyne himſelf to any but to his wife alone, in louing & cheriſhing her: euē ſo alſo the wife ought to content her ſelf with pleaſing of her huſband, and bee ſubiect vnto him. Now after that he hath ſhewed that by the exerciſe of vertue, the woman ought to reioyce & honor her huſbande, he ſheweth by the contrary, that ſhe doth grieue, trouble, & diſhonor him, when he ſaith, *But ſhee that maketh him aſhamed, &c.* The corruption of the bones bringeth great hurt vnto the body, & maketh it diſformed, & ſo the perſon is vexed & troubled, & cānot rightly do his office. Againe, the wife that deſpiſeth vertue & the exerciſe therof, & is giuen to be fooliſh, & to play the wanton, intemperate, arrogant, & rebellious, ſlouthful & negligent, in this ſort ſhe is a ſhame vnto her huſbande, ſhe greatly vexeth & troubleth him, in ſuch wiſe that he cannot ſet ſuch order in his houſe as behoueth, & for this cauſe his affaires haue euil ſucceſſe, wherby he is brought vnder foote and to confuſion. And in this maner the wicked wife is the deſtruction of her huſbande, where as ſhee ought to ſerue him for an helper and ſuccour, according as ſhe is ordeined of God. She is not then only rebellious againſt men, but alſo againſt God: wher-

Iob 19.9.
Pſal. 21.5.
& 65.11.12
& 103.4.
Eſa. 23.9.
& 28.1.3.
& 62.3.
Phil. 4.1.
1.*Theſ.* 2.19
Iam. 1.12.
1.*Pet.* 5.4.
Gen. 2.18.
& 3.16.
1.*Cor.* 11.7.
Gen. 2.18.24
1.*Cor.* 7.2.
34 & 11.8.
Eph. 5.22.

of foloweth, that ſhe her ſelſe muſt alſo goe into corruption, and remaine in eternal damnation.

5 *The thoughts of the iuſt are right: but the counſels of the wicked, are deceitful.*

It is not enough that we thinke to do wel vnto our neighbours, and to haue no deſire to hurt them: it ſufficeth not to thinke to doe right vnto our neighbours, & not to do them any iniury or violēce: but euerie one ought to be ſo affectioned, that he ſhould looke how he could deliuer the miſerable and afflicted from the wrongs & oppreſſions that the wicked do labour to worke them: otherwiſe wee cannot boaſt to be ought worth. For as Solomon heere ſaieth, *The thoughts of the iuſt are right*. Good people do ſeeke out al the honeſt and fit meanes to ſaue & deliuer the miſerable frō the violence and wrong of the wicked. Euerie one of vs ought to labour for it, and chiefly the Magiſtrates, to whom the word is directed, It doeth belong vnto them ſo to doe, for they beare the ſword. Priuate perſons haue not authoritie to repreſſe iniuries and wronges by the ſword: albeit that it is the duetie of euerie one of vs for to help our neighbours, and to deliuer them from the oppreſſion of the wicked. When S. Peter ſtept foorth to ſtrike with the ſword, he was reprooued. We ſhould then looke to miniſter help vnto our neighbors, but yet without ſwoord: except the ſame be committed vnto vs, by the Magiſtrate, & that we are expreſly charged to vſe it. Otherwiſe, we muſt haue as it were our hands bound, but not our mouthes ſtopt. It ſhould ſerue to giue exhortation, to preach and to threaten, for to turne away iniuries & wrongs. This perteineth vnto al Chriſtians, and aboue al, vnto the Miniſters of the word, which ſhould be folowers of the Prophetes & Apoſtles. Contrarily, it is not enough for the wicked to deſpiſe their neighbours, & not to thinke to do them any good: but their heartes are ſo poiſoned with malice, that they ceaſe not to conſult and determine, to looke and to deuiſe all the meanes they can to hurt their neighbours, & to deſtroy them: and chiefly they which take not heede. Solomon doeth wel ſignifie this ſame, when he ſaith, *But the counſels of the wicked, are deceitful.* Wee may point out two reaſons, for the which the euil which they think, is called deceitful. Firſt of al, becauſe they ſet trappes to catche them which take no heed of them, or which cannot perceiue them.

Pſal. 82.2.
Iere. 22.3
Rom. 13.4.
2. Pet. 2.14

Mat. 26.51. 52.

Secondly,becauſe they are counterfait & diſguiſed,they faine them ſelues honeſt & good men,hiding their malice ſo much as they can: and alſo they make them ſelues to beleeue that God doeth not ſee them,conſpiring & inuenting ſo ſecretly as they can.Solomon doeth giue vs this ſame to vnderſtand briefly,*by the deceitful counſels*, & by the Pſalme,His mouth is ful of curſing,deceit,and fraude: vnder his tongue is vngodlines & vanitie.Hide me from the gathering together of the froward : and from the inſurrection of wicked doers. Lord how long ſhal the vngodly : howe long ſhal the vngodly tryumph? *Pſal.10.7. & 64.2.3. & 94.3.8.* Thus thinking and ſaying,they deceiue them ſelues : and do wel ſhewe that they are beaſtes:and therefore, they are ſharply reprooued.O ye fooles,whẽ wil you vnderſtand? And wo vnto them that ſeeke deepe to hide their counſel from the Lord. *Eſai.29.15*

6 *The talking of the wicked,is to lie in waite for blood : but the mouth of the righteous wil deliuer them.*

The maner and cuſtome of the greateſt part of the wicked,is that they would be eſteemed for honeſt and good men, & do boaſt therof with open mouth. Wherfore let vs not think that Solomon meaneth,that the wicked do openly ſay,let vs laye waite for blood: but they haue this malicious craft, to beare falſe witneſſe againſt theyr neighbours,to laye falſe crimes to their charge, & to interpret their workes and their words to euil,to the end that they may haue ſome cloke, and to ſeeme that they proceede as honeſt & good men,whẽ they labour to bring to ruine and deſtruction the innocents , the poore & weak which do not take heede of their malice,or haue not power to ſaue them ſelues from their violence. The world is ſo filled with ſuch wicked men, that rightly wee may complaine, The good man is periſhed out of the earth. *Mich.7.2.* The Prophets,our lord Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles,haue bene handeled after this ſort. *Mat.9.10.* And bleſſed are they which ſuffer with them. But what proſperitie ſoeuer there is in the patience that we haue in trouble, and though we muſt reioyce therein,yet it is not to ſay,but that we ſhould haue cõpaſſion of thẽ which ſuffer,& to think how to deliuer thẽ, & to procure the ſame: and if wee can not better, and reſtore it at the leaſtwiſe , that wee ſhould labor by prayers,exhortations, & threatenings,if it be needful: otherwiſe,we are faint, & haue not a right heart, Solomen doth ſhew vs this ſame,when hee ſaith, *But the mouth of the righteous* *wil deliuer*, for whoſe blood they laye waite. Nowe as ſuch wicked men doe worke the ouerthrow of others, ſo alſo ſhal they be ouerthrowne themſelues: and contrarily, the iuſt which labour to ſaue their neighbours, ſhalbe deliuered, as foloweth.

7 *God ouerthroweth the wicked, and they are not: but the houſe of the righteous ſhal ſtand.*

Mat.7.26. The wicked are like vnto an houſe builded without foundation: And therefore let the good comfort themſelues.

8 *A man ſhalbe commended for his wiſedome: but the froward of heart ſhalbe deſpiſed.*

There is none of vs that would gladly ſuffer him ſelf to be deſpiſed, nor to be euil ſpoken of, but doe al deſire to be eſteemed, & to be wel and honeſtly ſpoken of. Wherſore we muſt be very attentiue vnto the doctrine that Solomon doth preſently giue vs: for he doth ſhew vs the way for to attaine vnto that which we deſire, touching our reputation and good name. This is the wiſedome wherewithall, if we be endewed, hee doeth promiſe vs commendation. Wee muſt therefore be giuen vnto wiſedome, and we ſhalbe had in good reputation, and ſhalbe prayſed and commended. But to the ende that we may not be deceiued, let vs know, that there hath been and are in the world many honeſt men and wel learned, after the outward apparance, and in the feeling of the fleſhe, the which haue bene, & are wel counted of, and praiſed of them which are led with a carnal and worldly affection: but as ſuch wiſdom is condemned of God, euen ſo, that reputation vaniſheth away verie quickly, as al men do proue by experience, ſauing thoſe which knowe not what wiſdom is. Solomon ſpeaketh not here of ſuch wiſdom, but of that which is ioyned together with vpright heart, wherby we labour to profit our neighbours, & to do hurt to no man. He doth ſhewe it, when he ſetteth a froward hart againſt wiſdom, ſaying, *But the froward of heart ſhal be deſpiſed.* At the firſt ſight it ſeemeth vnto the faithful poore afflicted, beeing weake & ful of infirmities, that the contrary of this ſentence is true. For we ſee that as the wicked do pleaſe & praiſe themſelues: ſo alſo they haue a great number of flatterers to applaud and to commende them. And as the faithful doe walke in humilitie, and

eſteeme

eſteme not of thẽſelues: euen ſo alſo the world doth contemne thẽ. This ſame hath bin tryed & is prooued dayly. Notwithſtanding the ſame letteth not this ſentence to be true: for Solomon doeth not ſpeake of that which is done in the world amongſt the wicked, but of that which ought to be done, ſhewing vs, what God doth allow, & diſallowe: and what the children of God ought to praiſe, and what they ought to contemne and abhorre. Let vs then vnderſtande that Solomon promiſeth vnto them which haue true wiſdom, that they ſhalbe eſteemed before God, who alſo wil cauſe them to bee eſteemed and reuerenced of men ſo farre as he ſhal know to bee neceſſary for them: and therewith alſo hee declareth vnto vs what is our duetie towardes them, to the end that we ſhould not folow the fooliſhnes and malice of the world, which doeth mocke and perſecute the wiſe and prudent, but that wee ſhould haue them in admiration, ſpeaking wel of them, and giuing them honor & reuerence, in being at their commandement, & obeying their admonitions, inſtructions, and exhortations: and in trembling at their reprehenſions and threatnings: as we honour the wiſe magiſtrates, godly Miniſters, our fathers and mothers. Contrarily, let vs knowe, that hee threateneth the fooliſh and wicked which are ſo much peruerted & ouercome, that they giue themſelues to nothing but to vanitie and fooliſhneſſe, vnto vngodlineſſe and filthineſſe: let vs knowe I ſay, that hee threateneth ſuch people denouncing vnto them that God wil deſpiſe them, with a horrible and fearful contempt. Let vs know alſo that they are wel worthy to be contemned before men, & that they which know them to be ſuch, ſhould abhorre them, & eſteme them not only as filth and doung, but alſo as poyſon and deadly peſtilence, euen verily to hate them, and to pray for their deſtruction, yet without being led with any carnal affection, which ſhould draw vs to ſeeke our particular profit, and to reuenge our ſelues vpon thẽ which ſhould hinder the ſame: but that onely we ſhoulde haue before our eyes the honour and glory of God, and the reſt and peace of his. Then may we ſay, Stand vp, o Lord, in thy wrath, and lift vp thy ſelfe. &c. Let God ariſe, & let his enemies be ſcattered. &c. Wilt thou not ſlay the wicked O God? &c. Moreouer let vs note, firſt of al foraſmuch as al wiſdome commeth of God, and that none is indued therewith but by his grace and goodneſſe, and that for the

Pſal.7.6.
Pſal.68.1.
Pſal.139.19.

ſame we are eſteemed of by our neighbours, and that they commende and praiſe vs for it, let vs take good heed from being delighted with our ſelues, and to bee drunken with ſuch praiſes, thinking that they are due vnto vs of right: but walking with humblenes, let *Pſalm.115.1* vs ſay, Not vnto vs, O Lorde, not vnto vs, but vnto thy name giue the praiſe, &c. If we do contrarily, we deſerue to heare, What haſt *1.Cor.4.7.* thou, which thou haſt not receiued.

9 *He that is deſpiſed, and is his owne ſeruant, is better then he that boaſteth himſelf & lacketh bread.*

We all naturally are ſet to glory and boaſting, & do loue reſt, and are glad that others ſhoulde labour for vs, and ſerue vs : for this cauſe wee thinke it very ſtrange that Solomon ſhoulde heere commend baſenes and ſeruice. But ſeeing we loue not to want victuals, and doe feare to ſtarue for hunger, ſo that for bread wee will applie our ſelues to the vileſt office that can be thought of, rather then wee wil die for hunger, let vs not therefore finde it ſtrange though Solomon doth commend the man that is deſpiſed, and doeth apply his worke for to ſerue and helpe himſelfe, and to earne his bread in the ſweate of his face. He doth not ſimply and abſolutely commend the baſenes and ſeruice, but by compariſon. For in that that man is conſtrained to become ſlaue and bounde, commeth of ſinne. And thus *Gen.3.17.* abiection and ſeruice are after a ſort the reward for ſinne, which we were better to ſuffer, then to runne into further danger & trouble, that is to ſay, to ſtarue for hunger. There is none of vs but if neceſſitie pricke him, that wil not rather chooſe to humble himſelfe and to giue himſelfe to worke, then to ſuffer himſelfe to die for hunger, by contemning labour and worke. And ſuche an election is agreeable vnto the ordinance of God, when we are ſet to worke in good conſcience. Man in the beginning was in a noble and excellent ſtate, as wee may wel vnderſtand when it is ſaide, That God did create him vnto his image and likeneſſe: and when it is ſaide, they both *Gen.1.27* were naked, &c. But ſinne did otherwayes change their eſtate. The *Gen.2.24* Eccleſiaſtes doth wel ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, That God hath made *Eccle.7.31* man righteous: but they haue ſought many inuentions And thus from the beginning we haue experimēted, that he which exalteth himſelf, ſhalbe brought lowe. Now albeit that humilitie & bondage are paines due for ſinne, yet ſeeing they are of ſmal continuance, & that the Lorde woulde haue vs to beare them for to mortifie our fleſh (the which otherwiſe woulde runne into al filthineſſe and vncleanneſſe, into al inſolencie and diſſolutenes) we muſt not abhorre them, neither to be grieued to be deſpiſed, to be vile and abiect, and to abaſe our ſelues to doo the woorkes of ſeruantes, and chiefly when they are fit and meete to prouide for the neceſſities of vs and our houſholde, and needie brethren: but wee muſt reioyce therein, knowing that in ſuch eſtate we are not vnprofitable vnto our neighbours and alſo that wee our ſelues therby reape profite. Solomon doth ſignifie it, by this worde, *and is his owne ſeruant*. He meaneth not by this worde to teache vs to be niggardes, to loue our ſelues, to make our particular profite, without hauing care of our neighbours. If he ſpake after the manner of the worlde, and carnal men, which wil ſay, giue vs more of your purſe, and leſſe of your courteſie: and wil forget al glorie, pompe and magnificence for to labour leaſt we ſhould dye for hunger, there might be inferred vppon his ſaying, that it were ynough for vs to meddle with our own buſines, and not to care for our neighbours: ſeing that after the world, man is ſeruant to himſelfe, who doth his workes without thinking that his neighbours do belong to him, or that hee is bounde vnto them. And ſuch a woorthy man is preferred before him which boaſteth himſelfe, and by glory wil not eſteeme to ſet his hand to worke, and in the meane while ſhal be ready to ſtarue. They which are moſt giuen to the fleſh, and to the world, haue taken ſuch an opinion, and doe alſo ſeeme at the firſt ſight that Solomon doth folow it: but Solomon being inſtructed by the ſpirit of God, hath vttered this ſentence by the ſame ſpirit, by whome wee al are one body in Ieſus Chriſt, and euery one, one anothers members. Let vs learne that Solomon calleth man a *ſeruant for himſelfe, or his owne ſeruant*, the which doth folow his vocation, & therin doth labour for to obey God, by louing of his neighbor as himſelf. Wherupon it foloweth that he ſetteth himſelfe to woorke looking to profite his neighbours and labouring to ſuccour them when neede requireth: otherwiſe there is no loue in him. Whoſoeuer hath this worlds good, and

Rom.12.4.
1.*Cor.12.12*
Ephe.4.4.

ſeeth his hath need,and ſhutteth his cõpaſsion frõ him,how dwelleth
1.Iohn.3.17. the loue of God in him?But wee muſt marke the next exhortatiõ:
& 18. My little childrẽ,let vs not loue in word,neither in tongue, but
in deede,,and in trueth. A man thus doing,is his owne ſeruant,and
is better then him that glorieth, and yet hath nothing to ſuſteine
himſelfe, much leſſe to helpe his neighbours. When Solomon ſaith
is better, he meaneth not that the needie boaſter, and vaineglorious
is good, ſeeing he is neither profitable to himſelfe, nor to his
neighbours,but hurtful.For to liue,he muſt vſe either craft and ſubtiltie,
or force and violence,or els other vnlawful meanes,as to borowe
without willing to pay againe,or els to ſel that which is not
his. Such a perſonage is no better then a theefe, or a robber, in whõ
there is no goodneſſe, but al hurt and hinderance. Therefore when
Solomon ſaith,*Better*,he denieth that the glorious wanter is good,
that he might on the contrary part affirme the goodneſſe of him
which is deſpiſed,and yet he ſerueth himſelf ſo wel,that he wanteth
nothing,and laboureth to helpe his poore members to get to ſuſtein
themſelues. Beſides this he willeth vs not to be greeued,though we
be deſpiſed of the worlde,but that we ſhoulde conceiue ſo humbly
of ourſelues,that we might rightly ſay,Lord,mine hart is not hauty,
neither are mine eyes loftie. Our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath not diſdained
Pſa.131.1. to bee counted an artificer or handicraftes man. Hee diſdained
Mar.6.3. not to take vpon him the fourme a ſeruant: and therefore S.
Phi.2.5. Paule exhorteth vs, ſaying, Let the ſame minde be in you, that was
euen in Chriſte Ieſus. &c. Furthermore let vs knowe that Solomon
prayſeth and commendeth labour and trauell, and ſheweth vs
that wee ought not to boaſt our ſelues of any goodneſſe, when wee
doe not apply our ſelues to doe our office: for then wee are vnprofitable,
and are not worthie of the bread that wee eate. For euen
2.Theſ.3.10. when we were with you, this wee warned you of, that if there were
any,which woulde not worke,that he ſhoulde not eate. To conclude,
let vs knowe that Solomon doeth teache vs, that euery one
ſhoulde content himſelfe with his owne vocation and ſtate,& therin
to labour according as hee knoweth the wil of God to bee: and
that none ſhoulde brag,nor preſume to ſupport many charges, and
to occupie diuers offices. For as the Prouerbe ſaith, who ſo gripeth
too muche, doeth holde ſo muche the worſe: that is, hee that

woulde

wouldе al haue, ſhal al forgoe. They which are contented to holde their eſtate, are willingly contented with ſufficiencie, and aſwel for themſelues as to helpe the neceſſitie of their neighbours. Contrarily, they which are vaine boaſters, preſuming to bee ſufficient to gouerne many affaires, and doe fall into ſuche neceſſitie that they haue nothing whereon to eate, except they borrow it, or ſteale it, ſo much it wanteth that they haue wherewith to ſatisfie them which labour for them, or to them, to whome rhey ſtande bounde. The doctrine of Paule is not contrary to this ſame, when hee ſaith, Let him that ſtole, ſteale no more. &c. This doctrine ſeemeth very plaine, but it is not eaſie to doe, that wee can attaine therevnto without brideling our corrupt nature, conſidering the inclination thereof. *Ephe.4.28*

10 *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beaſt: but the mercies of the wicked are cruell.*

For to ſhewe howe the poore deſpiſed man, and hee that is his owne ſeruant is better, he doeth attribute vnto him righteouſneſſe: and that becauſe ſo much it wanteth that he is not negligent in doing his duety towardes men, that he doth not neglect nor contemne his beaſt which ſerueth him to labour with al, but doeth adminiſter vnto him that which is neceſſary: he ſheweth this ſame, when hee doeth ſay, *A righteous man regardeth.&c.* And heerein hee hath reſpect to the lawe which ſaith, Thou ſhalt not muzzle, &c. Saint Paule doeth alledge this law for to ſhew that the miniſters of the worde ought to bee rewarded for their labour, and that they ſhoulde haue diſtributed vnto them that which is neceſſary for them to liue and to doe their office. And albeit there is not ſo little a birde whereof God taketh no care: yet notwithſtãding for to declare that by his law, god hath had more regard vnto men, for whome al thinges are created, then to oxen, Saint Paule denieth that god taketh care for oxẽ: not that he wold exclude oxen from the prouidence of God, without the which nothing can remaine in this worlde: but hee meaneth that this lawe was not giuen for the cauſe of oxen, but to the ende that we ſhoulde vnderſtande howe great care we ſhoulde haue ouer our neighbours, when God commandeth vs expreſly to take care of oxen. Nowe *Deut.25.4.* *1.Cor.9.9.*

alſo when Solomon ſpeaketh, that *the righteous man regardeth the life of his beaſt*, let vs not thinke that hee doeth attribute righteouſneſſe vnto a man for taking care of his beaſt, neither that hee woulde that the man ſhoulde be counted iuſt becauſe he regardeth to nouriſhe his horſes, or oxen which labour: but hee reaſoneth from the leſſe to the greater, as if he ſaid, If the righteous doth take paine to prouide for his beaſt, and to doe al the good hee can to him, or is neceſſary for him: by a ſtronger reaſon hee will bee moued, to ſhewe gentleneſſe towardes his neighbours, and wil accuſtome himſelſe too vſe vpright dealing, to the end thereby that hee may doe his duetie to them, and not to defraude them. And ſo doing, hee ſhal ſhewe that hee is led with a gentle and louing, good and righteous affection, and that hee hath no deſire to hurte, but that he intendeth to profite his neighbours. By ſuche exerciſes hee ſhal not be righteous: but becauſe he is righteous, he wil apply him ſelſe vnto them, and wil ſhew himſelſe righteous to the edification of his neighbours, as the good fruite maketh not the good tree, but becauſe the tree is good, hee bringeth foorth good fruite, and thereby declareth his goodneſſe. Solomon then doth not here exalt our works to make vs to boaſt of thē, but he prouoketh vs to do ſo well that our neighbours ſhoulde feele and perceiue vs to bee ſofte and gentle, and not to contemne them, to deale euil with them, to hurte them, and hinder them, as doe the wicked: euen as Solomon doeth ſignifie, when hee ſaith, *But the mercies of the wicked are cruell*, He iudgeth the affections which are inward and hid, the which are knowne to God onely. The hearte is deceitful and wicked aboue all things, who can knowe it? I the Lorde ſearch the heart, and try the reines. Againe, God ſeeth not as man ſeeth: for man looketh on the outwarde apparance, but the Lorde beholdeth the heart. Yet neuertheleſſe hee medleth not with the office of God, but when hee ſeeth that the wicked doe abounde in euil fruites of wicked works, that they exerciſe crueltïes in borrowing and not paying againe, ſeeing that ſuch vngentlenes cannot proceed but of cruel affection, by ſuch exerciſes Solomon doeth iudge rightly of the inward parts, though hee doeth not beholde them with his eies. For the tree is knowne by his fruite. And in pronouncing of that which is within

Iere.17.9.

&.10.

1.Sam.16.7

within,hee ſheweth what their outwarde conuerſation is,that is to
ſay,infamous, wicked and cruel. For an euill tree cannot bring *Mat.7.16.*
foorth good fruite. And becauſe, that none would bee counted cruell, *&.12.33.*
therefore,it is needeful, firſt of al that wee refourme the inward
parte: as the Lorde doeth ſhewe vnto vs, when hee reiecteth al
the outwarde holyneſſe,for the crueltie which hee expreſſeth, ſaying,
For your handes are ful of blood. And afterwardes when
hee exhorteth,waſhe yee then,&c. Yee make cleane the outſide of *Eſay.1.11.*
the Cuppe,and of the Platter: but within they are ful of bribery & *15.16.*
exceſſe. But it is not in your power thus to doe: it is the worke of *Mat.23.25.*
the Lord. Then will I powre cleane water vpon you, and yee ſhalbe *&.26.*
cleane: yea from al your filthineſſe,&c. Wherefore wee muſt pray *Ezec.36.25*
vnto God,and ſay,Purge mee with hyſope, and I ſhalbe cleane:
waſhe mee,and I ſhalbe whiter then ſnowe. The Pope with his
ſhauelinges hath neede thus to pray. For if there bee any people in *Pſal.51.7.*
the worlde which beare any cruel affection,they haue it,ſeeing that
they do not only ſpoyle mens goods for to enrich themſelues, but
alſo ſo much as in them lieth, ſteale ſoules from God, to giue them
to the diuell. They are of the number of them whom Ezechiel ſpeaketh,
Woe vnto the ſhepheardes of Iſrael,that feede themſelues:
ſhoulde not the ſhepheard feede the flockes? For this cauſe wee *Ezech.34.2*
are admoniſhed to beware of them. They which next ſucceede the
falſe doctours in cruell affections, are they which vnder colour of
miniſtring iuſtice,do iudge through parciality, hauing regarde too
perſons,taking bribes,and not giuing the right vnto him that it belongeth *Eſay.1.23.*
vnto. Thy Princes are rebellious, and companions of
theeues. &c.

11 *Hee that tilleth his land,ſhalbe ſatisfied with bread: but he that foloweth the idle,is deſtitute of vnderſtanding.*

For to giue courage vnto the man which is ſeruant for himſelf, and his owne man,hee maketh vs a promiſe, the accompliſhement whereof is very needeful for vs, yea neceſſary to mainteine vs in this life,he promiſeth *Satisfiyng with bread:* that is to ſay,that the mã which ſhalbe diligẽt & careful to do his office,to folow his eſtate and vocation,ſhal want nothing that is neceſſary for to liue in this worlde, but ſhal haue enough and contentation. For by bread are ſignified al thinges neceſſary for to vpholde this life: and by *ſatisfiyng* is ment contentation. Now hee that is contented with things neceſſary, is rich enough.

Albeit thē that Solomō doth not name but bread only, yet doth hee not promiſe any ſmal thing, as might ſeeme at the firſt ſight: but doeth promiſe riches, as afore in the 10. Chapter and 4. verſe. And ſith that theſe riches are neceſſary, and that he doth not promiſe thē but vnto the labourer, it followeth that hee exhorteth vs vnto labour, and doth ſhewe vs that it is neceſſary for vs to labour. And albeit that of our nature wee are not ſo much giuen to do pleaſure and ſeruice vnto our neighbours, as that wee wil leaue our owne worke to doe theirs: and alſo are not ſo diligent nor ſo earneſt in taking of paine that wee ſhoulde take other mens worke in hande with our owne: yet notwithſtanding becauſe there are many curious and vndiſcrete, which forſaking their office, woulde gladly take both the office and worke of others in hande, Solomon would not omit to teach vs, that we ſhould keep our ſelues within our limits: And therefore he hath not ſaide ſimply, That whoſoeuer doeth tyll the earth, but *hee that tilleth his lande*. Let vs therefore learne not to take in hande that which doeth not belong vnto vs, otherwiſe wee ſhoulde not be compelled to leaue our vocation: for wee are not able to deale in diuers eſtates, neither haue ſhoulders ſtrong enough for to beare many burdens. Wee are like vnto a body whoſe members haue diuers operations and offices, and where euery member doth his owne office without intermedling in the office of the other: and in this ſort there is no confuſion of diſorder in the body, but the members are careful & help one another. S. Paul doth teach vs ſuch ſimilitudes, for to ſhewe vs that none ought to thinke and eſteeme of himſelfe more then behoueth, that euery one ought to imploy himſelfe after the meaſure of the grace that he hath receiued, and that euery one vſe his eſtate, ſo as hee ſhoulde alſo care for his neighbour. But becauſe hee ſpeaketh but of the tilling of the lande, it might ſeeme that the promiſe to be filled with bread, doth not belong but onely vnto them which tyll the lande, which do plant the vines, which doe ſow and reape, and which are occupied about the lande: but let vs knowe that al they which buſie them ſelues

Rom.12.4.
1.Cor.12.12

in any woorke that is meete and agreeable vnto their vocation which is allowed of God, are woorthy to bee ſatiſfied with bread. And therefore, albeit Solomon doeth not ſpeake but of the tilling of the lande, yet doeth hee not exclude other vocations which are not forbidden of God, but vnder one kinde, hee comprehendeth all occupations and woorkes, and al eſtates which God hath ordeined for men to bee occupied, that they ſhoulde not eate their bread for nought, in ſlouthfulneſſe and ydleneſſe. If any man demande why Solomon hath rather named the tilling of the earth, then any other eſtate: there may be twoo reaſons aſſigned for the ſame. *Gen.2.15. & 3.17.* The firſt is, that the tilling of the lande was firſt ordeined. The ſeconde is, that thereby the earth doeth bring foorth vnto vs that which is moſt neceſſary for the maintenance of this preſent life: that is to ſay, bread, by the meanes whereof wee obteine al other neceſſaries & corporal profits. Wee may wel vnderſtand it when Chriſt teaching vs to aſke that which is needful for this life, doeth not make mention but of bread. *Mat.6.11.* Moreouer let vs note, that ſithens Solomon doth promiſe that we ſhalbe ſatiſfied with bread, that it is lawful for vs to deſire riches, but only ſuch as are neceſſary. It is not lawful for vs to deſire a great ſuperfluous abundāce, but we ſhould contēt our ſelues with a ſmal thing, as Solomō doth ſignifie it, though he doth promiſe vs but bread. Not ſo but that God doeth giue vs al other meates the which we may vſe with thanksgiuing: but we muſt not be curious of them, as are the gluttons and dainty mouthed which care only for their mouths & bellies, & care no whit for their neighbours. Albeeit ſuch maner of people haue plently of bread yet are they not filled: for they are neuer ſatiſfied. After this promiſe hee addeth a threatning to the contrarie, the which hee expreſſeth by a reproofe, ſaying, but *hee that foloweth the ydle, is deſtitute of vnderſtanding*. For to expreſſe and to deſcribe the man which wil not labour, he ſaith that he is ſlouthful, that is to ſay, that hee laboureth to be like vnto them, and heerein he cloſely doth chide and threaten them: as before in the 16. chap. & 6. verſe, &c. And to finiſhe the reproofe, he ſaith he is *deſtitute of vnderſtanding*, & by ſuch reprehenſion which is commō in the world againſt the ſlouthful, he ſheweth that he that foloweth them, is wel woorthy to dye for hunger: for ſith he is voide of vnderſtanding, his outward members, as

Pro.10.4. armes and legges doe feele therof, whereof doth folow pouertie. A ſlouthful hand maketh poore, &c. And if man for want of labouring to get his corporal bread, deſerueth to bee called deſtitute of vnderſtanding: by a more ſtrong reaſon, hee which hath no care of the health of his ſoule, hath a very faint hart.

12 *The wicked deſireth the net of euils: but the roote of the righteous giueth fruite.*

The hunter or the fouler that deſireth to make his profit in hunting or fouling, doeth not onely ſet and lay to take one beaſt or one foule, but many: and to obtaine his deſire, hee prepareth his lawnes toyles and nettes, and doeth place them as hee knoweth they will ſerue him beſt to make greateſt ſpoyle of beaſtes: for he doeth not hunt after them for to nouriſh and keepe them aliue, but to kil and eate them, and to ſatiſfie his deſire: euen ſo the wicked is not contented to commit one euil, but doeth inuent many, and againſt many perſons, and chiefly againſt the weake and feeble, againſt the ſimple and innocent, which want power or wiſedom to reſiſt the wicked, as doe the beaſtes that the huntſman or fouler purſueth. And to come to the ende of his deuiſes and enterpriſes, hee vſeth diuers artes, according as they are fit to bring him his deſire, and come to the ende of his enterpriſe: one while hee proceedeth by craft and ſubtiltie, another time by force and violence, ſometimes by cruel woordes, as by rebukes, falſe witneſſe bearing and threateninges. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame in fewe woordes, when hee ſaieth, *The wicked deſireth, &c.* And as it is more *Pſal.10.7. & 50.16.* amplie deſcribed in the Pſalmes: Saule againſt Dauid, Abſalon againſt his Father Dauid: Iudas with the Scribes and Phariſees againſt Ieſus Chriſt haue wel ſhewed that they did deſire a multitude of euils. The Pope and his ſouldiours, tyrantes and enemies of truthe doe wel ſhewe that they deſire a multitude of euils againſt the children of God. Wee feele that other wicked men alſo, as iudges and vngodly counſellers, murtherers, theeues, vſurers, couetous

uetous, whoremõgers and adulterers do wiſh a net of euils. For al
theſe haue bent themſelues theretoo, & doe dayly. Whereuppon it
commeth that the Pſalmiſt prayeth and often complaineth, Drawe *Pſal.31.4.*
mee out of the net that they haue layde priuily for mee. A- *Pſal.35.4.*
gaine, Let them bee confounded and put to ſhame that ſeeke af- *& 142.1.2.5*
ter my ſoule, &c. Againe, I cryed vnto the Lorde with my
voyce: with my voyce I prayed vnto the Lorde. I powred out my
meditation before him and declared my affliction in his preſence.
Though my ſpirit was in perplexitie in mee, yet thou kneweſt my
path: in the way wherein I walked, haue they priuily layde a ſnare
for mee.

But as it is commonly ſaide, that hunters doe often looſe their pathes: euen ſo alſo the Lorde bringeth to nought the awaytinges, enterpriſes, and ymaginations that the wicked woorke againſt the faithful: as Ioſeph, Moyſes, Dauid, Ezekias, the Prophetes, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and as the true faithful doe alſo feele at this day. For after that GOD hath exerciſed and tryed them a certaine time through the purſute of theſe wicked hunters and huntſmen, in the ende at moſt neede he doth deliuer them, and perceyuing and knowing themſelues to bee deliuered, they ſay, Who ſo dwelleth in the ſe- *Pſal.91.1.* crete of the moſt high, ſhall abyde in the ſhadowe of the Almightie. Againe, Prayſed bee the Lorde, which hath not gi- *Pſal. 124.6. & 7.* uen vs as a praye vnto their teeth. Our ſoule is eſcaped, euen as a byrd out of the ſnare of the foulers: the ſnare is broken and wee are deliuered. But when theſe wicked huntſmen are ſent of GOD for to followe after the vngodly, to deſtroy them, then they looſe not the way. As the Prophete Ieremy ſaieth, Beholde ſaith the Lorde, I wil ſende out many fiſhers, and they *Iere.16.16.* ſhall fiſhe them, and after, wil I ſende out many hunters, and they ſhal hunt them from euery mountaine and from euery hill, and out of the caues of the rockes. Nowe as Solomon hath compared the wicked vnto the huntſman which pitcheth and ſetteth a long net: euen ſo contrarily hee compareth the righteous, that is to ſay, thoſe which haue no deſire to hurte, but rather would profit their neighbours, hee doeth liken them, I ſay, Pſa.1.3. vnto a tree which is ſtrongly planted and ſoundly rooted: as alſo Ier.17.8. they are in other places likened theretoo. Solomon making the like compariſon, ſaith,

But the roote of the righteous giueth frute. As hee hath attributed vnprofitableneſſe, hurte, hinderance and deſtruction vnto Pſal.7.15. the wicked, whereupon commeth their damnation: euen ſo con- &9.16. trarily, hee attributeth frutefulneſſe or profite vnto the righteous: Pro.2.21. whereupon it doeth folowe that they ſhal continue, as hath beene &3.2. treated vpon. The frutefulneſſe that the righteous doe bring foorth, commeth from within, as Solomon doeth ſignifie, when hee attri- Mat.12.35. buteth fruite to come from the roote. Let vs then learne that all our inwarde partes muſt bee ſounde and good, if we wil bring forth any excellent frute. Solomon calleth the inward partes of man *A roote*, and that very aptly: for firſt of al, as the roote of the tree lyeth hidde in the earth: euen ſo can we not ſee the affections and deſires of man. For what is hee that knoweth the things of men? Secondly, as by the frute wee come to knowe what the roote of the Mat.7.16. tree is: euen ſo a man by his woordes and woorkes doeth reueale &20. what hee is within. Thirdly, as the tree without the roote cannot ſpring nor bring foorth frute: euen ſo man cannot bee occupied to profit his neighbours, but ſo farre as his wil and affection do leade and guide him. Nowe that the roote doeth ſignifie the inwarde parte, wee may vnderſtande it, when Solomon doth place it againſt Deu.29.18. deſires. Not hee alone doeth vſe it in this ſignification, but Moy- Heb.12.15. ſes alſo, And the Apoſtle to the Hebrewes. Saint Paule alſo doeth Rom.11.16. ſhewe the ſame ſpeaking of them that are entred by the Goſpel, 1.Cor.3.6. when he ſpeaketh, he hath planted, and Apollo watered, &c.

13 *The euil man is ſnared by the wickedneſſe of his lippes: but the iuſt ſhal come out of aduerſitie.*

They that are malicious and wicked, may bee encombred in many and diuers ſortes by the fault of their lippes. For firſt of all GOD doeth blinde them and giue them ouer vnto a reprobate mynde, in ſuch wiſe that they rather beleeue the lyes of falſe Prophetes and Doctours, then the trueth: they giue more credite vnto falſe witneſſes, then to the ſimple and plaine affirmation of the innocent and truſtie: and wil rather chooſe of ſet malice falſe witneſſes, then they wil bee put by from oppreſſing and ſpoyling the innocent. Such people doe wel deſerue to bee ſnared, to or be deſtroied: for they goe preciſely againſt the cōmandement and ordinances of GOD. And as they deſerue to bee ſnared, ſo ſhal they bee. Vnto them that are contentious and diſobey the trueth, and obey vnrighteouſneſſe, ſhalbee indignation and wrath. God ſhal ſende them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhoulde beleeue lyes, That al they might bee damned which beleeued not the trueth, but had pleaſure in vnrighteouſneſſe. The children of Iſrael were ſnared by the ſinne of their lippes, when they woulde not obey the holy Prophetes, but ſuffered themſelues to be deceiued by the falſe Prophetes. The Turkes and Papiſtes lye in the ſame miſery and deſtruction. Secondarily, as they rayle and abuſe their neighbours by iniurious woordes and that their mouthes are filled with craft and treaſon to woorke the deſtruction of their neighbours: euen ſo againe ſhal deſtruction fal vpon them: Thou ſhalt deſtroy al them that ſpeake leaſing, &c. Againe, For no conſtancie is in their mouthes: within, they are very corruption; their throte is an open ſepulchre, and they flatter with their tongue. The worlde is ſtuffed with ſuch euil tongues, and therefore Dauid complaineth, Helpe Lorde for there is not a godly man left: for the faythful are fayled from among the children of men. They ſpeake deceitfully eu ery one with his neighbour, flattering with their lippes, and ſpeake with a double hart, Thirdly, when the wicked are apprehended by iuſtice, oftentimes GOD ſuffereth that they hurte and wounde themſelues by their owne anſweres, when they are examined: & are ſo founde guiltie: wherupon foloweth the gallowes, wheretoo they condemne themſelues by their owne mouth: and ſo are ſnared through faulte of their owne lippes: or otherwiſe beeing examined, if they perſiſt in their lying, not confeſſing their fautes, they fal more deepely into the Deuils ſnares: and ſo are intangled by the faulte of their lippes. To bee ſhort, if the wicked followe their corrupt nature with obſtinacie

Exod.23.1.2

Rom.2.8.
2.Theſ.2.11 12.

Pſal.5.6.9.

Pſal.12.1.2

nacie without returning to repentance, there can bee nothing but ſinne in their lippes. For it is ſaide, Generation of vipers, howe
Mat.12.34. & 36. can you ſpeake good thinges, when ye are euil? For from the aboundance of the hearte the mouth ſpeaketh. And therefore they muſt needes bee ſnared in their woordes. For in the ſame former place it is ſaide againe: But I ſay vnto you that of euery ydle woorde that men ſhal ſpeake, they ſhal giue account thereof at the day of iudgement. And as they haue wicked lippes, ſo do they ioyne themſelues to their like, as to falſe Doctors, vnto lyers and ſeducers, and which haue nothing but vanitie and wickedneſſe in their mouthes. After this ſorte they become intangled and are ſnared. But to the ende that wee may forſake
Rom.16.17. their companie, let vs folowe the counſel of Saint Paule. And
Col.2.6. foraſmuch as it is a ſingular benefite of GOD to bee preſerued
Ephe.4.17. & 5.6. from the deceit and counterfaite ſpeache, fained and falſe, and not to conſent vnto hereſies and wicked doctrines, and alſo not to bee ſtained with any of them, wee haue neede to pray vnto GOD
Pſal. 120.2. after this ſort, Deliuer my ſoule, O Lorde, from lying lippes, and
Pſal. 140.1. 2.3. from a deceitful tongue. Againe, Deliuer mee, O Lorde, from the euil man: preſerue mee from the cruel man, which ymagine euil thinges in their heart, and make warre continually. They haue ſharpened tongues like a ſerpent, adders poyſon is vnder their lippes. But albeeit that the wicked may bee ſnared in al theſe foreſaide manners, yet the meaning moſt meete for this place, is that the wicked cannot beware nor take heede from beeing ouerthrowne and deſtroied by faire and flattering ſpeaches, by lyes and falſe witneſſes, by ſlaunderinges and falſe reportes, by falſe doctrines and traditions of men. For as hee ymagineth nothing but euil and deſtruction, and applyeth his mouth, yea all his members, to hurte and anoy his neighbours, he rightly deſerueth to haue the like happen vnto him. This ſame may bee vnderſtoode when againſt the euil man, hee ſetteth the iuſt: and againſt to bee ſnared, hee ſetteth to come out of aduerſitie, ſaying,

But the iuſt ſhall come out of aduerſitie. He calleth him righteous heere, which doeth not ymagine nor ſay any thing that may hurte or anoy his neighbours. Hee doeth not promiſe him that hee ſhal bee without aduerſitie (for experience teacheth the contrarie: Greate are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lorde deli- *Pſal.34.20.* uereth them out of all) but according to the promiſe heere ſet downe, he ſaith that he ſhall come out of aduerſitie. Whatſoeuer then the wicked doe ymagine, thinke, ſay or doe againſt the iuſt, they cannot deſtroy them. The wicked watcheth the righteous, & *Pſal.37.22.* ſeeketh to ſlay him: but the Lord wil not leaue him in his hand, &c. In this promiſe wee are exhorted vnto patience: for trouble or aduerſitie lyeth vpon vs, ſith it is ſaide that the iuſt ſhal come out thereof. Hee ſaieth not that hee doeth preſently come out, but in time to come, hee ſhal come foorth. Hee telleth not when, and ſo it ſeemeth vnto our reaſon, that GOD lingereth and tarieth long ere hee helpe vs: but it is no ſlackneſſe. *Heb.10.37.* And to the ende that we ſhould not fayle nor ſtumble, we muſt take heed vnto the holy *2.Pet.3.9.* Prophetes, and chiefly vnto our Lorde Ieſus. *Iam.5.10.* Hee is not onely our example, but alſo our ſtrength and vertue. It is he which is our patience: *Heb.12.2.* for wee cannot ſtande faſt and continue, except that hee fortifie and vpholde vs.

14 *A man ſhall be ſatiate with good things by the fruite of his mouth: and the recompence of a mans handes ſhall God giue vnto him.*

Solomon exhorteth vs to vſe wel our mouthes, and to imploy them to ſpeake trueth, to thanke, to praiſe and to cal vpon God our Father by prayer, when hee promiſeth vs that a man ſhalbe ſatiate, &c. And heerein hee ſomewhat alludeth vnto the olde ſacrifices. *Deut.12.7.* For as they which offred the ſacrifices, did eate of them by *& 14.23.* the permiſſion and ordinance of God: euen ſo by following the counſel of the Prophete Oſeas, *Oſe.14.2* if we take the wordes with vs, and returne vnto the Lord, and ſay vnto him, Take away al iniquitie, & receiue vs graciouſly: ſo wil wee render the calues of our lippes.

Heb.13.15. And that in al thinges wee giue thankes alwaies vnto God by Ieſus
Chriſt, that is, the frute of the lippes which confeſſe his name:
If (I ſay) in folowing the doctrine of the aboue named holy men,
wee apply our mouthes to ſpeake trueth, and that by them we giue
good counſel vnto our neighbours, admoniſhing, exhorting, correcting,
and threatening them, for to bring them vnto true repentance,
and to ſtrengthen them in the fayth: if feeling our neceſſities
wee open our mouthes, for to require and cal vpon God
for to helpe vs, and truely confeſſing that hee is the authour of all
goodneſſe, and doe occupie our tongues in giuing of thankes vnto
him, and to ſing foorth his praiſes: hee wil not ſuffer vs to
lacke or want any thing, but wil giue vs ynough and contentation.
The auncient Leuites and Sacrificers by the ordinance of
Num.18.9. GOD, were nouriſhed and ſuſtained by vſing their miniſtery.
Deut.10.9. Dauid ordeined of them to be ouer the arte of ſinging, according as
&.18.1. was commaunded in the lawe of Moyſes. And the Pſalme 81. hauing
1.Chro.6.31. reſpect vnto this order of the ſeruice of GOD, doeth bid vs,
Num.10.10 Sing ioyfully: and afterwardes doeth promiſe vs that wee ſhalbee
Pſal.8.2. ſatiſfied, ſaying, Open thy mouth wyde, and I ſhal fill it. For to
& 11. do this wel, it ſuffiſeth not for the mouth alone to bee occupyed,
but the ſong muſt come from the minde, &c. That which
proceedeth from the mouth of Papiſtes is no fruite, but poyſon:
as wee may vnderſtande and gather. And therefore this promiſe
doeth nothing appertaine vnto them: as alſo they are nothing
partakers thereof: for they burne ſo much with auarice,
that they are neuer ſatiſfied, and make themſelues beleeue that
they ſerue GOD and his Churche wel, when they can make
the water come to the mill (as is ſaide) or increaſe the goods
of the Churche. Of ſuch kinde of people Saint Paule ſaieth,
that they are of a corrupted minde. After this promiſe, he addeth,
And the recompence of the hands, &c.

This ſentence conteineth partly a promiſe, and partly a threatening: as wee may vnderſtande by other places. This ſentence, as alſo the former promiſe, ſhal chiefly bee accompliſhed at the laſt day. Yet notwithſtanding in looking for it, the Lorde doeth ſhewe ſome proofes thereof: for euen in this

liſe

life preſent, the good are ſo wel recompenſed that they content themſelues: Contrarily, wee may ſee feareful puniſhementes, fal and lighte vpon the wicked, the which are payde them after their deſertes: but that which is giuen vnto the good, commeth of meere grace: as aboue in the 11.chapter, 18.verſe, and chapter 12.verſe,2.

15 *The way of a foole is right in his owne eyes: but hee that heareth counſel, is wiſe.*

When after the natural reaſon, or humaine ſenſe, or the affection of the fleſhe, wee followe our fantaſies, inuentions and good intentes, wee ſeeme to our ſelues to bee very wiſe, and that wee walke vprightly. But ſith that in ſo dooing, wee wander and goe out of the way which is taught vs by the woorde, the which only is right: Solomon, or rather the holy Ghoſt, letteth not to pronounce vs fooles, when hee ſaith, *The way of a foole, &c.* Moyſes ſeeing before hande howe the children of Iſrael did ſtray from *Deut.3* the ſeruice of God, that hee had taught them, by his woorde, calleth them fooles and vnwiſe, ſaying, they haue corrupted themſelues towardes him by their vice. &c. For the ſelfe ſame cauſe, Ieremy alſo ſince that time, hath called them fooles, ſaying, Heare *Iere.5.21.* nowe this, O fooliſhe people, and without vnderſtanding, which haue eyes and ſee not, which haue eares and heare not. And foraſmuch as the Papiſtes at this day doe the like, delighting in their abhominations, wee may truely ſay they are a fooliſhe people. Nowe if they which thinke they doe wel, are fooliſhe, by a ſtronger reaſon, they which boaſt themſelues in their wickedneſſes, the which they commit againſt their conſciences, deſerue wel to bee counted fooliſh. For this cauſe alſo it is ſaide of them, The foole hath ſaide in his heart, there is no God, &c. Except therefore that *Pſal.14.1* wee bee aſſured that that which wee ſay, or doe, is according to that which God teacheth vs by his woorde, let vs take good heede from perſwading our ſelues that wee doe walke right. For there is no way right, but onely that which the Lorde God doth ſhew vnto vs in his lawe. The ſame is not ours, aſwel for that that of our nature wee forſake it, and are not pleaſed therewith, as alſo for that wee cannot walke, but that GOD wil guide vs, nor goe forewardes without his aſſiſtance, as may bee gathered out of the hundreth and nynetienth Pſalme. Therfore when any thing doeth delight vs beſides the woorde of God, wee are fooliſhe: for our way is right before our eyes. The ſame is called *ours*, aſwell for that that wee become forgetful of God, deſpiſe him, and rebel againſt him, for to folowe our fantaſies and affections: as alſo for that that whatſoeuer pleaſeth vs, is inuented by our braines, or commeth from our Fathers which haue beene ignorant of the woorde, or that wee attribute the ſame vnto our wiſedome and cunning, vnto our care and diligence. And indeede, we doe wel deſerue that ſuch way ſhoulde be ours, ſeeing it is nothing worth. For ſeeing that wee are good for nothing, wee cannot bee occupyed about any thing that is ought. Wherevppon it followeth that wee are fooliſhe, if wee delight in ſuch woorke: for in ſuch ſorte doe wee declare openly our fooliſheneſſe, when that which is nothing worth, yea rather which is hurtful vnto vs, doeth pleaſe vs.

Contrarily, if ſo bee by renouncing of that which is our owne, and abhorre it, wee doe giue eare vnto thoſe which giue vs good counſel, and beleeue the ſame, delighting to folowe it, and to order our life thereafter, wee are wiſe: as Solomon doeth affirme ſaying, *But hee that heareth counſel, is wiſe*. Hee ſpeaketh not heere of the corporal and external hearing, but of the inwarde and ſpiritual. For albeeit that the counſel whereof hee ſpeaketh is the pure woorde of trueth, which ſerueth to teache, to exhort, to correct and to threaten: many doe heare this woorde, and yet are not wyſe. Wee muſt therefore heare with an earneſt minde, to take pleaſure, and to giue al diligence to folowe the counſel that is giuen vs in the name of GOD, and by his woorde. Otherwiſe wee muſt looke for a feareful iudgement: yea more then the Papiſtes or other infidelles, which haue not ſuch communication of counſel as wee haue. They haue counſel which maketh to erre, and wee haue counſel which leadeth vs ſtraight to life, if wee fol-

Pro.1.25.

Mat.7.26.

Pro.1.26.

lowe it. Notwithſtanding they ſhal bee no more excuſable then the moſt vnthankeful: as are they whome God lighteneth by the preaching of the pure trueth and doe deſpiſe it, mocking, refuſing and perſecuting it. Moreouer, for to ſhewe our ſelues wiſe, and *Luke.18.11.* not to bee counted fooles, let vs bee more ready to condemne our *Iohn.9.28.* ſelues, then to boaſt our ſelues: let vs not bee like vnto the Phariſees. *& 34.*

16 *A foole in a day ſhalbe knowne by his anger: but he that couereth ſhame, is wiſe.*

Man is of ſuch a nature, that he wilbe feared and douted, and cannot ſuffer to bee deſpiſed, nor to receiue any ſigne of contempt. If it ſeeme to him that any labour to trouble him, hee is ſtraightwaies moued with anger and wrath, and ſodainely doeth ſhewe it by contentions, debates, ſtrifes, and vprores, in outragious wordes and violent deedes. Hee boyleth ſo vehemently with impatiencie and furie, hee hath ſo greate deſire to bee reuenged for the iniurie, that hee perſwadeth himſelfe to bee done vnto him, that he looſeth al boldneſſe, and cannot diſſemble his naughtie ſtomacke: and yet, it ſeemeth vnto him that hee is mighty and ſtrong, and that hee behaueth himſelfe as an honeſt man, and that his heart is vpright, becauſe hee ſuffereth none to bite him, neither to treade him vnder foote. But the holy Ghoſt doeth pronounce him to bee a foole by the mouth of Solomon, when hee ſaith, *A foole in a day ſhalbe knowne, &c.* Saying, *A foole* in a day, hee meaneth not that the foole is ſatisfied to haue ſhewed his anger and wrath for a litle while, and afterwards, returneth to be reconciled and to be friendes againe with them with whome hee was angry, as euery one of vs muſt doe, in folowing the goodneſſe of our heauenly Father. For *Pſal.30.6.* he endureth but a whyle in his anger: but in his fauour is life. And for to folowe him, wee muſt obey Saint Paule. Bee angry, but ſinne not, &c. *Ephe.4.26.* Againe, Let all bitterneſſe, anger and wrath crying and euill ſpeaking, bee put away from *31.* you with all maliciouſneſſe, &c. But hee meaneth that wee muſt not dwell and abyde long in the companie of a foole, for to knowe the wickedneſſe of his heart: for as ſoone as a man ſhal haue remoued but a ſtrawe without his wil, without purpoſing to offende him, hee ſheweth by iniuries, ragings and violences, what hee is within. As Caine againſt Abel: Core, Dathan and Abyram againſt Moyſes: Saule againſt Dauid: the enemies of the trueth againſt the children of GOD, not onely amongeſt the Papiſtes, but alſo there where they bragg of the reformation of the Goſpel. Alſo when hee ſaieth, *in a day*, hee meaneth not that the foole doeth ſpue foorth al the poyſon of his hearte in one day or in a little tyme. Experience teacheth vs the contrarie: for wee ſee that from day to day the wicked ſhewe themſelues more furious againſt the faithful: but hee meaneth that they are eaſie and doe ſodainely ſhewe their impatiencie and furie.

Num.16.

In this Solomon doeth exhorte vs, that wee woulde not bee haſtily angry, except wee woulde bee counted fooles: that is to ſay, contemners of GOD and of his woorde, the which for to obey, and to fulfil, the humour of choler is not fit, neither do they care alſo: and therefore Saint Iames doeth admoniſhe vs; Let euery man bee ſwift to heare, and ſlowe to anger. &c. Wee ſee heere that wee ought highly to eſteeme, gentlenes, ſoftneſſe, meekeneſſe, and friendlineſſe, when wee woulde not that men ſhoulde eſteeme vs fooles nor contemners of God. If wee bee indued with ſuch goodneſſe, as that we would not deſpiſe God, & labour alſo that he may not bee deſpiſed, and that his name ſhoulde not bee blaſphemed by vs, likewiſe wee wil eaſily diſſemble and couer the imperfections of our neighbours, and wil not ſeeke to make them a reproche, neither to lay any faulte to their charge, though they haue offended vs: and ſhal bee led and induced thus to gouerne our ſelues by an holy wiſedome and good counſel. Solomon doth teach vs this ſame when hee ſaith,

But hee that couereth ſhame, is wiſe. That wee muſt thus vnderſtande this ſentence, Solomon himſelfe doeth ſhewe it, when againſt the knowledge of wrath, hee ſetteth hyding or couering of ſhame: and againſt the foole, hee ſetteth the wiſe man. And though the Antitheſis be very propre, euen according

ding to mans reaſon, yet Solomon ſpeaketh againſt the opinion and iudgement of the worlde, in both the partes of this Prouerbe. For firſt of al, the worlde eſteemeth and iudgeth the hearte of man to bee vpright and perfite, and not fearefull nor cowardely, if when hee ſheweth by wrath and anger, that hee cannot beare, if hee feele himſelfe grieued, and that hee is ready, to reuenge himſelfe eyther by woorde or by deede.

Secondarily, the worlde doth not count this diſcretion or wiſedome when a man wil diſſemble or couer an offence, and that hee is not quicke to reuile and rage againſt him that hath offended him, except hee flye for to take the better leape: that is to ſay, to ſeeke to haue him whome hee iudgeth to bee his enemie at his more aduantage, and to handle him after his deſire. Solomon ſpeaketh not of ſuch wiſedome, which is rather ſet malice: but of the ſame whereby wee beare with our neighbour, and wiſh not to anger nor hurte him. This wiſedome proceedeth of true charitie, whereunto wee are exhorted. Let vs therefore knowe that wee are heere admoniſhed to flye and eſchue reuenging of our owne and priuate iniurie: as alſo our Lorde doth teache vs. But yet notwithſtanding let vs not thinke but that it is lawefull for the faythful and Chriſtians to exerciſe and execute the office of a Magiſtrate and iudge, in dooing iuſtice by wrath vppon him that doth euil.

1.Cor.13.4
Ephe.4.2.
32.&5.2.
Col.3.13.
Mat.5.39.
Rom.12.14.
17.&13.4.

17 *Hee that ſpeaketh trueth, will ſhewe righteouſnes: but a falſe witneſſe vſeth diſceit.*

There are many wayes of ſpeaking trueth, though there bee not diuers truthes, but one, which is God and his word, Our Lord doeth ſhewe it, and therefore in what ſtate ſoeuer we be, wee muſt ſpeake trueth. Nowe foraſmuch as there are diuers ſtates, it foloweth there are many wayes of ſpeaking trueth, the which may bee gathered into foure partes.

Iohn.14.6.
&17.17.
Ephe.4.25.

First of al, the Paſtors of the Churche, which are Miniſters of the woorde of trueth, which aboue al other ought to profeſſe trueth, haue their manner of ſpeaking trueth by publike and priuate preaching the pure Goſpel, and by the ſame to admoniſhe, to reprooue, to comforte, to chide and threaten and to make afraide. Secondarily, Iudges and Magiſtrates which ought to bee righteous and not falſly blamed, haue their kinde of ſpeaking trueth, when they pronounce their ſentences with deſire of giftes, without regarding the perſon: but onely according as matters ſhalbe duely and plainly prooued, &c.

Exo.18. 21. & 23.1.

Thirdly, they which are called for witneſſes, haue their way of ſpeaking trueth, when they plainely declare that which they knowe, and deſire not to ſlaunder nor flatter, nor to ſpeake any thing that may hurte the good name of their neighbour, neither to hurte him either in his body or in his goods, but doe labour to obey the commandementes of GOD written in Exodus the 20. chapter and 23. chapter. Fourthly, the manner of ſpeaking trueth, in our common, familiar and priuate talke, is that wee ſhoulde talke togither of thinges and matters euen ſo as they are, and as wee knowe them, without flattering and ſlaundering, without affection of telling newes, and without delighting to conſume and paſſe away the time in reaſoning and babbling, as vaine people giuen to ydleneſſe and ſlouthfulneſſe: for it is very harde for ſuch men to go foreward in the truth: but muſt needs frō the great vanitie of their heartes ſpeake vaine thinges, whoſe ſteppes wee may not follow: and therefore, muſt wee be ſober in woordes, and alſo not to open our mouthes, but to talke and commen of thinges profitable and neceſſarie, as of thinges which may ſerue to the glory of GOD, and profite of our neighbours, and of thoſe matters which concerne our ſtate and vocation, &c. Loe, theſe are the manners the which wee muſt holde in ſpeaking trueth: vnto the which if wee bee wel giuen, wee will vtter nothing that may redounde to the hurte of our neighbours, but will rather procure that right may be done to them, and to render to euery man that which is his, without fraude or deceit. Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, *Hee that ſpeaketh truth, wil ſhew righteouſneſſe.* The

Miniſters of the woorde doe wel preache righteouſneſſe, when by their miniſtery they labour to turne vs away from al ſuperſtition and Idolatry, and from al iniquitie and wickedneſſe (whereby the Deuill doeth holde vs captiue vnder his tyrannie) that they might deliuer vs from the ſame, and by fayth to make vs partakers of the righteouſneſſe of our Lorde. The Magiſtrates do ſhewe foorth righteouſneſſe, when by their ſentences and iudgementes, they render right to them to whome it belongeth, &c. The witneſſes by their true depoſitions doe ſhewe foorth righteouſneſſe: for ſo much as in them lyeth, they guide the iudges, and ſhewe them the waye to miniſter iuſtice. Alſo when in our familiar talke and communication wee continewe ſpeaking of trueth, wee ſhewe foorth iuſtice: for our woordes doe tende neither to diſceite nor hurte, but to doe right, pleaſure, and ſeruice vnto our neighbours.

Wherefore, let vs vnderſtande that to ſpeake trueth, conſiſteth not onely in the mouth, but alſo in woorkes. Solomon doeth well teache it vs, when hee ioyneth righteouſneſſe togither with truth, and that afterwardes againſt righteouſneſſe, hee ſetteth fraude: ſaying, *But a falſe witneſſe vſeth diſceite*. As wee haue ſet foure kindes of ſpeaking truth, and to ſhew righteouſneſſe, ſo may we do the like in ſpeaking of falſe witneſſe, and in woorking diſceite. Beſides this, let vs learne that by this Antitheſis or againſt ſetting, Solomon doeth exhorte vs to haue trueth and righteouſneſſe in great reuerence, ſeeing that none of vs woulde bee counted lyers nor deceiuers, &c.

18 *There is that ſpeaketh wordes like the prickinges of a ſword: but the tongue of the wiſe man is health.*

There is none of vs that would be pricked or harmed, but do all deſire health and do labour by al meanes poſſible to auoide all dangers and hurtes, and to keepe our bodies in good order and ſafetie. Nowe if wee haue care of our bodies which are not ſo excellent as our ſoules, by a more ſtrong reaſon wee muſt take care of them, and to keepe them that they bee not pricked: but that they may obteine health, and that therein they ſhoulde continue and increaſe. For to come to this, there are companies and feloweſhippes that wee muſt flye and reiect, and others that wee muſt ſeeke and keepe. Solomon doeth wel giue vs this ſame to vnderſtande, when hee ſaith, *There is that ſpeaketh words, &c.* Heere by that, which he placeth the wiſe againſt him which ſpeaketh like the prickings of a ſworde, wee ought to knowe that if wee will not bee hurte, wee muſt beware of the fooliſhe, for they are they which by their woordes are as ſwordes. There are diuers kindes of theſe fooles which are very dangerous, as are the wicked iudges, and wicked magiſtrates, falſe witneſſe bearers, flatterers, lyers, ieſters, and ſuch as abounde in wanton woordes. The woordes of ſuch people doe pricke and ſmart after twoo ſortes: that is to ſay, without and within. If wee doe not conſent with them, and doe not become their familiar acquaintance and friendes, and at their commandement, doe labour by their wicked ſentences, by their falſe witneſſe bearings, by their wicked tales, & by their ieſtings, and ſcornings for to hurte vs, either in our goods or in our bodies, or in our good name. And if we walke familiarly with them, they prick vs and ſting vs within, for they do what they can with their tongues to corrupt vs. Therefore Saint Paule doeth admoniſh vs, ſaying, Bee not deceiued: euil woordes corrupt good manners. Againe, hee ſaith, Be not vnequally yoked with the infidels: for what felowſhip hath righteouſneſſe, with vnrighteouſnes? &c. He ſaieth againe, But fornication, and al vncleanneſſe, or couetouſneſſe, let it not bee once named among you, as it becommeth ſaints, neither filthineſſe, neither fooliſhe talking, neither ieſting, which are things not comely, but rather giuing of thãks. We learne then that we muſt fly ſuch kinde of people, and haue no acquaintãce with them, if wee woulde bee preſerued from inwarde hurt, which is a more dangerous and ſore wounde then that without. Nowe if wee muſt ſeuer our ſelues from ſuch folke, by a ſtronger reaſon, wee muſt flye and reiect falſe Prophetes and lying Doctours, which by ſweete woordes and fayre ſpeeches doe deceiue the harts of the ignorant. The wordes of ſuch people are ſo dangerous and deadly, that Saint Paule warneth Timothie, To ſtay prophane, and vaine babblings: for they ſhal increaſe vnto more vngodlineſſe.

1.Cor.15.33.
2.Cor.6.14.
Ephe.5.3.

2.Tim.2.16.

If it ſeemed good to Saint Paule to bee needful to admoniſhe ſo excellent a diſciple of theſe things, by ſo much the more haue wee very greate neede to bee warned thereof. Of al theſe points we cannot take heede, but haue neede that the Lorde ſhoulde keepe and deliuer vs. The Pſalmiſt doeth wel ſhewe it vs, when hee is Pſal.57.4. ſo diligent to pray, My ſoule is amongſt Lyons: I lye among the children of men, that are ſet on fire: whoſe teeth are ſpeares and arrowes, and their tongue a ſharpe ſwoorde. Againe hee ſaieth, &64.8. Heare my voyce, O God, in my prayer, preſerue my life from feare of the enemie. Hyde mee from the conſpiracye of the wicked, and from the rage of the woorkers of iniquitie: Which haue whet their tongue like a ſworde, and ſhot foorth their arrowes, bitter woordes. Further, let vs note that Solomon doeth accuſe ſuch kinde of men to be murtherers, when hee doeth attribute vnto them the prickings of a ſworde, and ſo conſequently, hee condemneth them vnto eternal death. For it is ſaid, You know that no manſlear hath eternal life abyding in him. Therefore if wee will 1.Iohn.3.15. not periſh with them, let vs ſoften our tongues, and make them ſounde and healthful: the which wee ſhal doe, if renouncing fooliſhneſſe, wee doe folowe the wiſe, and that by their wholeſome doctrine, and good examples wee become wiſe: for as Solomon ſaith,

But the tongue of wiſe men is health. As wee commonly cal thoſe things whereby wee get and mainteine corporal health, by the name thereof: euen ſo Solomon calleth the tongue of the wiſe, health, becauſe that if wee vſe the ſame and helpe vs by it, wee obteine an excellent health, and are kept therein. If wee bee diligent to heare the wiſe, and alſo careful to followe their wholeſome doctrine, wee ſhal haue health, not temporal and bodily only, but our ſoules ſhalbee ſo healthful, that wee ſhal neuer die. The tongue of the wiſe is of ſuch vertue, that whoſoeuer ſhal helpe himſelfe thereby in true fayth and repentance, it ſhal bring vnto him eternal life: for it ſpeaketh the trueth, it bringeth foorth the ſeede of life and euerlaſting health, as before in the thirde chapter and firſt verſe, vnto the nienth: and the fourth chapter and 20. verſe, &c. The Pſalmiſt doeth wel ſhewe this ſame, when hee Pſal.119.4. attributeth quickening vnto the woorde of the Lorde. And our

Iohn.3.14. Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doeth plainely declare it vs, when hee compareth himſelfe vnto the ſerpent, and doth exhort vs to beleue in him. Therefore if wee deſire health, let vs often reſorte vnto the ſermons, for it is ſaid, Fayth commeth by hearing, and hearing by the *Rom.10.17.* woorde of God. Al Chriſtians according to the meaſure they haue receiued, ought for to bring this health: but the Miniſters of the woorde aboue al others: for to them it is that the Lord hath committed the Goſpel, after the which they bring wholeſome doctrine. *2.Tim.1.13.* And therefore Saint Paule doeth admoniſhe Timothe to keepe the *Tit.1.7.* true paterne of the wholeſome woordes, &c. Againe, For a biſhop *& 2.1.* muſt bee vnreprooueable, as Gods ſteward, &c. But ſpeake thou the thinges which become wholeſome doctrine. &c. Nowe foraſmuch as amongeſt the Papiſtes there are no wiſe men, they are alſo deſtitute of health, &c. Moreouer let vs note that although the worlde bee filled with people which haue great appearance of wiſedome, yet are there fewe in it that haue healthful tongues. Whereupon wee may inferre that wiſe men in deede are thicke ſowne, and come but thinly vp. &c.

19 *The lippe of trueth ſhalbee ſtable for euer: but a lying tongue varieth incontinently.*

1 Wee woulde not bee iudged reedeſhaken and caried with euery winde, but counted conſtant. And as we haue this wil, ſo muſt wee bee alſo in deede and truly, leaſt wee bee nowe of one minde, and immediatly of another, except that hauing bene euil inſtructed before, and euil mouthed, wee change our euil woordes into good, after that by the grace of God wee are informed. This changing doeth not proceede of vnconſtancie, but of wiſedome and good counſel. The Turkes, Papiſtes, and other obſtinate infidels and hardened in their ſuperſtitions and idolatries, in their falſe religions & deuotions, do thinke themſelues very conſtant, when they wil in no wiſe be turned from them: but it is not in this ſorte that wee muſt count our ſelues conſtant, but before that wee may truely bragge thereof, we muſt firſt be armed and furniſhed inuiolably with truth: that our hartes and mindes may bee ſo faſtened and filled with ſo great aboundance that they might ouerflowe. Solomon doeth note

it,ſaying, *The lippe of trueth.&c.* The man that from the abundance of his hearte ſpeaketh trueth,ſhalbe ſo ſtable and cōſtant,that hee ſhal neuer turne therefrom : his lippe ſhal not ſtart at a ſoden, and without good conſideration but ſhal folow the guiding of his hearte and of his vnderſtanding. There are many which prate at pleaſure,holding true talke , but yet ſhal not haue the lippe of truth , as they wil ſhewe by their inconſtancie,& that after diuers ſortes : for ſome will ſoone waxe wery of holding good talke, and wil turne ouer vnto fables and vanities : and other ſome fearing perſecution , had rather holde their peace , or to deny the trueth, then to perſeuer in good and true wordes : and otherſome wil pleaſure a company of carnal and worldly people , and therefore if in any wiſe they know that their company delight not in true and Chriſtian talke,they change and turne vnto fables, and vaine iangling. If ſuch men had their tongues of trueth,they would remaine ſtedfaſt without euer turning.

Trueth is of ſuche nature, that it neuer changeth , otherwiſe it ſhould not be trueth . It hath this nature of God, who is vnchangeable : and therefore as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, The trueth of the Lorde indureth for euer. Againe, There is no trueth, but commeth from him onely who is trueth. Wherefore if hee hath once writen this truethe in our heartes,and that thereby wee bee truely renewed, wee can neuer vary nor turne from it . For the giftes and callings of God are without repentance:and ſo we ſhal abide ſtable and conſtant for euer.

Pſal. 117. 2.

Rom. 11. 29.

But for this conſtancie let vs not boaſt our ſelues of it , as though it came of vs, but with humbleneſſe let vs confeſſe that it commeth of God,as we may heere knowe it. Firſt of al,becauſe hee attributeth ſtabilitie vnto trueth , the which wee cannot haue but of the onely grace and liberalitie of God. Secondarily, by that that he ſaith not,it ſhalbe ſtabliſhed: but it ſhal be ſtable. Thirdly, by this worde *foreuer:* for man of himſelfe hath no permanent & continuall goodneſſe. We muſt therefore aske ſtedfaſtneſſe of God, as Dauid doth,Create in me a cleane hart,O God,& renew a right ſpirite in me:and in the 12.verſe of the ſame Pſalm,he ſaith, Reſtore to mee the ioy of thy ſaluation, & ſtabliſh me with thy free ſpirite.

Pſal. 51. 10. & .12.

For they which haue their heartes infected with falſhood, diſſimulation, & hypocriſie, are not ſtable, but turne with euery winde, & changetheir mindes incõtinently. If they haue made any promiſe, they doe eaſily falſifie their faith, euẽ for euery vaine and light cauſe. &c. They wil often ſpeake traiterouſly, and vnfaithfully vnto their neighbours, ſpeaking one thing, & thinking another. They wil flatter and praiſe their neighbours before their faces, and behinde their backes they wil ſlaunder them, and ſpeake al euil they can of them. They wil cloſly cary falſe tales, and when they haue kindled the fire, and that the matter is diſcloſed, and that it is knowne to be by the, they doe ſhameleſly deny it. If they haue reported any good or naughtie matter, and that they are therfore like to come to trouble, they ſodenly change their mind, and go backe from that which they haue ſaide. Behold the inconſtancie and vnſtabilitie whereunto the hypocrites and liers are ſubiect. Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame briefly, when he ſaith, *But a lying tongue varieth, &c.* As if hee ſaid, The man that out of the wicked abundance of his heart is ſetteled in lying and hypocriſie, is accuſtomed to lie with his tongue, and cannot be ſtable and ſure: but eaſily and ſodenly doth alter his purpoſe. For though Solomon doth not expreſſe but the tongue, yet notwithſtanding he doeth accuſe the heart, the which is made manifeſt by the tongue, which of it ſelfe is not moued, but onely ſo farre as it is guided by the hearte. For from the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh. Naturally we are al ſuch. For let God be true, and euery man a lyar. Wherefore if we wil not be comprehẽded vnder this accuſation, let vs follow the counſell of S. Paul, that is, That yee caſt off, concerning the conuerſatiõ in time paſt, the old man, which is corrupt through the deceiueable luſts. &c. Moreouer, let vs note, that hee which hath the lip of trueth, is ſtedfaſt, for his wordes are true: they conteine no repugnancie nor contrarietie, but al agree wel together: but they which haue a lying tongue, do often times ſpeake wordes which are contrary one to the other: and ſo doe fouly vary, ſometimes through forgetfulneſſe, ſometimes of ſet malice for to deceiue and hurt.

Rom.3.4.

Ephe.4.22.

20 *Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine euil: but to the counſellours of peace ſhalbe ioy.*

If he which intendeth to hurt his neighbors, doth proceede vnaduiſedly & raſhly to execute his enterpriſes, he is quickly diſcouered: and therefore it is the more eaſie for a man to beware of him, and to defend himſelfe. When the wicked doth openly ſhewe himſelfe to bee ſuche as hee is, without diſguiſing himſelfe, if hee be too mightie, men flie from him: and if hee bee weake, they reſiſt him. But contrarily, they which inuent euil, and before that they bigin to execute their enterpriſes, doe deepely thinke therevpon, and doe a long while purpoſe in themſelues howe they ſhal come to the end, that their malice may not willingly too ſoone be diſcouered, & that they be not hindered to put in execution their diſpleaſure, they diſguiſe themſelues, vſing fraude & deceite; treaſon, and laying awaite, and ſo it is not eaſie for a man to take heede of them, nor to reſiſt them: but is conſtrained to ſuffer their wronges and violences, with great griefe and melācholiouſneſſe. Solomō doth ſignifie this ſame, when he ſaith, *Deceite is in the hearte of them that imagine euil.* As if hee did ſay, it is a common and dayly thing that they which imagine euil, which wil hurt and hinder their neighbours, doe not at the firſt ſight ſhew thēſelues ſuch as they bee in their heartes, but doe vſe both words and deedes cleane contrary vnto their thoughts and enterpriſes: as the deuil hath doone for to deſtroy men, and Iudas for to murder our Lord Ieſus. The Pope & his ſhauelings haue no leſſe doone for to deſtroy the Churche of our Lorde: and doe ſtil continue at this day. But what deceite ſoeuer they beare in their heartes, they cannot ſo much hurt as they woulde: for the Lord by the lampe of his Goſpel doeth giue vs light, and doeth ſhewe what their furies are, making vs to knowe their wickedneſſes: ſo that the Lorde nowe fulfilleth that which is ſaide: and then ſhal the wicked man bee reuealed, whome the Lorde ſhal conſume with the ſpirite of his mouth, and ſhal aboliſhe with the brightneſſe of his comming. &c. There are alſo other people which cary deceit in their heartes, as are murderers: but the moſt dangerous deceite is that whereby trappes are laide for ſoules, when in burdening them with the doctrines of men, they are made to beleeue that in keeping thē, they hold the way to life: and thereby men are brought to eternal death. Wee haue ſaide that when a man cannot take heede of the deceites and treaſons of the wicked, and that he is compelled to ſuf-

2.The.2.8.

ſer their iniuries and violences, that they haue inuented maliciouſly, that it is with grieſe and ſorow. Experience doth ſhew it, & Solomon doth note it, when againſt deceit he ſetteth ioy, ſaying: *But to counſellours of peace ſhalbe ioy*. And when he placeth the counſellours of peace againſt them that imagine euil, he ſheweth that the imaginers of euill, ſo much as in them lyeth, doe trouble al, and ſet al things in diſorder, making diuiſions and diſcordes, ſeditions, and inſurrections: the which things do cauſe great troubles and ſorowes. Contrarily, they which are giuen vnto holy meditations, and good thoughtes, and haue ſet their loue vpon the lawe of the Lord, *Pſal.1.2.* ſtudiyng therein day and night, and in following this holy lawe, doe labour to ſet peace in the worlde. Suche people doe not bring trouble nor ſorrowe, but ioy: not ſuch as the carnal and worldlinges doe bring, who cannot reioyce except a man pleaſe and followe the affections of their fleſhe: and make an account of no reioycing, but when they flowe ouer in all inſolences and diſſolutions. But the counſellours of peace doe ſo reioyce them that receiue their counſel, that they are beſt content to ſee things in good order, that they prayſe God, and giue him thankes therfore, and haue al their delite to followe that which is ſhewed vnto them by the counſellours of peace. To the end then that wee may be partakers of this ioy, wee muſt folow the counſellours of peace, which are chiefly the miniſters of the Worde, whereby they teach vs to bee at peace with al men, & *Rom.12.18.* not onely ſo, but alſo with God. Al things are of God, who hath re- *2.Cor.5.18.* conciled vs vnto himſelfe by Ieſus Chriſt. &c. By this miniſtery they make peace betweene God & our conſciences. We haue alſo other counſellours of peace, that is to ſay, our Lords & gouernors, which watch ouer the gouernment of the common wealth, and make holy ordinances for to ſtop ſlaunders, diſſentions, ſeditions and inſurrections: that the people cōmitted to their charge, may liue in peace. Wee muſt yeelde vnto their lawes, not onely to the ende that wee may auoide outwarde trouble, but alſo that wee may haue peace in *Rom.13.5.* our conſciences. S. Paul doth ſignifie the ſame, when he ſaith, And therefore wee muſt be ſubiect not only for feare of wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake. We ought alſo al to be counſellors one to another, euery man after his ſtate and calling, ſo doing wee ſhal haue *Mat.5.6.* cauſe of ioy: For the Lorde ſaith, Bleſſed are the peace makers, for they ſhalbe called the children of God. This ſentence might be vnderſtoode after another ſort, that is to ſay, that as they which deuiſe euil for their neighbours, are giuen vnto deceite and treaſons: euen ſo they which wiſhe peace vnto their neighbours, are filled with ioy, and are not vexed in mind, as they are that inuent malice: for againſt their willes, their conſcience doeth reproue them, and are in an horrible paine, albeit they labour to reioyce in their wickedneſſe, to the which they are giuen without griefe, with an vnbrideled luſt. The counſellours of peace are oftentimes tormented aſwel without, as within, but yet they ceaſſe not to reioyce, and to haue peace in their conſciences, knowing that they walke vprightly. &c.

21 *There ſhall no iniquitie come to the iuſt: but the wicked are full of euill.*

It hath beene ſeene in al times, and yet ſtil is ſeene, that the iuſt are perſecuted as the wicked and vngodly: but Solomon doeth cleare them from al iniquitie, contrary to the iudgement of the worlde, when hee ſaith, *There ſhall none iniquitie come to the iuſt* Wherin at the firſt ſight he ſeemeth to ſpeake againſt the Scripture. Who can bring a cleane thing out of filthineſſe? there is none. What is man, that he ſhoulde be cleane? And hee that is borne of woman, that he ſhoulde be iuſt? Who can ſay, I haue made my hart cleane, I am cleane from my ſinne? Surely there is no man iuſt in the earth, that doeth good and ſinneth not. That which is borne of fleſh, is fleſhe. For there is no difference: for al haue ſinned, and are depriued of the glory of God. &c. Or at leaſtwiſe, if hee doe not gainſtay the Scripture, it ſeemeth that there is none that is righteous. Al are gone out of the way: they are al corrupt: there is none that doeth good, no not one. Wee are commanded al to pray for the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes. If wee ſay wee haue not ſinned, wee deceiue our ſelues, and the trueth is not in vs. Nowe ſinne commeth of none but of vs. Euery man is tempted, when hee is drawne away by his owne concupiſcence, and is entiſed. It ſeemeth then at the firſt ſight, that he ſhould gainſtay the ſcripture,

Iob.14.4 & 15.14.
Pro.20.9.
Eccle.7.22.
Iohn.3:6.
Rom.3.22
Pſal.14.3.
Mat.6.12.
1.Iohn.1.8.
Iam.1.14.

or of his ſaying it might bee inferred that there is none *righteous*,
and that the firſt part of this ſentence is pronounced in vaine. The
anſwere is, that Solomon ſpeaketh not of man as hee is borne of
man: for in the ſame nature he is altogether deſtitute of iuſtice: but
he ſpeaketh of man as he is regenerated by the ſpirte of GOD, by
whom he is ſo ordered and guided, that hee abhorreth al iniquitie,
and delighteth in goodneſſe, and doth giue himſelſe thereto ſo much
as hee can. For this cauſe, though whiles he liueth in this body, he
Rom. 7. 14. hath ſtil ſome relikes of corruption, and that ſinne dwelleth in him:
yet becauſe that the ſeede of God is in him, he delighteth in the law
of God. Solomon doth impute none iniquitie vnto him, but doeth
1. John. 3. purge him thereof: as doth S. Iohn alſo, He that is borne of God,
ſinneth not, &c. And this is not without cauſe: for inaſmuche as
Chriſt by his ſpirit & his word, dwelleth in vs, ſin is aboliſhed in vs,
and yet for the principal part we are counted iuſt, and to liue iuſtly,
becauſe that with a pure affection, we aſpire vnto righteouſnes. And
albeit that through the infirmitie of our fleſh we often fal, yet is it
ſaide, that we worke none iniquitie, that wee doe not ſinne, becauſe
we doe not conſent vnto ſinne, but rather in weeping, we reſiſt and
fight againſt ſinne, ſo that we may truly witneſſe with S. Paul, That
Rom. 7. 19. we do the euil we wold not do: for this cauſe alſo it is not imputed
& 8. 1. vnto vs, neither are we condẽned for it. This is not to ſay, but that
we ſhould confeſſe our ſelues truely to be ſinners, and continually to
aſke forgiuenes of our ſinnes: as Ieſus Chriſt hath ordeined vnto al
Pſal. 32. 1. his Church. Although then that none iniquitie come to the iuſt, yet
Rom. 4. 7. the iuſt is not he that hath no ſinne, but he to whome God wil not
impute it. Wherefore, for to make vs certaine that we are of the nũber of the righteous, let vs aſpire vnto wel doing in ſoundneſſe and
Pſal. 51. 10. integritie of conſcience, praying vnto the Lorde, Create in mee a
cleane hart, O God, and renewe a right ſpirite within mee. Contrarily, as touching that which hath bin ſaide at the beginning, that the
wicked are honored & beloued of the world, as if they were honeſt
men: yet Solomon doth depriue them of al iuſtice, when hee ſaith,
but the wicked *are full of euill*. When Solomon exempteth
the iuſt from al iniquitie, and that contrarily, hee attributeth vnto
the wicked, fulneſſe of euil; hee declareth that the wicked doe
purpoſe and determine nothing but to doe euil, and to hurte.

And albeit that in ſome places they make a goodly ſhew of iuſtice and holines, as in their almes, faſtings, and prayers, yet from the abundance of their euil, they corrupt & defile al: Vnto them that are defiled and vnbeleeuing, nothing is pure, but euen their minds and conſciences are defiled. This ſentence thus conſidered, wee may gather of the promiſe and threatening that Ieſus Chriſt pronounceth, They that haue done euil, ſhal go vnto the reſurrection of condemnation. And thus Solomon by this ſentence doeth exhort vs vnto righteouſnes, and doeth labour to turne vs away from wickednes: but there are verie fewe which make any account thereof: and as we ſee by experience, we may wel complaine with the Prophet Eſai, their works are wicked works, and the worke of crueltie is in their handes: Therefore iudgement is turned backward, and iuſtice ſtandeth farre of: for trueth is fallen in the ſtreete, and equitie can not enter.

Tit.1.15.
Ioh.5.29.
Eſai.59.6. & 14.

22 *The lying lippes are an abhomination to the Lorde: but they that deale truely, are his delight.*

Lying hath alwayes liked men, as appeareth, there where wee may ſee, that man rather beleeued the Deuil father of lying, then obeyed God. And as he was eaſie to beleeue lyes, euen ſo gaue hee him ſelfe to ſpeake the ſame with his mouth, and to doe it alſo by worke, in folowing his father and maiſter the Deuil: and ſo made him ſelfe the enemie of God, who is the father of trueth, euen truth it ſelf. But albeit that mā doth delight to lie, ſo that it is not without cauſe that the Scripture ſaieth, that al men are liers: yet his conſcience doeth reprooue him therefore, and cauſeth him to iudge that it is wickedly done of man for to lye: as it is manifeſt by two arguments. The firſt is, that there is none that would haue any man to lye vnto him: and alſo we ſay, that a lier is worſe then a theefe, becauſe we can not ſo wel take heede from a lier, as from a theefe. The ſecond argument is, That wee our ſelues would not be counted lyers: and if any man belye vs, we are by and by prouoked vnto anger: and if we be able, we are readie to ſtrike and to kil them that belye vs. Wee naturally then vnderſtande, that it is great wickedneſſe for to lye: but for to make vs yet more excuſable, (except wee fo-

Gen.3.6.
Pſal.116.11.

low this natural light,) the Lord hath giuen vs his lawe by writing, the which ſaith, Thou ſhalt beare no falſe witneſſe,&c. Alſo let vs folow the inſtruction of S. Paule, Put away lying, and ſpeake euerie man trueth to his neighbour, &c. Let not whoredome nor any other vncleanneſſe bee once named amongſt you.&c. Exo.20.16.

Thus doing, we ſhalbe acceptable vnto God, as Solomon doth pronounce it, ſaying, *But they that deale truely, are his delight*. Whē Solomon is not contented to ſay, which ſpeake trueth: but ſayeth, that deale truely: he ſheweth vs that trueth doth not lye onely in word, but alſo in deed and works, that are done ſo faithfully & with ſuch trueth, that we feare not though they be examined, ſeene, and knowne. Our Lord doeth wel ſhew it. Nowe this is condemnation, that light is come into the word, & men loue darkeneſſe more then light. And when he ſetteth to deale truely, againſt lying lippes, wee knowe thereby that lying is alſo in fained and counterfait woorkes, the which haue their colour and diſguiſing for lippes. For it is as much as if they did bragge to be good and lawful. Whoſoeuer ſhal ſel a counterfait worke or marchandiſe, though he ſay nothing, yet ceaſeth he not to lye: for he ſetteth it to ſale, and ſelleth it alſo as deare as he can. Contrarily, they that worke truely, though they be dumbe, yet are they true, & work truth, the which God loueth, and thē that work it: as Solomon doth ſignifie, whē he ſaith, *They are his delight*. Herein wee haue the promiſe of life encloſed & cōteined: for it foloweth wel, if we pleaſe God, we can not periſhe. Ioh.3.19.

23 *A wiſe man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of the fooles publiſheth fooliſhnes.*

Solomon attributeth ſuttletie, that is to ſay, counſel and wiſdom vnto the man that keepeth ſecret his knowledge: but when we are not borne for our ſelues onely, and that God doeth not communicate his graces vnto vs, for to vſe them for our ſelues, without helping our neighbours: it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that Solomon ſhoulde attribute malice and vnthankfulneſſe vnto him that hideth knowledge, and not ſuttletie, except wee cal him ſutdle, which hath the cunning to deceiue and to beguile his neighbours, and to make his profite by the hurt of others. Knowledge ought not to bee kept ſecret, as Solomon him ſelfe hath ſhewed before, in the firſt Chapter, 20. verſe, and in diuers other places, where he exhorteth vs vnto hearing. God alſo hath wel ſhewed, when hee hath rayſed vp ſo many Prophetes for to teache his people of Iſrael.

Our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doeth teach vs likewiſe, Ye are the light of the worlde, &c. That which I tel you in darkeneſſe, doe you preach on the houſe toppe, &c. Goe and teache al people, &c. I anſwere, that it is not lawful for man to holde his knowledge ſo ſecrete, that he ſhould make no man partaker thereof: and alſo it is not the minde of Solomon to allow ſuch kinde of doing. And therefore that we may perfitly vnderſtande this preſent ſaying of Solomon, let vs knowe that hee ſpeaketh by compariſon, ſetting the modeſtie and temperancie of a wiſe and diſcrete man, againſt the inſolencie and exceſſe of the fooliſhe, that hath neither manner nor meaſure in their ſayings nor in their walking, but are ful of boaſting & oſtentation. They would be ſeene and praiſed in things that are vaine & nothing worth: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, ſaying, that the *hart of the fooles publiſheth fooliſhnes.* The minde then of Solomon is to ſhewe that the wiſe man, for al the knowledge hee hath, wil rather holde his peace, and keepe ſilence, then to giue any ſigne of oſtentation and boaſting either in his words or workes. He wil marke both the time and a fit occaſion for to beſtowe his knowledge: and alſo he wil conſider with what people hee hath to doe: and according as he ſhal know to be expedient, he wil imploy his knowledge in vtterance and in doing what he can for the honour of God, and profite of his neighbours: or if it be needful wil abſtaine. Giue not thoſe thinges that are holie vnto dogges, &c. The Miniſters of the worde are chiefly they that ought to conceale knowledge, and to take good heed of ſaying or doing any thing by oſtentation: for they are ſent of Chriſte for to preache the Goſpel, not in wiſedome of wordes that the croſſe of Chriſte ſhoulde bee made vaine. And ſo they ought to followe the modeſtie of Paule, who ſaith, And I brethren, when I came, and that they may ſay, Truely wee are not many, &c. And as for ſuch is the duty of miniſters, euen ſo alſo they that are taught by them, ought not to affect for to ſhewe that they learned muche, and are very wel learned: but muſt (following the doctrine of Saint Iames) being begotten by the worde of trueth, and not of our ſelues, but of the proper wil of God) bee ſwift to heare, and ſlowe to ſpeake. But notwithſtanding let vs not bee ſlowe to ſpeake, that wee ſhoulde not teache our houſholdes, and family, & alſo our neighbours, where neceſſitie ſhould require

Mat. 5.14. & 10.27. & 28.19.

Mat. 7.6.

1. Cor. 1. 17. & 2. 1.

2. Cor. 2. 17.

Iam. 1. 18

for of the gifts that God hath giuen vs, wee muſt make our neighbours partakers, Euerie one as he hath receiued. 1.Pet.4.10 And that not onely in wordes, but in workes: leſt we be like them, who when they knowe any arte or ſcience, woulde haue none to know it but themſelues: they wil not gladly teache it to others, and doe enuy them that doe knowe it. Let vs not I ſay, be like ſuch people, but without deſiring oſtentation, let vs make our neighbours partakers with vs of the benefites, giftes, and graces that we haue receiued of God: ſo doing, wee ſhal be wiſe, and ſhal conceale knowledge, and ſhall not folow fooles, who hauing their hearts puffed vp with pride and arrogancie, with ambition and vaine glorie, doe deſire to be ſeene: but becauſe they are depriued of good and true wiſedome, & haue not the knowledge of God, they doe bring foorth of their heartes, nothing but foliſhneſſe, and doe ſhewe openly that there is nothing in them but fooliſhneſſe, as though they proclaimed it by ſounde of trumpet, for to make it knowne to all: and yet make themſelues beleeue that they are very ſubtil and wiſe, and would be counted ſuch. The Pope is the prince of ſuch fooles, as we may know by his traditions, and by his conuerſation. For the heart of the fooliſh doeth not onely leade the tongue, but alſo all the members of the body. The Nichodemites do thinke to be ſubtil, to bee wiſe and very diſcrete, to wit, when they hold their peace for feare of perſecution: but their hearts do wel preach fooliſhnes, when by outward conuerſation they conforme themſelues, & become like vnto the wicked.

24 *The hande of the diligent ſhal beare rule: but the ydle ſhalbe vnder tribute.*

The Princes and great Lords of the earth are naturally led with a deſire to rule, ſo that they may commande others, and no man to haue authoritie for to commande any thing: that they may gather ſubſidies, impoſts, cuſtom & tributes of others, and themſelues to
1.Sam.8.11 be wholy excepted. And as they deſire ſuch things, ſo are they graun-
Rom.13.5.6. ted thẽ, & giuen thẽ of God. Neuertheles haue they not al enioyed
Wiſd.6.4. this graunt, neither yet doe they al enioy it. Wee haue ſeene in
Ioſu.16.10.& our time, & do ſtil ſee it, that kings in captiuitie do pay great raun-
17.13. ſomes: likewiſe great Lords to be captiues, and free Cities to bee in

bondage. This ſame came to paſſe, & commeth commonly to paſſe for want of heede and diligence, as experience doeth teache it. If then Kings, Princes, and Lords, would enioy the gift and graunt of God, let them not giue them ſelues to idlenes and ſlouth, vnto negligence and careleſnes, to vanitie and pleaſures, vnto voluptuouſnes and ſportes: but let them watche, let them labour with great care and with al diligence, and to doe that which is their duetie & office. Thus doing, they ſhal rule, as doth Solomon ſignifie, in ſaying, *The hande of the diligent ſhal beare rule:* but it wil be demanded, whether it be lawful for them that are diligent, to deſire to beare rule. I anſwere, That they which are not placed in high dignitie, ought to walke in ſuche humilitie, that they may ſay with the Pſalmiſt, O Lord, I haue no high heart, neither high lookes, &c. And that they may truely proteſt ſo, they muſt folow the doctrine of our Lord and maiſter, Whoſoeuer wil be the greateſt amongſt you, let him be your ſeruant. The Kings of the nations, &c. And alſo let them folowe his example, as hee ſetteth before vs in the places before alledged: and when he refuſed to be a King. But the Kings, Princes, and gouernours of the earth, which haue the preheminence, and are ordeined of God for to rule and reigne, if they be diligent to doe their office, they may deſire to beare rule, not cruel and tyrannical, as do they that vſe their corrupt and diſordered wil for reaſon and lawe: but they may deſire to beare authoritie, whereby they may ſerue to the glorie and honour of God, vnto reſt and quietnes, vnto the edification and ſaluation of their ſubiects. For it is needful that the people ſhould feare, reuerence, and honour their Lordes, rendering to thē obedience in al things, without any cōtradiction or murmuring, but that peaceably, with al humblenes, they ſhoulde ſubmit them ſelues vnto the ordinances, ſtatutes, and commandementes of their Lordes, not onely in ſuch thinges as concerne the honour of God rightly, but alſo in them which belong vnto common peace, and to the order of pollicie: and that the ſuperiours alſo ſhould bee diligent to execute the iudgements of God as the ſcriptures of God doe inſtruct them. When the Lordes ſhal thus worke, it ſhalbe lawful for them to deſire domination: and in deed alſo they ſhal obteine it, according to this promiſe, the which is infallible. *The hand of the diligent ſhal beare rule.* The ſame hath bin fulfilled in many

2.Sam.8.1.
2.Kings.18.10.& 25.6.
Deut.4.28.

Pſal.131.1.

Mark.1.10.43.
Luk.22.25.
Iohn.6.15.

Exod.18.21.
Deut.17.16.
2.Chro.19.6.
Pſal.82.3.

good Magiſtrates, Iudges, and Kings, as the Scripture doth witneſſe of Moſes, of Ioſua, of Gedeon, of Ioſeph, of Sampſon, of Dauid, of Ezekias, and of Ioſias. But what domination ſoeuer diligent Lordes haue and doe obteine, yet is it not without contradiction, as experience doeth ſhew it. Yet it is not to ſay, but that God is true in his promiſes (as we muſt eſteeme it) & what diligence ſoeuer they take in doing of their duetie, yet is it neuer ſuch, but that therin is much to be amended. And for this cauſe, there are no Lords but do wel deſerue to meete with much contradiction. Yet it is not to ſay, that God doeth not performe his promiſe, ſo farre as is expedient, and that it is not neceſſarie that Lordes ſhould puniſhe their gainſaiers. *Rom.13.4.* It belongeth not vnto ſubiectes to withſtand that which is wel ordeined: though they which ordeine them, be not ſuch as they ought to be. And though it ſhould ſo be, that in doing their dutie perfectly, the Lordes ſhoulde haue contradiction: *1.Pet.2.18* neuertheles wee muſt in no wiſe doubt of this promiſe: for God faileth not to accompliſh it, ſo farre as he knoweth to be expedient, though we ſee it not alwayes. And as the Princes that are careful and diligent, doe beare rule: euen ſo euerie one of vs, according to his eſtate, ſhal rule, if he labour to folow his vocation. But contrarily as ſaith Solomon, *The idle hand ſhalbe vnder tribute.* They that are negligēt to giue their duetie, muſt needes bee ſlaues and as captiues, ſubiect to ranſomes, Impoſtes and Subſides: as experience ſheweth it.

25 ***Heauines in the heart of man doeth bring it downe: but a good word reioyceth it.***

When a man daily worketh, and that it ſeemeth to him that hee buſieth him ſelfe in vaine, or that hee receiueth not ſo great profite as he deſireth, complayningly he ſaith gladly, that he is ſo wery with labouring, that he groweth crooked therewith: ſignifying thereby that he is not without care and ſorowe, and is not contented with the profite that God ſendeth him daily, becauſe hee feareth to dye for hunger, and (by a kinde of ſpeech) feareth leſt the earth wil faile him. Thus ſpeaking, he ſheweth wel, that hee woulde not willingly be crooked, & that it is a thing verie noiſome. If we wil auoid ſuch trouble, & not to waxe crooked, we muſt giue our ſelues euery one of vs to folowe our ſtate without heauineſſe. For as Solomon ſaith, *Heaui-*

Heauineſſe in the heart of man doeth bring him downe. When man taketh care exceſſiuely, and without meaſure, with great actiuitie, he ſetteth his heart in a miſerable ſtate, he doeth depriue it of al ioy and delight, of al peace and quietnes, as if hee fel vnderneath his burden, without being able to riſe againe. Solomon here doth not labour to turne man away from his daily labour, according as is meete for his vocation: otherwiſe hee ſhoulde contrarie himſelfe: for hee ſayeth, Goe ſlouthful to the Emmet, and marke his wayes, &c. An idle hande maketh poore, &c. Hee that tilleth his grounde, ſhalbe filled with bread. *1.Tim.6.10.* But hee laboureth to roote out of our heartes the roote of al euil, which is couetouſnes, the which whileſt ſome haue deſired, they haue erred from the Fayth, and haue intangled them ſelues with many ſorows. Amongſt other ſorowes, couetouſnes cauſeth the heart of man to be loaden with heauineſſe, the which is ſo heauie a burthen, that it bringeth him down, ſo that all his thoughtes and deſires are vpon the goods of the earth, and can not aſpire vp vnto heauen, where Ieſus Chriſt woulde haue vs to laye vp our treaſure. *Mat.6.20.* For to folow wel theſe exhortations of our Lorde, wee muſt aske our daily bread, and to bee contented therewith. *Hebr.13.5* Let your conuerſation be without couetouſnes. If in ſteede to yeeld vnto this holie exhortation we vexe our ſelues, & do diſtruſt the helpe of God, it is a true argument that the word of God doeth not liue in our hearts: as alſo Solomon doth ſignifie it preſently, ſetting a good word againſt heauines, & ioy vnto crookednes: ſaying, *But a good word reioyceth it.* For to put away heauineſſe from the heart, Solomon ſendeth vs to heare the preaching of the word of God, and not flatteries and ſweete wordes of men, the which, albeit that for a litle tyme they ſeeme to recreate and reioyce man, and doe deliuer him from heauineſſe, yet the ſame is of no continuance: but the ioye that commeth of mens words, doth quickly vaniſh away, and ſo is not true, as alſo their wordes are not truely good. For as there is none but God that is good, euen ſo alſo there *Pſal.19.9.* is nothing but his only word good, and that giueth true and continuall ioye to the heart. Now as we cal a thing good, when it doeth nothing hurt, but doeth profite, and chiefly when it ſerueth our neceſſarie vſes: euen ſo, Solomon calleth the worde of the Lorde *good,* becauſe that it doeth nothing hurt the children of God,

though it doeth rebuke them, chide, threaten and feare them, making them to feele the horriblenes and heauines of their ſinnes, and doeth ſet before them the iudgement of God, wherupon commeth to them great ſorow, when they ſee them ſelues ſo poore and ſo miſerable. For albeit that they are greatly ſorowful, yet is the ſame ſo farre of, that the worde which leadeth them vnto this ſorowfulnes,
2.Cor.7.8. doeth hurt them, that rather it is healthful for them. For though I made you ſorowful by mine Epiſtle, yet doe I not repent me, &c. becauſe ye ſorowed vnto repentance. If then we receiue the word in feare, it ſhal not hurt vs, but greatly profite vs: not for one time onely, but for euer. And ſith that the children of the world do reioyce at a temporal profite, by a ſtronger reaſon the worde of the Lorde ought to giue occaſion vnto the faithful for to reioyce, when the ſame bringeth them vnto eternal life, that euery one of vs may ſay with Dauid, I haue delighted in thy lawe. Alſo, Thy teſtimonies
Pſal.114.14 24. haue bene my delight, &c. It commeth not from our ſelues that we haue this delight, and therefore the Pſalmiſt prayeth, Lorde teache
Pſal.119.33. me the way of thy ſtatutes. Although then that the couetous doe often walke with a ſtiffe necke, and that they ſeeme to be ioyful, yet haue they a crooked heart, and haue no true reioycing. Euen ſo, if we wil be deliuered from heauines, and obteine ioye, wee muſt receiue the lawe which doeth aduertiſe vs of our ſinne, for to repent therefore: and we muſt cleaue faſt vnto the promiſes, and ſtay our ſelues thereupon, for to aſſure vs of the remiſſion of our ſinnes and of eternal life.

26 *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour: but the way of the wicked wil deceiue them.*

Whileſt we are in this world, albeit that God doeth giue vs this grace that we conforme not our ſelues vnto the world, neither are of the worlde, yet muſt we dwel with them which are of the world, and think them our neighbours, euen though we know that they are nothing worth. Solomon doeth ſomewhat ſignifie it, when he ſaith, *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour*. But when he ſpeaketh thus, his chiefe intent is, not to make vs to vnderſtande the ſame, but to turne vs away from the proſperitie of the wicked.

For Solomon doth ſet himſelf againſt the common opinion of men which iudge them excellent, that haue their ſcope and courſe in abundance of riches, and great credite, and that take their eaſe and pleaſures in this life. For by this that they doe their buſineſſe wel, and bring their purpoſes and enterpriſes to paſſe, the worlde eſteemeth them excellent perſonages. Contrarily, Solomon doeth heere pronounce, that albeit the righteous ſeemeth to bee a man of nothing, woful and vnprofitable, yet that he is excellent, by this, that whatſoeuer doth happen to him, he goeth not out of the right way. He ſetteth the excellencie of the righteous in his patience and conſtancie: as he doeth ſhewe it, when he ſaith conſequently: *But the way of the wicked wil deceiue them.* Heere the way of the wicked is taken for that which they are, and doeth happen vnto them: for not knowing them ſelues, and ſeeing their proſperitie, credite, and power, they make them ſelues beleeue that al things are lawful for them: and therefore they liue in al diſſolution. They forſake the way of ſaluation, and take the broad way which leadeth to deſtruction. And that we ſhoulde not goe aſtray, wee are warned for to enter by the ſtraight gate. If then wee wil finde excellencie, let vs not ſtaye our ſelues with the great number, nor with them that are moſt eſteemed after the worlde, but let vs conuert with the ſmall number and moſt contemned. Nowe the righteous in this point is ſaide to be excellent, for the giftes and graces of God, by the which he is ledde and gouerned ſo wel that he erreth not, but keepeth the right way of ſaluation and eternal life. That we muſt ſo vnderſtand it, Solomon doeth ſhewe it vs, when againſt excellent he ſetteth the way that leadeth to errour. For becauſe that the wicked are voide of al gifts, as they deſerue, they can not wel guide themſelues, whatſoeuer they haue, or that happeneth them, but al thinges are a ſtumbling blocke vnto them, an hinderance, ouerthrow, and deſtruction: as Solomon doeth giue it wel to vnderſtande, when he ſaieth, that the way of the wicked maketh them erre. And it hath alwayes bin that this hath befal them. The wicked are ſtrangers frõ the wombe: euen from the bellie haue they erred, and ſpeake lies. And albeit that the wicked deſerue to walke in errour, yet it is not to ſay, that the iuſt can deſerue to bee excellent: for, as it hath bene al-

Pſal.37.1

Mat.7.13.

Pſal.58.3.

Iob.3.27. readie ſaide, hee is eſteemed excellent, not for any thing he hath of
& 15.4.5. him ſelfe: for al giftes come from the pure liberalitie of God. Solomon
1.Cor.4.7. alſo doeth ſignifie it, when hee doeth not attribute to man
Iam.1.17. that hee is excellent. True it is, that man in his firſt creation was
made excellent, when hee was created and formed vnto the image
and likeneſſe of God: but hee loſt his excellencie by tranſgreſſing
of God his commaundement, and by the inuentions that followed
thereupon. I conſidered in mine heart the ſtate of the children of
Eccle.3.18 men, that God had purged them: yet to ſee too, they are in themſelues
& 7.30. as beaſtes. God made man right, but they ſought many inuentions.
Alſo, as is ſaide, Solomon doeth not attribute vnto man
that hee is excellent, but to the righteous: hee ſaieth not Man is excellent:
but the righteous is more excellent, &c.

In this ſort he attributeth excellencie vnto man, inaſmuch as hee is
iuſt: the which hee is not in him ſelfe, but in Ieſus Chriſt. Let vs
note beſides this, that Solomon doeth not pretend to attribute vnto
the wicked any excellencie, though hee ſay *more excellent*: but
hee ſpeaketh alſo for to repugne and gainſay the opinion of the
worlde, which reiecteth, diſdaineth, and perſecuteth the righteous:
as Saint Paule doeth deſcribe it in his perſon, Truely I thinke, that
1.Cor.1.30. God hath ſet foorth vs the laſt Apoſtles, as men appointed to death:
2.Cor.3.21. for wee are made a gazing ſtocke vnto the worlde, and to the Angels,
& to men. And contrarily, the world hath the wicked in wonderment,
reuerencing and honouring them. And this is as much
as if hee did ſay, If I graunt vnto you that they which yee eſteeme,
haue ſome excellencie, yet I woulde haue you to vnderſtande, that
1.Cor.4.9. it is as nothing in compariſon of the excellencie of the iuſt, whom
yee abhorre. And thus a man might well ſay, that Solomon ſpeaketh
as it were by Conceſſion. Moreouer, let vs note, that the
2.Cor.6.14. faithful and iuſt that are counted before God of great excellencie,
are heere admoniſhed not to communicate in any wiſe with the filthines
of the wicked: as alſo Saint Paul doeth exhort them.

27 *The deceitful man roſteth not that he tooke in hunting:*
but the riches of the diligent man are precious.

Solomon doeth exhorte vs by this ſentence vnto care and diligence, that we ſhoulde not ſuffer that to be loſt which we poſſeſſe, but knowing that it is God which giueth vs that that we haue, bee it litle or much, that we ſhoulde make great account thereof, & to preſerue the ſame for to vſe when wee haue neede. Now for to induce vs theretoo, and to turne vs from ſlouthfulnes, he compareth the ſlouthful vnto an hunter: but not in al things. For the ſlouthful ſleepeth, and maketh no account to occupie himſelfe in labour and trauaile, as Solomon hath reprooued him elſe where: contrariwiſe the hunter is watchful and with great care and diligence hee conſidereth the meanes whereby hee may come vnto the ende to take ſome peece of fleſh: hee pitcheth his toyles and his nets, hee trimmeth his pitfals, hee goeth and runneth vp and downe according as hee ſeeth needful to purſue the pray, that it may not eſcape from him. But it happeneth that the hunter which is vndiſcreete and taketh no heede, after he hath taken the veneſon, knoweth not howe to trimme and dreſſe it, for to preſerue it from corruption, that hee may make thereof his profit. And in this ſort it is that Solomon compareth the ſlouthful vnto the hunter: as hee doeth ſhewe it, when he doth ſay, *The ſlouthfull man roſteth not that he tooke in hunting*. Hee calleth the hunting of the ſlouthful not that which he hath got by his labour and trauaile: for the ſlouthful refuſeth to labour: as it is but too much prooued, and Solomon hath already ſhewed it & wil ſhew it heereafter: but the hunting of the ſlouthful are the goods that are come to him by the labour of other, the which he poſſeſſeth by right of ſucceſſion, or by gifte, or by theft, polling and briberie. Foraſmuch as the ſlouthful wil not occupie himſelfe for to get his liuing by honeſt labour, and that hee careth not to buſie himſelfe about good woorkes, hee is often compelled to rauiſh the goods of his neighbours: and albeit that to do the ſame, he watcheth and taketh great paines, yet ceaſeth not hee to be ſlouthful: for that which hee doeth, is done for nothing elſe, but to auoide the labour that God hath appointed, & to enioye the pleaſures of the body with the hurt & hinderance of his neighbors. Such ſlouthful are the moſt dangerous after the outward apparance, & alſo after the iudgement of the fleſh but their bellies, whereof S.

Pro.6.9.

Rom.16.18. Phi.3.19. Tit.1.10. Paule ſpeaketh, are yet worſe: for liuing ydlely and ſlouthfully, they doe not only rauiſhe the temporal goods, and doe not onely kil the body: but in ſo much as in them lyeth they pul away the ſoules from God, and giue them to bee deuoured of the Deuil: of the which number are the Pope and al his, whome a man may wel curſe, after Mat.23.13. the example of Ieſus Chriſt, Wo be to you, ye Scribes & Phariſees hypocrites: for yee ſhut vp the kingdome of heauen before men: for neither yee your ſelues enter in, nor ſuffer them that woulde to enter therein. Al ſuch people ſhal not roſte that they toke on hunting: they take no profit of that which they haue gotten by gaine & diſhoneſtie: for either they ſpende the ſame vnprofitably, or it is taken from them, or elſe they are compelled to leaue the ſame with- Luke.12.20. & 15.13. & 16.23. out hauing any vſe thereof. This ſame is proued, and we haue ſome examples thereof. Nowe that wee may not bee of the number of ſuch people, let vs folowe the counſel of Saint Paule, let him that Ephe.4.28. 2.Theſſ.3.7. ſtole, ſteale no more: and alſo, ſo much as wee poſſibly can, folowe his example. Thus dooing, we ſhal not looſe that which we tooke in hunting, for want of roſting: but that which wee haue taken we ſhal keepe it diligently, and ſhal holde it deere and precious, as Solomon doth ſignifie it ſaying,

But the riches of the diligent man are precious. It ſeemeth wel vnto the couetous and vſurers which take greate paine to gather treaſures in this world, that they holde their riches for very precious, when they dare not vſe their treaſures for feare to diminiſh them: and then it ſeemeth that in thus dooing, they keepe and preſerue them wel, and make no ſmal account of them. But ſith God hath created al things that they ſhoulde bee occupied for the vſe of man, wee ſhoulde knowe that then our riches are precious vnto vs, when wee make them ſerue according as God hath ordeined them. For ſo doing, we ſuffer them not to goe to loſſe, but do keepe them togither. Wee ſhoulde eſteeme a thing wel kept, when it is applyed where it ought to be, and that it ſerueth and profiteth. They then Luke.6.38. 1.Tim.6.17. that are almoſe giuers & charitable, haue their riches precious: for they doe wel beſtowe it and put it foorth to good profit, Giue, and it ſhal be giuen to you: Commande them that are rich in this world, that they bee not high minded.

28 *Lyfe is in the way of righteouſnes: and in that pathway there is no death.*

Foraſmuch as there is none but deſireth to liue,& to flye death,
except it be for great ſorow that he ſuffereth, hee doe deſire death,
not preferring and chooſing it before life,but for the afflictions that
he beareth: and except hee were vnpatient,and did diſpaire to bee
exempted from ſuch ſorowes in this world,he would deſire life,and
abhorre death,as in deed he doth:for being in his ſtraights,he thinketh
him ſelf to be in a death more hard thẽ if his ſoule were ſeparated
frõ his body.That we may obteine our deſires,we muſt know
where life is founde without the danger of death: Solomon doeth
teach vs it, when he ſaith, *Life is in the way of righteouſnes,&c.*
When any man hath neede to make a voyage, and vnderſtandeth
that the high way is dangerous,for theeues and robbers that watch
who come by, he wil not take that way if hee may auoide it by any
meanes,but ſeketh ſome path that wil bring him to the place where
he would bee; and ſo he liueth and auoideth death, whereof he had
bene in danger if he had paſſed by the high way. Wee are Pilgrimes *Hebr.13.14*
in this world, For wee haue heere no continual dwelling Citie, &c.
In folowing then the Faith of Abraham and of other holie Patriarkes, *Hebr.11.10*
dwelling in this world,we ſhal walke as ſtrangers,looking for
the Citie, that hath a ſure foundation. So doing,God wil not be aſhamed
to be called our God. For to accompliſhe this voyage, and
to come to this Citie, wee muſt take good heede from taking the *Mat.7.13.*
high way, for it leadeth to damnation, becauſe it is ful of theeues,
robbers,and filchers, which ſeeke for nothing but our deſtruction:
As our luſtes, the worlde,and the Deuil doe draw vs, and lay baites *1.Pet.4.3*
for vs, that delighting in the pleaſures of the heathen, that knowe *Ioh.3.3.*
not God, we ſhould walke diſhoneſtly.So doing,we can not finde *1.Cor.6.9*
life. The reward of ſinne,is death: but wee muſt ſeeke for a ſtraight *Rom.6.23*
pathe that may leade vs vnto life. And for to runne wel therein,let *Gal.5.21.*
vs laye away al that preſſeth vs downe, and putting away al malice, *Mat.7.13.*
let vs abſtaine from carnal luſtes,which fight againſt the ſoule.If we *Hebr.12.1*
thus walke, we ſhal finde life; for that way is the path of righteouſnes, *1.Pro.2.1*
wherein, as Solomon ſaith,is life, and no death therein.When

Deut.4. & 5.& 8.

Solomon tooke his doctrine from the lawe, whereunto it is lawfull for no man to adde, or diminiſh, we muſt vnderſtande that he ſpeaketh heere of eternal life chiefly.

2.Cor.1.20,
Hebr.11.9. 10.13.
Leu.18.5.
Rom.10.5.
1.Cor.15.50.
Hebr.9.29
Ioh.5.24. & 8.51. 11.25.

For albeit that God by Moyſes gaue vnto the children of Iſrael, promiſes concerning this temporal life (as neuertheles ſeeing that God doeth eſteeme none but his children, whom he hath erected to eternal life, worthie of his promiſes, for al his promiſes are yea and Amen in Chriſt) wee muſt vnderſtand, that in theſe temporal and earthly promiſes are encloſed the heauenly and ſpiritual: as the Fathers did wel vnderſtande, and alſo Moyſes doeth ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, The which if a man ſhal doe, he ſhal liue in them: the which Saint Paule expoundeth of eternal life. Then when Solomon ſaith, *Life is in the way, &c.* Let vs vnderſtand it of the bleſſed and eternal lyfe: as he him ſelfe declareth it, ſaying, *And in that path way there is no death.* For temporal life is not without death, as experience teacheth alwayes, and the Scripture witneſſeth vnto vs: I ſay vnto you brethren, that fleſhe and blood can not inherite the kingdome of God. Men are appointed once to dye. Wee muſt alſo take death heere, for eternal death: as doeth our Lord Ieſus, Verely, verely, I ſay vnto you, that he which heareth my word, is paſſed from death vnto life. If any man keepe my worde, he ſhal not ſee death. Whoſoeuer beleeueth in me though hee were dead, yet ſhal he liue. If then wee wil liue without death, let vs walke in the path of righteouſnes, as wee are taught by the Scriptures aforeſaide. The which ſhal be done, if hauing the aſſured hope of our ſaluation in the righteouſnes of our Lord, we giue our ſelues to liue after his commandements conteined in his lawe. There is no death. For albeit the righteous are the moſt that are ſlaine, yet they dye not, but doe paſſe from death vnto lyfe.

1 *A wiſe ſonne wil obey the inſtruction of his father : but a ſcorner wil heare no rebuke.*

FOraſmuch as inſtruction conſiſteth in commandemẽts,counſels, exhortations, corrections and reprehenſions, wherof the rude, ſimple and ignorant haue neede, and not they that are indewed with ſo much wiſdom as they neede,& ought to haue: and liue according thereto before the world,and walke ſo wiſely that they are without reprehenſion,& haue no need that any man ſhould ſhew them any thing. Wee vnderſtand not by the *wiſe Sonne*,a man hauing wiſdome premeditated (for ſuche a man hath no need that his father ſhould ſhewe him, either reprooue or correct him) but by a wiſe ſonne we wil vnderſtand him that humbleth himſelfe vnto his father, feareth and reuerenceth him, wil receiue doctrine,and endeuoureth to ſerue him,and to be at his commandement. This ſonne is wiſe,though ther be in him many things which require either admonitions, exhortations,or corrections. Albeit then that wee haue many imperfections,yet doe wee not ceaſe therfore to be called wiſe by the Scriptures,which lie not,ſo that we
confeſſing our ſelues to be ſuch as wee are, doe become eaſie to bee *Rom.*13.7.
taught & tractable,and endeuour to yeeld ſubiection & obedience, *Ephe.*4.1.
feare & honour to them that wee ought,folowing the counſel of S. 1.*Pet.*2.13
Paul, Giue vnto euery man that which is due to him,&c. So doing, we ſhalbe wiſe ſonnes,and wil take inſtruction of them to whome we are committed,and to whom we owe honour & obedience. As then we ſee,Solomon calleth children & inferiours vnto wiſdõ,that the youth & the common people ſhould not take licence to remain in ignorance, as though wiſdome did nothing belong to them. For gladly ſuch people are wont to ſay,that they need not to be ſo wiſe, & they think that wiſdõ is not neceſſary for thẽ,but for men in authority & dignitie, He doth alſo exhort thẽ to receiue inſtruction of the father: vnder the which name of father,let vs vnderſtãd al ſuch as

we owe obedience and honour vnto: but as they make no account of wiſedome, euen ſo doe ſuche people commonly hate inſtruction, though it be neceſſary for them. It is too common a vice, that things moſt neceſſarie are moſt deſpiſed in the world: there is almoſt none but feareth to be either too wiſe or too honeſt: wherin they are like to children: who according as they are borne of fleſhe, doe loue that which is not good for them. Now though we muſt be like vnto litle *Mat. 18. 3* children: yet when we are here called to be wiſe, and to receiue inſtruction, let vs folow the admonition of S. Paul, Brethren, in vnder- *1. Cor. 14. 20* ſtanding be not children: but in malice let vs be children; Take heed *Ephe. 5. 15* therefore that ye walke circumſpectly, &c: putting away al malice, *1. Pet. 2. 1.* &c. If we make no count of ſuch inſtructions, we are not wiſe: but ſcorners, as Solomon doth ſhew vs, ſaying, *But a ſcorner wil heare no rebukes.* Wiſdom hath complained here aboue, (Chaper. 1. verſe 22.) and for their refuſal, hath threatened them afterwardes, verſe, 24. By this ſentence & other alreadie alledged, & Chap. 9. verſe, 7. 8. we *Eſai. 28. 15* may vnderſtand that ſcorners are proude, wicked, corrupted, hardened, & vncorrigible. Such people labour to make themſelues beleeue that what euil ſoeuer doth happen, they ſhal be exempted. And therfore they ſcorne al reprehenſion. It is not to ſay that they are aſſured: for their conſcience, in ſpight of their teeth wil reprooue them: whereupon they are feared with the iudgement of God. They ſhew thēſelues verie bold, as if they were in great aſſurance: but the wicked are as the raging of the ſea, &c. There is no peace to the wicked, *Eſai. 57. 20* ſaieth God. Beſides this, let vs note firſt of al, that ſcorners haue eares, but they heare not: they are of the number of them of whom Eſai ſpeaketh, Goe & ſay to this people, heare and vnderſtande not, *Eſai. 6. 9* ſee and know not, &c. The number of them is verie great, as wee may gather by the ſimilitude of the ſeed. Secondly, that they which haue charge of others, ought to be vigilāt & careful to giue inſtruction, euery one after his ſtate and vocation: and for to do the ſame wel, they themſelues ought to be lerned. We muſt firſt be ſchollers, before we become maiſters. They then which neuer made account and eſteemed inſtruction, are not capable nor meete to haue authoritie ouer others.

2 *A man ſhal eate good things by the fruit of his mouth: but the ſoule of the treſpaſſers ſhal ſuffer violence.*

It is ſaide, you ſhal bring your burnt offeringes, &c. Thou ſhalt pay thy tenth. &c. Euē ſo we ſee that the Lord ſought no profite in the Sacrifices, neither ordeined them for to take his pleaſure in them: but hee woulde that the people ſhoulde be refreſhed, and reioyced therewith. Nowe Solomon knowing that ſuche ſacrifices were not the principal thinges that God required, as wee may ſee by the ſcripture: knowing (I ſay) the ſame, and willing to induce vs to offer the true ſacrifices, hee maketh an alluſion vnto the olde ſacrifices. & doth ſhew vs, that if we ſacrifice truly, we ſhal haue profite with ioy: when he ſaith, *A man ſhall eate &c.* As herebefore by eating, hee hath threatened the wicked, and hath foretolde them their ouerthrowe, ſaying, Wherefore they ſhall eate. &c. Euen ſo nowe by eating, hee promiſeth proſperitie to the good which vſe their mouth wel, in ſacrificing alwaies praiſes vnto God: that is to ſay, the fruite of the lippes, which confeſſe his name. If then wee wil proſper and haue ioy of our proſperitie, let vs bring forth good fruite out of our mouthes: if we ſpeake, let vs ſpeake as the words of God, let no corrupt cōmunication proceed out of your mouths. &c. Let no fornication, nor any filthineſſe be once named amongeſt you. &c. Nowe as the ouerthrowe of the wicked ſhal euer indure, euen ſo the proſperitie that Solomon promiſeth now, is of no ſmal continance, but ſhal laſt for euer. This proſperitie ſhal come vnto them that ſhal rightly vſe their mouthes, and alſo which ſhal occupie all the other members of their body in wel doing, as wee are admoniſhed, I beſeech yee then brethren, &c. For though Solomon doeth make no mention but of the fruite of the mouth, yet he excludeth not the other members, neither reiecteth the good fruite that commeth from them: but vnder the goodneſſe that commeth from the mouth, hee comprehendeth the ſame of the other members, the which if wee vſe wel, wee ſhall eate the fruite. For we muſt al appeare before the iudgment ſeate of Chriſt, that euery man may receiue the things that hee hath doone in his owne body. Let vs folowe that which is ſaide, Bee not deceiued: that which a man hath ſowne, that ſhal hee alſo reape. &c. If any man ſhall aske why Solomon did rather name the mouth then any other member, we may anſwere him, that it is becauſe hee ſignifieth the proſperitie of the good and faithful by eating, the which is proper to the mouth: for

Deut.12.6. & 14.22.
Pſalm.50.8. & 51.18.
Eſa.1.11.
Oſe.14.3.
Pro.1.31.
Heb.13.15.
Ephe.4.29. & 5.3.18.
Rom.12.1.
2.Cor.5.10.
Gal.6.7.

the mouth is the organe by the which the nouriſhment is ſent vnto al the body, and by the mouth are executed al the moſt excellent workes which concerne the glory and honour of God, as is to ſing the prayſes of God. If againe it bee demaunded, why hee ſignifieth the bleſſed life, rather by eating, then by gold, ſiluer, and other riches: I anſwere, That he maketh an alluſion vnto the olde ſacrifices, of the which they did eate that offered them. And alſo, ſith that the fruition of the heauenly glory, and of eternal life is our chiefe felicitie, and the greateſt ioy that wee can haue or deſire: Solomon hath ſignified it wel and accordingly by eating: and that for to yeelde vnto our rudeneſſe and infirmitie: ſeeing that the greateſt goodneſſe that wee can bodidy haue, ſtandeth in eating: for without it, wee periſhe, though wee haue neuer ſo much prouiſion of other riches. What riches ſoeuer we haue, yet are we miſerable concerning the body, except wee eate when neceſſitie requireth. Our Lorde doeth ſomewhat ſignifie, that to eate is the moſt neceſſary profite that doeth belong to the body, when in teaching vs for to aske the neceſſary foode of this preſent life, hee doeth admoniſh vs, that wee ſhoulde aske our dayly bread. But that it is ſo, that Solomon making mention of the mouth doeth not exclude the other members, he himſelfe doth ſhew ir, when againſt a fruiteful mouth, hee ſetteth the ſoule or perſon of the treſpaſſer: and againſt good things, ſetteth violence: ſaying, *But the ſoule of the treſpaſſer ſhal ſuffer violence*: that is to ſay that the treſpaſſers ſhal bee puniſhed for the violence doone to God and to their neighbours. Now violence doeth not onely conſiſt in outagious wordes, but alſo in al workes that are doone to any mans hurte or hinderance. Conſidering then the Antitheſis, we may knowe that Solomon vnderneath the mouth, compriſeth all the other members. But when the ſoule of the treſpaſſer is ſet againſt the mouth, wee maye ſomething gather that the wicked are more earneſt too doe euill then the good are to do good: but the earneſtneſſe they haue, is as if they had deuoured ſome deadly poyſon: for by the violence that they labour to doe vnto God and to their neighbours, they ſhal bee fedde therewith in eternall death. Beſides this, let vs note as amongeſt the moſt excellent mouthes, are they whiche

Mat.6.11

faithfully preache the worde, vnto the honour of GOD and profite of his Churche; euen ſo amongſt the treſpaſſers, the worſt are they that vnder colour of holineſſe and religion doe ſowe falſe doctrine: whereof Popery is full. And thus the greateſt treſpaſſe lyeth in the tongue: as Solomon doeth ſomewhat ſignifie, ſetting the ſoule of the treſpaſſer againſt the mouth. Let vs note alſo that wee muſt not truſt to the good deedes of other men, as doe the poore Papiſts which truſt in the merits of hee ſaints, & ſhee ſaints or in the ſuffrages of the Churche: and in the meane while to care nothing to put the hande into the pye. Solomon doeth not ſay that we that we ſhal eate the good fruit of the mouth of our neighbours. That which our neighbours ſhall haue done, ſhall nothing profite vs, if wee haue beene vnfruitefull: The Lorde wil giue to euery one according to his workes: and as Solomon ſaith, Euery man ſhall eate the good fruite of his mouth. Neuertheleſſe, as they that are diligent to gather the fruite of any tree, doe eate of the ſame: euen ſo if wee be careful to heare the holy worde by the mouth of the miniſters thereof, wee ſhal eate the fruite of the ſame. Likewiſe if wee participate with the treſpaſſes of the wicked, wee ſhal (as they doe) ſuffer violence, &c.

3 *Hee that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life: but hee that openeth his lippes, deſtruction ſhalbe to him.*

There are two principal wayes of keeping the mouth, and conſequently of keeping the ſoule and life: and both of them are very neceſſary, The one is, to keepe ſoberneſſe and temperancie in eating and drinking. They which haue no knowledge of GOD, doe ſo iudge: for they ſay, Of ſober life, cōmeth long life. They iudge ſo by a naturall light without the Scripture: the which beſides the ſaide light, doeth lighten vs, by admonitions and exhortations, by reprehentions and threatenings. If we receiue theſe admonitions, and that wee tremble at his threatninges, wee ſhall keepe our ſoules not onely for a time in this worlde, but alſo for eternall life. The other manner of keepyng the mouth, is too bee carefull in following the thirde and fourth commandements of the lawe. Thus doeing, wee ſhall keepe our ſoules: for none wyll

Eſay.5.11. & 22.12.56.10
Luke.21-34.
Rom.13.13.
1.*Pet.4.2.3.*

purſue vs to death, but vniuſtly : and ſo wee ſhall liue firſt of all in this worlde, ſo farre as ſhalbe expedient for our ſpiritual ſaluation: afterwardes hel ſhal haue no power ouer vs, for to ſwallow vs: but the Lorde wil deliuer vs by his great mercy alone, and not that wee can deſerue it. For albeit it is ſaide that wee keepe our ſoules , yet muſt wee attribute nothing, but vnto the grace and vertue of the holy Ghoſt which is giuen vnto vs: and for this cauſe that which he doeth in vs, is called ours . Let vs then confeſſe that the keeping of the mouth, and conſequently the keeping of the ſoule, is the gifte of the holy Ghoſt: and let vs not thinke that Dauid doth attribute any thing to himſelfe, when hee ſaith, I wil take heede to my waies. *Pſal.39.2* &c. Hee doeth ſhewe it well, when hee ſaith, Set a watche, O *&.114.3.* Lorde, before my mouth: and keepe the doore of my lippes. Beholde two kindes of keeping our mouthes, the which are very harde for man to doe: for wee haue bellies that cannot bee filled, becauſe they bee vnſatiable, as are thoſe of gluttons and drunkardes, which eate and drinke tyl they burſt, and if they haue any thing too thruſt into their mouthes, they begin alwayes afreſhe: or els they are delicate, deſiring daintie meate, and ſweete drinkes: as are gluttons and licorous fellowes, that haue none other care but to ſeeke where good wine is, and ſweete morſels. Nowe the mouthes of ſuch bellies doe ſerue them to their appetites if they haue any thing to furniſhe the ſame. Thus much for the firſt manner. As touching the ſecond, it is no leſſe hard. For in our mouth there is a little member which is the tongue, but it is a fire, euen a worlde of iniquitie. &c. *Iam.3.6.* The worlde is filled with ſuch tongues : whereof Dauid complai- *Pſal.12.2.&* neth, Helpe mee, O Lorde, for there is not one goodly man left. *34.14.* &c. They talke of vanitie euery one with his neighbour. &c. It followeth thē that the number of thē which keepe their ſoules, is very ſmal. If we deſire to be of this nūber, let vs obey the admonitiō, Keep thy tongue from euil, and thy lippes that they ſpeake no guile. It is of this kinde of keeping our mouth that Solomon ſpeaketh heere, as he himſelfe doth giue it to vnderſtande, ſetting raſhe ſpeaking & opening of the lippes, againſt keeping of the mouth: and oppreſſion againſt keeping of the ſoule: ſaying, but *he that openeth his lippes. &c.* Heere the lyars, periurers, falſe witneſſes, and ſuche wicked men doe ſee what rewarde they are worthy of, not only in this life, but alſo after this life. For as they which keepe their mouthes, doe keepe their ſoules,not onely for a time,but alſo for euer : euen ſo the wicked and the vngodly lippes ought too bee puniſhed in this worlde. The hiſtory alſo of Suſanna doth witneſſe it. And if in time they come not to repentance,let them looke for eternal death. For the Lorde wil not holde him giltleſſe, that taketh his name in vaine. The ſlaunderers ſhal not inherite the kingdome of God. Kinges, Princes, and Superiours of the earth may learne a leſſon whereof they make no account, they haue their honour and excellencie in moſt high commendations : for they can wel tel howe to puniſhe them greuouſly which ſhall ſpeake againſt them,and do eaſily let paſſe the iniuries that are ſpoken and doone againſt God, not doing any puniſhmente therefore, or pay little. So doing they ſhewe thereby that they are puft vp with exceſſiue pride, and with a diueliſhe arrogancie : for they doe preferre them ſelues before God,and doe iudge them ſelues more worthie,and more excellent then hee : but finally, God ſhal finde them out wel enough, and ſhal wel mainteine his honour in puniſhing them, as they deſerue : euen as they are threatened therewith. Diuers greate Lordes haue well prooued, and ſhal feele that GOD reſiſteth the proude.

Leui.24.14.
Deut.19.16

1.Cor.6.10.

Pſal.2.4. & 82.6.

4 *The ſluggarde luſteth,but his ſoule hath naught: but the ſoule of the diligent ſhall haue plentie.*

There are ieſters and idle bodies,who making no account of giuing themſelues vnto good and neceſſary workes, doe giue themſelues to followe fooliſhe and vnprofitable deſires and pleaſures : and yet for to ſeeme pleaſant & mery,they are not aſhamed to pronounce that they woulde not giue their pleaſures for a great ſumme of money. Such folke are muche vnprouided and voide of good ſenſe and ſounde indgment, when againſt their conſcience and affection,they reiect by worde that which God hath created for the vſe of men, and contrarily doe eſteeme and prayſe that whiche God hath forbidden in the tenth commandement of his lawe,Thou ſhalt not luſt. In this manner,they doe more eſteeme their fantaſies,which doe nothing profite,then the liuing God,who giueth vs

al things

all thinges aboundantly for to vſe. For this cauſe they wel deſerue for to bee brought into extreeme and vtter neceſsitie, and to haue nothing wherewith to mainteine themſelues in this life, but to bee in continual and miſerable ſorowe al the time that they haue to dwell in this worlde. Solomon doth threaten thē with ſuch miſery, ſaying, *The ſluggarde luſteth, &c.* Hee hath already diuers times vſed the like threates. It is a thing very infamous and reprochable, for to liue in idleneſſe, as wee doe iudge al naturally. For albeit that naturally wee loue wel to doe nothing, and that after the fleſhe wee thinke thē happy that haue wherewithal to liue without doing any thing, yet if wee haue men ſeruants or maide ſeruants, or iourney men for to doe our buſineſſe, except they labour diligently, wee wil not looke cheerefully vpon them, they vexe and greeue vs, and wee cannot bee pleaſed with them: and that is chiefly becauſe wee loue our profite, and doe feare to bee hindered: but heerewith wee haue an agreement that man doeth naturally deteſt ſlouthfulneſſe. But it is not ſo much, neither ſo as wee ought. For we do not abhor it in our owne perſons, but ſo far as we feare to die for hunger, or to become poore and beggers. Solomon doth ſomthing ſignifie this feare by the worde of *luſting:* and when he doth threaten that this feare ſhal come vpon vs, if we be ſlouthful, when he ſaith, *But his ſoule hath naught,* The ſlouthful are heere threatened with pouertie and bodily want, & temporal ſcarcitie, the which is very hard to beare: but yet it is nothing in compariſon of the ſpiritual hūger, wherewith foloweth the depriuation of eternal riches, wherewithal the ſlouthful ſhalbe takē, which haue nothing eſteemed the threateninges of Solomon, and chiefly they that haue made no account of gathering the ſpiritual ſeede of the word, which is the foode of life. To them alſo chiefly do the threatenings belong, and vpon them are they put in execution, not onely in this life, but more miſerably in the other. For if God doe not eſteeme them worthy of this preſent life, and the riches thereof, much leſſe will hee counte them worthy of eternal riches. And ſo the ſoule of the ſlouthful which make none account of their duetie, ſhal haue naught: for it ſhal bee depriued of temporal riches, and of eternall and heauenly. It is not then without cauſe that Solomon laboureth ſo often to awake vp the ſlouthful by ſuch threatenings, whē he ſeeth them in ſo great danger. The

Pro.6.50.11 &.10.4.& 12.27.

care

eare that Solomon hath ſo often to threaten the ſlouthful, ſhal profite them that amend, and ſhal make the vnrepentant more vnexcuſable. Now that ſuch threates ſhould not be executed againſt vs, let vs take heede to turne away from ſlouthfulneſſe, and to occupie our ſelues diligently in labour, euery man according to his vocation. So doing, our ſoule ſhal want nothing, but wee ſhal haue ſuch aboundance of riches, that we ſhal be contented. Solomon doeth promiſe vs it, ſaying, but the *ſoule of the diligent. &c.* As heeretofore hee hath promiſed, that hee might print it ſo muche the more into our wits, and for to confirme it more vnto vs, and to make vs more certaine of the goodneſſe and liberalitie of God towardes vs: and that being ſo aſſured, wee may bee more enclined to giue our ſelues vnto labour according to our vocation, & after as we vnderſtande to be his wil. Wee wil therefore giue our ſelues vnto labour, according as God hath ordeyned it by his worde, and as it hath bin handeled here before, and wil diligently doe our worke, not by deſire of enriching our ſelues, and keepe backe to our ſelues what God ſendeth vs, without making our poore brethren and members partakers thereof with vs. This is not the wayes to abounde and increaſe in riches, nor to make our ſoules fatte, as Solomon doeth ſhewe it. If wee obey vnto his admonitions, our ſoules ſhall not onely haue worldly and temporal plentie, but alſo after this life, they ſhal fully enioy heauenly and eternal riches. For the Lorde doeth not promiſe vnto his faithful people earthly riches in this life, for to forſake them afterwardes, and to ſuffer them miſerably to periſhe. &c.

Pro.11.24.
25.
2.Cor.9.6.
Gal.6.9.
1.Tim.6.17.

5 *A righteous man hateth lying woordes: but the wicked cauſeth ſlander and ſhame.*

If we wil be certaine in our conſciences that wee bee righteous, and alſo to giue true witneſſe of our wiſedome and honeſtie before men, that they may bee edified, and that we be no offence to them, ſo much as we can, we muſt abhorre lying: as Solomon doth ſhew vs, ſaying, *But the iuſt man hateth lying wordes*. There is none of vs, but hateth to heare lying, and chiefly when lying bringeth vs any hurt, either to our body, to our goods, or to our name. Such hatred doth not proceed of feare that wee haue to ſinne, but of feare that

85

that wee haue to ſuffer loſſe : and therefore ſuche hatred cannot make vs certaine, nor our neighbours, that wee be honeſt men: but therein for to haue and to giue a certentie, that wee are honeſt men, wee muſt hate our ſelues, in aſmuch as we are enclining naturally to lying, according as the Scripture witneſſeth it : ſaying, That euery man is a lyar : & as we of our nature do lye, euen ſo alſo are wee ready to beleeue lying, and loue to heare lyes, ſo that we thinke therein is no hurte nor hinderance : we delight to heare our ſelues praiſed, and wel ſpoken of, and to be flattered in ſlaundering, and in euil reporting of our neighbonrs, whome wee hate. Nowe as in two ſortes wee loue lying, and heereby haue a witneſſe that we are wicked and vngodly, and alſo for to haue a certaintie: that wee are righteous and honeſt men, we muſt hate the wordes of lying after twoo ſortes, ſo that wee ſhoulde feare to pronounce it with our mouth, and to receiue it with our eares. Albeit that al faythfull and true Chriſtians ſhoulde be thus diſpoſed and affectioned to folow the third & nienth commandement. For for obſeruing of them well, wee muſt not onely beware to abuſe the name of God, and to lye againſt our neighbours, but wee alſo ought to procure that none ſhould abuſe this holie Name, neither ſpeake euil of his neighbours. But, I ſay, that this ſame belongeth vntoo al Chriſtians, yet chiefly vnto the Miniſters of the worde to pronounce trueth, and to abhorre the declaring of lyes: and to the Magiſtrates and Iudges not to receiue falſe accuſation. So doing, the Miniſters ſhal not ſeduce the people by falſe doctrines, as doe the Friers and hypocrites: neither wil the Iudges pronounce wicked ſentences. But ſith that the Scripture doeth attribute righteouſnes vnto them that hate the worde of lying, wee muſt inferre thereupon, that the number of the righteous is verie ſmal, and almoſt none. For it is ſaide, Helpe Lorde. For there is not one godly man left : for the faithful are nouriſhed from among the children of men. We conclude alſo, that wee can not be iuſt, except wee doe violence to our nature, which is enclined to think and to ſpeake lyes. If we let looſe the bridle vnto our tongue, according as it is drawne and driuen by the natural inclination of man, wee ſhal winne nothing to thinke our ſelues iuſt, and to pronounce that we are honeſt men. Solomon by

Pſal.116.11

Exo.23.1.

Pſal.12.1

by the ſpirite of trueth doeth pronounce vs to be wicked : when he ſaith, *But the wicked deuiſeth ſlaunder.&c.* This is not to ſay, that wee muſt not accuſe them which leade a wicked life. Beſides this, let vs note firſt of al, albeit that though one feeleth himſelfe to bee ſlaundered, hee wil make ſo great a matter of it, as to thinke it laweful for him to ſmite and kil him that hath diffamed him, notwithſtanding the greateſt parte of the worlde doeth not eſteeme it to be any great offence to ſlaunder their neigbours : experience alſo doeth ſhew it, when the worlde alwaies hath beene and ſtyll remaineth ful of lying, flatterers, detractours, & falſe witneſſes, which haue laboured and ſtill do labour to ſlaunder the good & righteous chiefly, as haue Ioſeph, Moſes, Dauid, the Prophets, Ieſus Chriſt, and his Apoſtles beene, and nowe the poore faithful ones doe feele it. Heere may bee ſeene that the iudgment of the worldlinges and carnal, is firſt of al corrupted, in this, that they iudge the ſlandering of their neighbours ſo lite and ſmal a matter: and if they be ſlaundered, they counte themſelues ſo greatly offended, that they think it to bee lawefull for them too kil them that haue miſſeſaide and backebitten them. Afterwardes they are filled with crueltie, when they ſlaunder the iuſt and innocent. Secondly, let vs note, ſithe that they which miſſereporte their neighbours that are but duſt and aſhes, are pronounced wicked : by a more ſtrong reaſon they that ſlaunder GOD ſo farre as they can, are to bee eſteemed moſt wicked : but when wee cauſe men to make amendes for the diſhonour they haue doone to their neighbours, and not to GOD, they wel ſhewe that they honor more the creature then the Creator. Thirdly, let vs note that in this preſent ſentence we ought to behold the promiſe of life encloſed, for the faithful which hate lying, and ſpeake trueth, ſith that righteouſneſſe is attributed vnto them. Contrarily, that the miſſereporters are threatened with death, ſith they are called wicked. And ſo when we loue life, and abhorre death, we are heere exhorted to loue trueth, and to mainteine the ſame, to hate ſlaunderinges and diffaminges, and to procure the honour of our neighbors.

6 *Righteouſneſſe preſerueth the vpright of life: but wickedneſſe ouerthroweth the ſinner.*

Wee al deſire naturally to auoide hurt, and danger, and to bee
in ſafetie, aud to keepe our ſelues wel: but moſt commonly wee
knowe not howe, and by what meanes to preſerue our ſelues: as
wee may knowe it, ſeeing that many doe ouerthrowe and deſtroy
themſelues, willing to ſaue themſelues. Nowe that wee may not
bee of this number, and that wee knowe howe to preſerue vs, Solomon
doeth teache vs, when hee ſaith, *Righteouſneſſe preſerueth,
&c.* Heere hee teacheth vs no newe thing that we haue not ſeene,
Pr.11.4.5.6 But beſides that which is there handeled, wee muſt note firſt of all,
Eccle.7.21. that as our righteouſneſſe is in this worlde neuer without ſinne, euen
1.Iohn.1.8. ſo wee are neuer ſo perfect, but that wee may ſtill growe: for
during this life, howe right a path ſoeuer wee keepe, yet can it not
bee right vnto perfection. Otherwiſe, wee ſhould not neede to aske
Pſal.5.9.& Leade mee, O Lord, in thy righteouſneſſe: make me to knowe thy
25.4.&.25. wayes, O Lord: Teache mee thy way, O Lorde. The perfection
11. that God requireth of vs in this worlde is neuer ſuch, but that therin
may alwaies bee founde ſome thing to bee amended: neuertheleſſe
when wee walke in ſoundneſſe of conſcience, and with a free
hearte, without diſſembling and hypocriſie, in that hee commandeth
by his worde, imperfection is not imputed vnto vs. And this is the
cauſe wherefore the Scripture calleth vs vpright and perfect: and
alſo wee are ſo, ſith that God accepteth vs for ſuch. The Monkes &
Nunnes amōg the Papiſts do proudely brag of the ſtate of perfectiō,
which hath bin brought out of the diuels ſhop, the which giueth thē
to vnderſtande that they are not like other, and that in this eſtate
they deſerue not onely for themſelues, but alſo for them, that commend
themſelues to their prayers, & do good vnto their couēt. They
reſemble the Phariſee, but not in al things: for the ſame gaue almes,
and faſted, but theſe heere deuoure, ſo that they deſerue the
curſe. Secondly, Let vs note that if we wil bee wel preſerued, it ſufficeth
Luke.18.11 not to haue ſome beginning of religion, of holy conuerſatiō
Mat.23.14. and righteouſneſſe, but wee muſt continewe, and aſpire vnto perfectiō
without being weary. Whoſoeuer ſhal con[illegible]ew to the end,
ſhal be ſaued. And that we might learne to perſeuer, & come to perfectiō,
Ephe.4.11. the Lord hath ſet an order in his Church, to the which we
Col.1.25. muſt all obey. In following this order, S. Paul ſpeaking of the
2.Tim.3.16. Church ſaith, Of whō I am a Miniſter. &c. Al Scripture diuinely inſpired

ſpired, is profitable for doctrine. But what order ſoeuer wee holde in the Churche, it is not in vs to make vs perfect: this is the worke Phi.5.1.6.& 2.13. of God. Holding for certaine that hee which hath begunne a good worke in vs, wil finiſhe the ſame: it is God that worketh in you 1.Pet.5.10. both the wil and the deede. For this cauſe Saint Peter prayeth. But Phil.2.12. the God of all grace make you perfect. And albeit that this is the worke of GOD, yet it is not to ſay, that wee muſt bee negligent but careful for to aſpire vnto this perfection, in following S. Paul, Occupie your ſelues about your ſaluation. &c. Phil.3.12. And hee giueth an example to purſue and goe forwarde, when hee ſaith, not as though I had already atteined to it, eyther were alreadie perfect: but I folowe, &c. But for to come wel to the ende of this ſame, wee muſt haue loue which is the bonde of perfection. Collo.3.14. If wee doe not thus proceede, wee cannot bee preſerued: for we are void of righteouſnes, of faithfulneſſe, of integritie, and of ſound goodnes, wherein ſtandeth the perfection of ioy, and there is in vs nothing but wickedneſſe, frowardneſſe, and vnfaithfulneſſe, which leade men to deſtruction and perdition. Thirdly, let vs note that albeit wee ſinne continually, and without ceaſsing, and that wee muſt aske pardon for our ſinnes, confeſsing our ſelues guiltie of death and eternal damnation becauſe of our ſinnes: yet if it diſpleaſe vs to haue offended, and with true affection giue our ſelues to wel doing, the Scripture calleth vs not ſinners, for to condemne vs to deſtruction for our wickedneſſe: but doeth cal vs ſaintes, righteous, innocent, becauſe that God for our faith and repentance doeth accept vs for ſuche, not imputing vnto vs our faultes. Wherefore when the Apoſtataes and tranſgreſſours, (for to leſſen their ſins wherof they are reproued) doe ſay that wee are al ſinners, comprehending both good & euil, they lye falſly, and doe belie God and his ſcripture, and doe iniurie to the faithful, ſetting them in the ranke of them which for their ſinnes and wickedneſſe doe goe into deſtruction. When they ſpeake thus, they condemne them that GOD abſolueth by his worde.

7 *There is that maketh himſelfe rich, and hath nothing, and that maketh him ſelfe poore, hauing greate riches.*

Wee al come of one father, and of one mother, wee are al one fleſhe and one blood, and haue al our affections which tende to our profite: yet haue wee not al like affections, but diuers, and which haue diuers effects, according as it ſeemeth vnto euery one that hee ought to proceede for to make his profite, or to get honour, and to bee in reputation. For example of diuerſitie, or contrarietie of affections and effectes, Solomon ſaith, *There is that maketh himſelfe riche.&c.* Heere Solomon doeth declare vnto vs that there are ſome which are poore, ſo that they haue nothing, yet doe they bragge to bee riche, tending by ſuche diſſimulation to get credite, and authoritie, honour and reputation, and by ſuch meanes to finde men that wil lende them, and truſt them with their goods. So doeing, they are theeues and robbers, offending God and their neighbours. Contrarily, there are ſome which poſſeſſe great riches, and for feare they haue that men wil aske of gift, or to borrow (ſo cruel and churliſhe are they, hauing no pitie nor compaſſion of the needy) doe hyde their riches, and faine themſelues poore. Theſe ſame are little better then the other: for, aſmuch as in them lyeth, they hungerſtarue the poore, and cut their throtes. Heerein Solomon doth declare vs the abuſes of the worlde, that wee may learne that wee muſt not frame our ſelues like therevnto, and that wee ſhould take good heed leaſt ſuch deceiuers doe beguile vs. Neuertheleſſe it is lawful for vs, yea neceſſary, to make our ſelues riche, where wee are poore, not in heaping vp great treaſures vpon earth, as doe the miſerable and woeful couetous (for our Lorde doeth forbid it vs) but laying vp our treaſures in heauen, as wee are commaunded. For if wee haue any thing to diſtribute, wee wil not ceaſſe to become riche, if wee haue contentation, though wee haue but a little. For a ſmal thing that the righteous hath, is better then great riches of the vngodly. Wherefore let vs obey the Apoſtle, Let your conuerſation bee without couetouſneſſe. In this ſort we ſhal be as poore, and yet making many riche. Alſo, When wee are rich, it is lawful for vs, yea neceſſary to make our ſelues poore: not for feare to lende or to giue: but wee muſt followe the ſaying of our maiſter Chriſt, make you freendes of wicked mammon.&c.

Mat.6.19 20.
Luke.12.15. &.16.9.
Pſal.37.16.
Heb.13.5.
2.Cor.6.10.
Luke.12.15.

It remaineth that they which buy, be as though they poſſeſſed

not. Hee exhorteth vs to followe the readineſſe and willingneſſe of
the *Macedon* Churches, Commaunde the riche. &c. If in following 1.Cor.7.31.
the opinion of ſome, wee wil vnderſtande that Solomon by 2.Cor.8.7.
the firſt parte of this ſentence ſpeaketh of them that haue greate aboundance Tim.6.17.
of riches, and yet gouerne themſelues ſo euil that they
become poore and needy, and ſone indetted, there ſhal bee no inconuenience.
For wee ſee many of them which hauing aboundance
of riches, do not ceaſſe therefore to owe much, and that not
through exceſſe or greate ſuperfluous expenſes, but their riches doe
not proſper with them becauſe that God doth not powre foorth his
bleſſing vpon them, the which onely maketh riche. Contrarily, there
are ſome which haue nothing or very litle, but becauſe that through Pro.10.22.
the bleſſing of God they rule them ſelues wel, they haue enough
and contentation: according as Saint Paule ſaith, Truely godlines
is great gaine, if a man bee contented with that hee hath. Suche 1.Tim.6.6.
riches are muche more better then the more aboundant, the which
are poſſeſſed without confeſſing the bleſſing of God. To the ende
then that for all our pouertie, wee may bee rich, and haue no neede,
let vs confeſſe that the bleſſing of God is neceſſary for vs: and therfore
let vs aske of him, that hee woulde giue vs this day our dayly
bread. And let vs beleeue that it is he onely that gouerneth vs, and
giueth vs al things for to vſe. For then the giftes of God ſhal bee
profitable vnto vs, and wee ſhal vſe them rightly, and to our cõmoditie
and felicitie, when wee ſhalbe aſſured by faith that it is God
who gouerneth al things, & that we ſhal aske and loke for al things
that we haue neede of, of him.

8 *A man will giue his riches for the ranſome of his life: but the poore cannot heare the reproche.*

When wee heare Solomon ſpeake thus, let vs take good heede Math.5.14.
from blaſpheming as doe the Papiſtes, which ſay that we muſt ſatisfie 16.
for our ſinnes, and winne Paradiſe by our almes giuen too the
poore, and by diſtribution of our goods vnto the Churches and couentes
for to bee partakers with their ſuffrages and prayers, with
this goodly diuine ſeruice and with the workes of ſupererogation
of Prieſts and Monks. It is too horrible a blaſphemie, by the which

the Papiſtes doe deny the power and vertue of Chriſte his death &
paſſion, and aſmuch as in them lyeth doe aboliſhe the ſame: and no
thanke to them that al the worlde is not damned eternally, ſeeing
Actes.4.12. that there is no ſaluation in any other. &c. It ſeemeth wel at the
firſt ſight that Solomon woulde leade men to truſt in their riches, &
by a kind of ſpeache, to make them their God and Sauiour. But let
vs know that Solomon, neuer thought vpon any ſuch matter: for
the holy Ghoſt by whome hee hath ſpoken, doeth not contrary and
ſay againſt himſelfe. Nowe he attributeth vnto God the ranſome
Pſal.49.15. of life, but God wil redeeme my ſoule, O Lorde God foraſmuche
&.130.3. as wee haue gotten this bleſſing, neither by our power, wiſedome,
dignitie, nor riches, but by the meanes of the ſhedding of the precious
blood of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Eue͂ as the ſonne of man came
Mrt.20.28. not to bee ſerued. &c. But Chriſt being come an high Prieſt of good
He.9.11.12. thinges to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made
with handes, that is, not of this building, neither by the blood of
Goates and Calues: but by his owne blood entered he in once vnto
the holy place, and obteined eternall redemption for vs. Knowing
1.Pe.1.18.19. that yee were not redeemed with corruptible thinges, as ſiluer
and golde, from your vaine conuerſation receiued by the traditions
of the Fathers: but with the precious blood of Chriſt. For
Iohn.3.16. God ſo loued the worlde, that hee hath giuen his onely begotten
ſonne, that whoſoeuer beleeueth in him ſhould not periſh, &c. In
1.Iohn.4.9.10 this appeared the loue of God towardes vs, &c. Of this raunſome
Iohn.3.16.& and deliuerance wee are made partakers by faith. Let vs then
5.24. knowe and learne that Solomon doeth not heere ſpeake of this
Rom.3.24.25. raunſome, whereby the ſoules of the faithful are eternally redeemed:
1.Pet.1.5.21. but hee meaneth that if a man be taken in any miſdeede that
deſerueth corporal puniſhment, or that hee ſeeth him ſelfe in the
hands of his enimies, that deſireth nothing but his death, hee will
not ſpare his goods, if hee thinke that by them hee may eſcape
and ſaue his life. That Solomon meaneth ſo, he him ſelfe doeth
ſhewe, when againſt this, hee ſaith, *But the poore cannot heare
the reproche*. Becauſe, that in what danger ſoeuer hee is, or
what threatening ſoeuer that is made him, hee cannot redeeme
himſelfe for want of riches: it is ſaide, That hee heareth not the

reproche

reproch. Hee anſwereth not vnto the deſires of them which haue him in their power, that doe watch and chide him. Theeues and robbers doe chiefly ſeeke after other mens purſes, and for the moſt part the iudges of the earth are like vnto them: for they wil pardon greate theeues, and hang vp the ſmal. And thus wee may knowe that by their threateninges and reproches they ſay, bring, and yee ſhalbe abſolued, & ye ſhal redeeme your life: they that haue wherwith, doe heare reproche, but the poore which haue nothing, cannot obey. Let vs alſo then vnderſtand that Solomon teacheth not the riche that they ſhoulde deliuer themſelues by their riches from the puniſhment that they haue deſerued for their miſdoinges. Hee alſo teacheth not the poore to be rebels, neither to deſpiſe correctiō: but hee declareth vnto vs what often happeneth in this worlde. If any man wil vnderſtande that the riche are ranſomed, and that the poore do feare no exaction of them, there is no inconuenience. And heereof wee may learne that the poore which are contented and take their pouertie and lowe eſtate patiently, are in greater quietnes thā the rich which feele much more care & penſiueneſſe to heape riches together, and to keepe them: they are moſt what in feare of them, and in danger of their liues, except the theeues and robbers doe ſee that they can otherwaies come by them. But againe, ſeeing that the riche worldlings and carnal men haue their hope and truſt in their riches, therefore it is a great heauineſſe and trouble to be in feare of ranſoming and robbing.

Nowe for to auoide ſuch ſorow and heauineſſe, Let vs folowe this ſentence, Put not not your truſt in oppreſſion, nor in robbery. &c. After theſe worldly troubles, they which ſhal not haue obeied to theſe admonitions, ſhal haue eternal ſorow. Luke. 6, 16. & 1. Tim. 6. Iames. 5.

Pſal.62.10.
Mat.6.19.20
Luke.12.15.

9 *The light of the righteous reioyceth: but the candle of the wicked ſhalbe put out.*

When our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſaith, yee are the light of the worlde: and after doeth admoniſhe, Let your light ſo ſhine before men, &c, Hee firſt taketh the light for them to whome the

Math.5.14. 16.

charge is committed to teache the people, not onely priuately, but chiefly publikely. Secondly, for the care and diligence of teaching and by wholeſome doctrine, and by honeſt and good conuerſation. Suche light ought to reioyce their hearts to whome it is giuen: as Eſay doth ſhewe, How beautiful are the feete of them which bring tidinges of peace? Againe, O yee deſolate places of Ieruſalem bee glad and reioyce together, &c. Alſo our Lorde doeth ſhewe it, when hee ſaith, That you may glorifie your Father which is in heauen. For if wee glorifie God, it is with ioy and gladneſſe, neither can it bee otherwayes doone. Such light doth not much reioyce the worlde, becauſe it is giuen to wickedneſſe. Nowe this is condemnation, that light is come into the worlde, and men loued darkeneſſe more then light. This remaineth not onely where Popery is, but is alſo cōmon there where the Goſpel is preached. But albeit that whatſoeuer is ſaide, conteineth trueth, and ſerueth to edification: yet neuertheles, it is not in this ſenſe that Solomō ſpeaketh of light. The natural ſenſe of this place is, that Solomon ſpeaketh of the eaſe, proſperitie, and felicitie both of the righteous and wicked. Then when Solomon ſaith, *The light of the righteous reioyceth, &c.* wee wil take it after that ſorte, as wee tooke that the citie reioyced for the proſperite of the iuſt. Solomon then would ſay that the people is bleſſed, and that they ought wel to reioyce, amongſt the which honeſt men haue no griefe nor trouble, but are in ioy, reſt and proſperite. The holy Scripture doeth often vſe to ſhine, to lighten, brightneſſe and light in this ſenſe, as contrarily a man cannot long reioyce with eaſe, proſperitie and glory amongeſt the wicked, ſeeing they fall into deſtruction, Solomon doeth nowe ſignifie vnto vs this deſtruction, when hee ſaith, that the *lampe of the wicked ſhall bee put out.* Wherein wee muſt note that as by the light, the ſcripture ſignifieth ioy, glory, eaſe and proſperitie: euen ſo by darkeneſſe it ſignifieth the contrary. Let vs then knowe that though the wicked haue their eaſe, that they proſper & triumph, yet that al ſhal bee turned into miſery, calamitie and deſtruction: and therfore that we haue no greate cauſe of ioy, when we ſee the glory of the wicked in this worlde, no more then a candle is put out in a moſt darke night, or that the Sunne doeth looſe his light at high noone

Eſay.52.7.9

Iohn.3.19.

Pro.11.10.

Pſal.13.4. &.34.6.& 56.9.

Eſay.30.26. &.60.1.

Pro.1.34.32 &.2.22.& 4.19. &.10.25.27 28.30.

noone tide. Moreouer let vs note, that if the Kings and Princes of the earth wil ſhewe them ſelues righteous as they ought, they muſt in their triumph and proſperitie, labour to make their ſubiects glad, in mainteining good pollicie, not committing any exactions for to ſerue their deſires and luſtes, but to folowe what is taught them by Moyſes, the Prophetes and Apoſtles: and chiefly for to reioyce the poore faithful. For wicked and diſſolute perſons reioyce not at good order, but when thinges are in confuſion. They loue to ſinne in troubled water. And as ſuch is the duetie of Kings and Princes, ſo likewiſe ought ſubiects to reioyce, when their Lords do proſper: & ought to ſing with their heart. Finally when he ſaith, *But the candle of the wicked, &c.* Let vs learne that we are taught, how we ought not to flatter the wicked, howe high ſoeuer they be, and what proſperitie ſoeuer they haue, nor enuie their wealth and felicitie. Otherwiſe our Candle ſhould be put out. For they which conſent to euil, are worthie of death, &c.

Pſal.35.6. Eſay.13.9. 10.& .60.2. Eze.32.7.8. Ioel.2.2. 10.31.& 3.15.

Pſal.20. & 21.

Rom.1.31.

10 *Onely by pride doeth man make contention: but with the wel aduiſed, is wiſedome.*

It ſeemeth to our ſelues that we are of ſo good a nature, that we deſire nothing more then to gouerne vs wiſely, in peace, vnitie, and concord one with an other: and doe iudge it great fooliſhneſſe to doe otherwiſe. But ſo long as we ſuffer our ſelues to be ruled after our owne nature, it can not be but there muſt needes bee ſtrife and debate: and chiefly when things are not done after our deſire. For we are ſo proud, and we think our ſelues to be ſo wiſe, that we would haue al things to come to paſſe, and be done after our fanſie. If the contrarie happen, according as we think we haue credit, power and authoritie, we are readie to drawe out our ſword, or els to braule and rayle, or els to conſume our ſelues by lawe: if this proud and arrogant eſtimation that we haue of our ſelues, were caſt farre from vs into obliuion and forgetfulnes, and that we did walk in humilitie and true wiſdome, no ſtrife ſhould be rayſed amongſt vs. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying, *Onely by pride*. And foraſmuche as by pride is mooued contention (the which proceedeth of hatred and for want of loue) it followeth that pride doeth beget hate and

Gen.4.5.8. enuiouſnes, and thereby is loue quenched. Through pride Cain became angrie with his brother Abel becauſe hee pleaſed God: and
thereby forgetting the loue that hee ought vnto his brother, hee
conceiued a deadly hatred againſt him: wherevpon hee mooueth
contention, and killeth him. Let vs know therefore, that al proud,
hateful and contentious perſons, are the ſeede of Caine: and as the
true faithful which folowe the humilitie, the ſoftneſſe and loue of
Chriſt are called Chriſtians, and are ſo in deede, euen ſo the proud
doe deſerue to be called Cainiſts, as they are. And therefore as God
reſiſted Caine, curſing and reiecting him: euen ſo doeth hee reſiſt
1.Pet.5.4 the proude. I haue ſaide to the fooliſhe, bee not ſo fooliſh: and
Pſal.75.5. to the wicked, ſet not vp your horne, &c. But God is Iudge, &c.
Luk.1.51. And the virgin Marie ſayeth, Hee hath ſcattered the proud in the
imagination of their hartes. Therefore as wee abhorre Caine, let
vs alſo not become Cainiſtes, leſt wee bee reiected of God: let vs
forſake al pride, hatred, contentions, and debates, walking in humilitie, loue, vnitie, concorde and peace. Euen ſo dooing wee ſhal
Mat.5.9. not be of the ſtocke of Caine, but the true children of God. Bleſſed
Ephe.5.1. are the peacemakers, for they ſhalbe called the children of God. Let
Phil.2.1. vs be folowers of God. For to ſhewe our ſelues rightly ſuche, let vs
folowe Saint Paule. For to turne our ſelues from pride as it
behoooueth, and ſhun contention, for to walk in true humilitie, & to
liue in peace according as the ſcriptures before alledged doe teache
vs, we muſt not become blockiſh & beaſtly, neither fooliſh & voide
of vnderſtanding, but we muſt be wel aduiſed and indued with wiſdome. Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when againſt that which hee hath
ſaid he addeth, *But with the wel aduiſed there is wiſedome*. The
proude do iudge & thinke thẽſelues to be wiſe ynough, & therfore
they would that al things ſhould be done after their wil & fantaſie,
and they wil the ſooner contend, as things are not done according as
they ymagine, wherein they ſhewe themſelues to want wiſedome,
and doe declare their furious and madde follie, when they are eaſie to beginne contention and ſtirre vp ſtrife. But they which ſuffer themſelues to bee counſelled, and doe delight to folowe good
counſel, are indued with wiſdome, whereby they are gouerned vnto humilitie, and thereby do they fly contentions & debate, ſeeking

nothing but peace, friendſhip and concord with al men, ſo much as they poſſibly can, without offending God. This humblenes ought to be folowed of al men, hauing one minde towards one an other, &c. Notwithſtanding this is not to ſay, but that euerie man by good aduiſement and wiſedome ought to labour for to holdfaſt the degree whereto hee hath bene called and appointed of God, yet without vnbrideled luſt, and without affection to rule, but ſo farre as is expedient for to doe his duetie well. It is not without cauſe that wee make mention of the calling and appointment of God, and that we caſt away the vnbrideled deſire and affection to rule. For firſt of al, it is not lawful for vs to take in hande to maintaine our ſelues in any degree, except the Lorde hath called vs theretoo, and if our eſtate be not according to his wil, the which is declared vnto vs by his worde. Saint Paule doeth wel ſhewe it. Therefore when the Pope and his Clergie haue no calling of God, it rightly foloweth, that they fooliſhly and proudly doe proceede to mainteine their degrees : the fruites whereof are ſeene : that is, that the kingdome of the Pope is filled with contention and brawlings, as experience declareth. The Monks ſeeme to thẽ ſelues to be very humble, and yet they walke in pride. Likewiſe are their cõuents ful of enuy, iniuries, contentions, and debates : One order and ſort of Monkes againſt an other, for to mainteine their Lordſhip and high dignitie. Secondly, the Kings of the earth for to ſatisfie their greedie deſire, and exceſſiue affection to rule, doe ſet the world in trouble through warres and ſhedding of blood.

Rom.12.18

1.Cor.7.20
Ephe.4.1.

Col.2.18.

11 *The riches of vanitie ſhal diminiſh : but hee that gathereth with the hand, ſhal increaſe them.*

Albeit, that Solomons intent is not here to teach vs howe wee may heape vp great riches together, yet wee ſhal not want, but ſhal abound in wealth, we if wil beleeue him. Hee ſaith firſt of al, *That the riches of vanitie, &c.* By the which hee laboureth to turne vs away from prodigalitie, the which hee calleth vanitie, and that rightly : for hee that ſpendeth his goods more exceſſiuely then hee ought, doeth followe vanitie : ſeeyng that ſuch expences doth nothing profit either his bodie or his ſoule: as it is eaſie to be knowne, and the prodigal doe alſo feele it. For if the prodigal for his owne pleaſure doeth commit exceſſe, his minde thereby is corrupted and made beaſtly, and his bodie made more heauie and more ſubiect to ſickneſſe: and conſequently, more neere vnto corruption. Moreouer, howe honourable ſoeuer the prodigal is, if he ſpend exceſſiuely, the ſame ſhal nothing profit him, as Solomon doth wel ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, *That riches ſhal diminiſhe*. Luk.15.13 The prodigal Sonne ſpoken of in Luke hath prooued it to be true; and nowe alſo the gluttons and drunkards, the daintie and ſugred mouthes doe alſo feele it. But albeit that vanitie doeth ſignifie prodigalitie, yet is it not to ſay, that it is an incōuenient thing to ſtretch vanitie further, and to take it for al wayes and meanes by the which a man commeth vnto pouertie, as are ſlouthfulneſſe and idleneſſe, Pro.6.6.& 10.3.& 13.4 and alſo couetouſneſſe. And if vanitie which doeth diminiſh temporal riches, ought to be auoided, much more ought the ſame to be fled that doeth depriue vs of the heauenly inheritance, which is euerlaſting. Therefore wee muſt be careful to flye away from all that that may hinder vs from receiuing of the Goſpel, which is the power of God to ſaue vs, and maketh vs inheritours and poſſeſſours of the heauenly and eternal riches.

Secondly, for to ſhewe vs howe we ſhal abounde in wealth, hee ſaieth, *But he that gathereth with the hand, &c.* Here he exhorteth vs to worke, and doeth promiſe vs that wee increaſe if wee wil labour, and get our bread by good, profitable, and neceſſarie works, the which hee meaneth by the hande: as wee may vnderſtande it, Pro.12.11. & 13.4. when hee ſetteth the hande againſt vanitie. Solomon hath made vs the like promiſes heere before. Thus we learne, that by flying of vanitie, and doing ſome woorthie and excellent worke, it is lawful to gather riches together: but we muſt take heede we ſet not our heartes vppon them, otherwiſe, it ſhal not be to gather with the hande, but with vanitie: for it is great vanitie for a man to occupie himſelf with greedineſſe and couetouſneſſe. As Dauid ſaith, Psal.39.6. Doubtleſſe man walketh in a vaine ſhadowe, and diſquieteth him ſelfe in vaine: hee heapeth vp riches, and can not tel who ſhal gather them. Againe, I turned, and ſawe vanitie vnder the Sunne. There is not Eccle.4.7. onely vanitie in ſuche labouring, but alſo great crueltie: for they which gather couetouſly, care leaſt to doe wrong vnto their neighbours, and alſo through hunger, to ſtarue and kil them. For this cauſe are they called in the Scriptures theeues, robbers, and murtherers: and it is layde to their charge, that their handes are full of blood. Eſai.1.59. Amos.8.

12 *The hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart: but when the deſire commeth, it is as a tree of life.*

When Solomon ſaith, *The hope that is deferred, &c.* hee doeth ſhewe vs thereby that we haue great neede of patience, and chiefly in looking for the eternal riches. For by howe muche as the riches are more precious and more excellent, by ſo muche are men more vexed, whē they are long kept frō the poſſeſſion of that which is longed for and deſired. The worldlinges doe prooue this in their temporal riches: and the faithful doe feele it in the heauenly and eternal riches. Saint Paule giueth witneſſe thereto, and not onely the creature, but wee alſo which haue the firſt fruites of the Spirite, euen wee doe ſigh in our ſelues, waiting for the adoption, euen the redemption of our bodie. Rom.8.23. Againe, For wee know that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle bee deſtroyed, wee haue building giuen of God, that is, an houſe not made with handes, but eternal in the heauens. 2.Cor.5.1. Abraham felt this languiſhing, as hee doeth ſhewe vs, when a certayne time after that God had promiſed him, I wil make thee growe into a great people, hee complayneth, ſaying, O Lorde God euerlaſting, what wilt thou giue me? Seeing I go childleſſe. Gen.12.2. & 15.2. Dauid alſo declareth this his longing, in the 42. Pſalme, ſaying, As the Hart brayeth for the riuers of water, ſo panteth my ſoule after thee, O God. Pſal.42.2. The Saintes therefore in looking for that which they hope for, doe languiſhe and fainte, but ſo ſoone as they obteine their deſires, they waxe ioyful and are ſatisfied. Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, *But when the deſire commeth, &c.* Dauid alſo doeth expreſſe it, ſaying, *I wayted patiently for the Lorde, and hee enclined vnto mee, and heard me.* It is ſaide of Simeon, That hee wayted for the conſolation of Iſrael, *Pſal.40.1.* *Luk.2.25. 29.* *Haba.2.3.* *Hebr.10.36.*

ſrael, and the holie Ghoſt was vpon him. And when hee had receiued his deſire, hee prayſeth God, and reioyceth, and is ſatiſfied: as hee ſheweth by his Canticle. Nowe as the holie Fathers in their languiſhing were neuer vnpatient, ſo muſt wee doe the like, folowing that which the Prophet Abacuk ſaieth, For the viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the laſt, it ſhal ſpeake and not lye: though it tarie, waite: for it ſhal ſurely come, and ſhal not ſtay. Agáin, Ye haue neede of patience, that after yee haue done the wil of God, ye might receiue the promiſe.

13 *Hee that deſpiſeth the worde, ſhalbee deſtroyed: but he that feareth the commaundement, ſhalbee rewarded.*

Wee muſt not doubt that Solomon doeth not ſpeake here of the worde and commaundement of God, the which ſpeaketh to the world after diuers ſortes, as hee hath diuers Miniſters and ſeruants. He ſpeaketh to the peoples and nations by his Apoſtles, Euangeliſts, Paſtors and Doctors, which in the name of Ieſus Chriſt doe preach fayth and repentance, according to the holie Scriptures. He ſpeaketh by Kinges, Princes, and Lordes of the earth, when by holie lawes, ſtatutes and ordinances, they labour to guide their ſubiectes in iuſtice, and to cauſe them to liue peaceably and in true and holie religion. Hee ſpeaketh when fathers and mothers doe teach good manners vnto their children. Hee ſpeaketh alſo when euery man particularly doeth admoniſh or reproue his neighbour when it is needful. Finally, he ſpeaketh, when we labour through honeſt and holie conuerſation to edifie our neighbours. Whoſoeuer doeth deſpiſe the worde, after what ſort ſoeuer God ſpeaketh, ſhalbee deſtroyed, firſt temporally (as many haue tried it, and doe daily feele it.) Secondly, if there bee no repentance, there foloweth eternal deſtruction. The holie Scripture doeth ſhewe vs many examples therof, and alſo it is repleniſhed with threateninges againſt the contemners, whereof wee preſently haue one, when Solomon ſayeth, *Hee ſhalbe deſtroyed, &c.* The firſt Chapter hath the like threateninges. *Pro.1.24*

Contrarily, if wee gladly heare that which is ſaide vnto vs in the name of God, and by his authoritie, & that with true zeale of heart we endeuour to obey it, wee ſhalbe mainteined in good eſtate, and ſhal not periſhe. Salomon doeth here pronounce it, ſaying:

But hee that feareth the commaundement, ſhalbe rewarded.

Wherin let vs firſt note, that he ſaith not ſimply, he that feareth. For albeit that the contemners are affrayde by the accuſation of their conſciences, and that they tremble and feare, when the worde and commandement is preached vnto them, yet they ceaſe not to periſhe: for they feare not the commandement wherein is promiſed rewarde, but they feare the paines and torments. Therefore if we deſire to be rewarded, let vs feare, not the paine, but the commaundement, forſaking euil, and applying our ſelues willingly vnto goodneſſe: becauſe the commandement is holie, iuſt, and good. This is the feare that our God demandeth, Gather the people together vnto mee, &c. that they may feare me. And nowe Iſrael, what doeth the Lorde thy God aske of thee, but onely that thou ſhouldeſt feare him? They that ſhal haue this feare, ſhalbee rewarded with euerlaſting bleſſednes, which is a rewarde not of merite, but of grace and liberal goodneſſe. Secondarily, let vs note, that if wee wil vnderſtande this ſentence of the ſayings of Kings and Princes, they ought to learne heere, that their office is to roote out the wicked, and to ſet good men at reſt: for we may alſo expounde the laſt woorde of this ſentence by, To obteine peace.

Deut.4.10 & 10.12.

Mat.24.25.

Thirdly, let vs note, that the worde, Worde, after the Hebrewe phraſe, doeth ſignifie a thing: and after this ſignification, wee may ſay, that hee ſhalbe deſtroyed, which deſpiſeth the thing that is committed vnto him.

14 *The inſtruction of a wiſe man, is as the wel ſpring of life, to turne away from the ſnares of death.*

As the man which fainteth for want of drinke, if hee meete with a fountaine of water, and drinke thereof, doeth ſlake his thirſt, and is ſo quickened, that hee is out of danger to dye by thirſt: euen ſo when wee haue Lords and gouernous which do their duetie in politike gouernement: when fathers and mothers are carefull of their families as behoueth: and when the Paſtours of the church doe employe themſelues diligently vnto wholeſome doctrine: then haue wee wiſe men, whoſe admonitions, counſelles and corrections if wee receiue, then doe wee drinke of the fountaine of liuing water, the which wil preſerue vs from death, and wil quicken vs, when by ſuch inſtructions the holy Ghoſt woorketh in vs, ſanctifying and making vs obedient by faith and repentance. For without the working of the holie Ghoſt, inſtruction is dead, and is deadly to them to whom it is offered, when they doe not willingly receiue it. Solomon doeth exhort vs to drinke of this ſpring and fountaine, when hee ſayeth, *The inſtruction of a wiſe man, &c.* For to drinke rightly of this fountaine, let vs reſort thither whither Eſay calleth vs, ſaying, Al yee that bee athirſt, come to the waters. Therefore, for to receiue well the inſtruction of the wiſe, and to be refreſhed, and to auoyde the ſnares of death, wee muſt come vnto Ieſus Chriſt, that hee may make vs partakers of the graces and giftes of his Spirite, teaching vs by the doctrine of his Goſpel. For as wee are corporally nouriſhed with bread, wine, milke, and water: euen ſo ought wee to vnderſtande, that our ſoules are ſuſteyned with the doctrine of the Goſpel, with the holie Ghoſt, and other giftes of Ieſus Chriſt: and are ſo nouriſhed and ſuſtayned therewith, that wee ſhal neuer neede any thing. If thou knewest the gift of God, &c. Againe, whoſoeuer drinketh of this water, &c. If any man thirſt, let him come to mee, and drinke, &c. Ouer and beſides this, let vs note firſt of al, that they which take vpon them to inſtruct others, ſhoulde bee wiſe, that no man may reprooue or blame them, Thou which teacheſt an other, teacheſt thou not thy ſelfe? And they muſt be wiſe, not as Turkes and Papiſts, which thinke them ſelues verie wiſe, when they are verie diligent to publiſhe humane doctrines and diuelliſhe traditions, by the which they ſeduce the heartes of the ſimple, and ſo doe drawe them to death, and doe not quenche the thirſt of the people, with the

Eſai.55.1.

Ioh.4.10. & 7.37.

Rom.2.21.

the ſpring of life: they are not adminiſtratours of the waters of this liuely ſpring, but they leade the people to a forſaking of the liuing God, which is the fountaine of liuing water: but they muſt folowe the wiſedome of Moyſes, of the Prophetes and Apoſtles, of good iudges and kings, which haue miniſtred this liuely water. Secondly, let vs note, that where there are no wiſe men, there is no ſpring of life, but al are ſnared in the nettes of death. Whereupon wee may vnderſtande, howe greate the miſerie is wherein the Turkes and Papiſtes are: and to conſider, howe much more miſerable are they which haue wiſe men, and do deſpiſe them. They are more miſerable then they of Sodom and Gomorrha. *Mat.10.15* Thirdly, let vs note, ſeeing that the ſcripture doeth attribute ſnares vnto death, that it is not in our power to deliuer our ſelues from death, no more then it is in the power of a litle byrde to eſcape the net, when he is entangled therein. Let vs not boaſt our ſelues therfore of our free wil, as if thereby wee had the power to ſaue our ſelues. But when wee drinke of this ſpring of life, that wee taſte and *1.Cor.15.55* digeſt it, let vs knowe that it commeth becauſe that our Lord Ieſus *Pſal.124.7.* Chriſt hath broken the bandes of death. And therefore, let vs con- *Ephe.2.* feſſe this grace, and ſay, Our ſoule is eſcaped as a byrde out of the *Titus.3.* ſnare of the fouler. &c.

15 *Good vnderſtanding maketh acceptable: but the way of the diſobedient is hated.*

When Solomon ſpeaketh thus, it is not to ſay that there is any euil vnderſtanding: but hee ſo ſpeaketh to diſtinguiſhe it from the ſame that the worlde eſteemeth ſo much, the which is but fooliſhneſſe before God, and conſequently before them which are indued with the ſpirite of the Lorde. This hee doeth alſo for to make vs to loue it, and to induce vs to ſeeke it, ſeeing that naturally wee loue that which is good. Therefore when Solomon ſaieth, *Good vnderſtanding, &c.* It is aſmuch as if hee did ſay, Take heede yee order not your manners after the cuſtome of them which thinke that they haue vnderſtanding before the worlde. It doeth nothing profite, but to puffe vp men, and to cauſe them to diſpiſe their neighbours, and often to become angrie & enuious. But giue your ſelues vnto good wiſedome and vnderſtanding which wil not ſwel nor contemne other: it maketh the man of vnderſtanding, acceptable vnto his neighours, whome hee by his wiſedome doth admoniſhe and comfort, adminiſtring vnto them the helpes of ſaluation. Beholde howe good vnderſtanding getteth fauour, aſwel to him that poſſeſſeth it, as alſo to the neighbours which are holpen thereby either ſpiritually, or corporally. Both of theſe may bee ſeene in Ioſeph and in Moyſes. And to the ende that wee ſhoulde knowe howe wee ought to gouerne vs after good vnderſtanding, Solomon doeth teache vs rightly wherein it conſiſteth, to wit, in faythfulneſſe, vprightneſſe and trueth, in gentleneſſe, eaſineſſe and ſoftneſſe. Wee may vnderſtande this ſame by the Antitheſis, when hee ſaith,

But the way of the diſobedient is hated. Againſt, good vnderſtanding, hee ſetteth, the way of the vnfaythful: and againſt grace or acceptation hee ſetteth heere ſharpenes or hatred. Whereupon wee may gather, what is ment by good vnderſtanding and that they which are indued therewith, ought to be acceptable vnto their neighbours, ſeeing that they become tractable, and are at their commaundement in what ſoeuer they can, as God willeth. Let vs alſo note that the vnfaithful and diſobedient can hardly counterfaite, for to bee founde honeſt men, and in the meane time to worke the deſtruction of their neighbours. And they which haue to doe with them, doe finde them harde, vngentle, ſtiffe, and cruel: and ſo their way is harde and hated both to them, and to their neighbours, which doe knowe their hypocriſie, diſſimulation, and fayning: albeit that they ſeeme to bee gentle, ſoft and gracious to the ſimple and vndiſcreete, and to their lyke. As contrarily the men of vnderſtanding which are ſoft and gracious to thē which loue wiſedome, doe ſeeme hated, harde and ſharpe vnto mockars and contemners.

16 *Euery wiſe man wil worke by knowledge: but a foole will ſpread abrode follie.*

Prou.12.23. Wee haue ſeene before, that the craftie or ſubtil man, doeth hyde knowledge, whereuppon it foloweth, that hee is indued with knowledge: and as hee is indewed therewith, ſo doeth hee alſo gouerne himſelfe thereby. Solomon doeth ſignifie this guyding & gouernement, when he ſaith,

Euery wiſe man wil woorke by knowledge. This knowledge is not the ſame, whereof Saint Paule ſpeaketh, Knowledge puffeth vp: but the ſame whereof Eſay ſpeaketh which wil not hurte: for the earth ſhalbee full of the knowledge of the Lorde, as the waters that couer the ſea. Whereunto wee are exhorted by Saint Peter: Ioyne moreouer vertue with your fayth: and with vertue, knowledge, &c. Solomon doeth wel ſhewe vs that hee ſpeaketh of ſuch knowledge, when hee ſaith, *But a foole wil ſpread abrode follie.* The fooliſhe are depriued of this knowledge: and therefore hee ſheweth his follie, proceeding in his affryres raſhly, without conſidering whither he doe wrong to his neighbours or no: it is ynough for him to bee ſeene and prayſed, and to gaine ſomething if it bee poſsible: neither doeth hee care to bee beloued, nor yet to loue his neighbours, but is ready rather to fight againſt them, if hee thinke that they hinder him to come to the ende of his enterpriſes. Heereby wee may know that there are very fewe wiſe men in the world, and that it is filled with the fooliſhe, not with ſuch as the worldlinges and carnal men doe count fooles (true it is there are fooles, about whome the mockers and ieſters doe take their paſtime, and make them, as it is ſayde, maygames: the world is but too full of ſuch fooles,) but of ſuch as are counted fooliſhe, and are abhorred of the worlde, their number is very ſmal. Bleſſed are yee which ſuffer perſecution for righteouſneſſe: &c. Againe, Bleſſed are yee when men reuile you, and perſecute you. &c. Heerein ſtandeth the true wiſedome, as Saint Paule doeth expreſſe, Let no man deceiue himſelfe. If any man among you ſeeme to bee wiſe in this worlde, let him bee a foole, that hee may bee wiſe. They which folowe theſe admonitions are the wiſe which rule themſelues by knowledge. And the greate wiſe men of the worlde with their great traine, are but fooliſh, for the wiſedome of this world is fooliſhneſſe before God.

1.Cor.8.1.
Eſay.11.9.
2.Pet.5.5.
Mat.5.11.
1.Cor.3.18.

17 *A wicked meſſenger falleth into euil: but a faythfull Ambaſſadour is preſeruation.*

When Solomon ſetteth *A wicked meſſenger*, againſt *a faythful ambaſſadour*, hee teacheth vs wherein wee may iudge the meſſenger to bee wicked, to wit, when hee doeth not giue himſelfe faythfully to doe the meſſage that hee is ſent for, and to execute the office that is committed vnto him. Solomon doeth threaten ſuch a meſſenger with the fal of euil, that is, hee doeth foreſhewe him a ſharpe and harde puniſhement, as hee doeth deſerue by his infidelitie and diſobedience, whereinto hee throweth himſelfe headlong either by ſet malice, or by negligence and contempt. And thus, there is a double fal: one, whereinto hee falleth headlong himſelfe, the which is cauſe of the ſeconde. Wee iudge that meſſengers or Ambaſſadours are wicked and diſobedient, when they breake or leaue out any parte of the commiſſion that is giuen vnto them by their ſuperiours and rulers, and that rightly they are puniſhed as traytours and vnfaythful. By a farre more ſtronger reaſon then, they which are ſent of God are to be counted diſobedient and traytors, when they neglect the meſſage of their Lorde: and conſequently, are very worthy to bee grieuouſly puniſhed, the which they can by no meanes auoide: as Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee ſaieth,

That A wicked meſſenger falleth into euill. Amongeſt the meſſengers and ambaſſadours of God in this worlde the principals, are Kings, Princes, Magiſtrates, Paſtours and Miniſters of the Churche: Wherein (if they doe not labour to doe their meſſage wel) puniſhement is prepared. As it hath beene ſaide, the wicked meſſenger doeth wel deſerue to fal into euil: for alſo, aſmuch as in him lyeth, hee hurteth his neighbours: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, ſaying. *But a faythfull Ambaſſadour is preſeruation.* Foraſmuch as hee attributeth preſeruation vnto the faythful *Ambaſſadour*, hee giueth cloſely to vnderſtande, that the wicked meſſenger bringeth death and is a murtherer, for the which cauſe it is good reaſon that hee ſhoulde fal into euil. The worlde is greatly filled with ſuch meſſengers, as wee

Pſal.2.9.12.
& 82.7.
Wiſd.6.6.
Eze.3.17.
&.33.8.
& 34.2.

may ſee by the multitude of decrees and wicked iudgementes that are pronounced and executed vpon the innocents. Alſo we may ſee it by the falſe doctrines which are ſowne by the hypocritical Fryers of the Popiſh Churche. For to knowe that Kings, Princes, Magiſtrates, and Paſtours of the Churche are meſſengers, let vs note that a man is called a meſſenger, when hee is ſent vnto any place, for to doe or ſay any thing: Wherevpon it right wel foloweth that wee may cal Kings, Princes, Magiſtrates, and Miniſters, the meſſengers of God, for they are ſent from him. And Saint Paule ſaith that powers are ordeined of God. And the ſcripture doeth cal them by a name, that ſignifieth not only an Angel, but alſo God. Euen ſo wee cal the Miniſters of the worde, the meſſengers of God: for they are ſent for to carry the meſſage of reconciliation: in this miniſtery, they ought to behaue themſelues faythfully and without offence. And conſequently al faithful men, euery one according to the charge which is committed to him, ought to behaue themſelues faithfully, with care and diligence, otherwiſe, we fal firſt into corporal euil, and afterwardes, into euerlaſting euil. Contrarily, they which haue faithfully executed their office: as they are healthful and ſerue for preſeruation to thē vnto whome they do ſeruice, euen ſo alſo they themſelues ſhal obteine health and preſeruation: they ſhal not fal into euil, but ſhal proſper. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, ſaying, *A faythful Ambaſſadour is preſeruation.* Wee do very willingly receiue and welcome and honour a good Phiſition, by whoſe arte and ſcience wee obtaine health: wee ſhewe him a cheereful countenance, and if wee bee able wee wil giue him giftes and preſentes, and doe wiſhe him felicitie and proſperitie. Therefore when Solomon doeth attribute preſeruation or health vnto the faythful Ambaſſadour, hee cloſely promiſeth him that hee ſhal not fal into euil: but that God wil keepe and ſaue him. And therewith alſo hee ſheweth howe the faithful Ambaſſadour, ought to bee receiued of men, yea with greater affection then the beſt Phiſition of the worlde: becauſe that the ſpiritual health is more precious and excellent then the preſeruation and health of the body. The Phiſitions of the body do ſo much as they can, to heale the bodies for a certaine ſpace of time: but the preſeruatiō & health that the faithful Ambaſſadours do bring, bringeth continual and euerlaſting life,

1. Pet. 2. 14.
Rom. 13. 1.
Pſal. 82. 6.
2. Cor. 5. 20.
1. Cor. 4. 2.
2. Cor. 6. 3.
Mat. 24. 45. & 25. 14.

if by fayth and obedience we receiue their ambaſſage. Now as there are fewe which gladly receiue the faythful ambaſſadour, euen ſo there are fewe which are preſerued and haue health in their ſoules: the faulte whereof lyeth not in the faythful ambaſſadours. The worldlings doe not feele their ſicknes and diſeaſe, & therefore they refuſe the faithful ambaſſadours, and ſo are loſt: and ſo much as in them lyeth, they make the meſſengers fal into euil, and no thanke to them, that they become not wicked and infidels. But albeit that the faythful ambaſſadours do bring preſeruation and health, yet ought they to acknowledge and confeſſe that they are nothing but organes and inſtruments, and that there is but one Phiſition Ieſus
Mala.4.2. Chriſt: of whoſe office looke Malachie chapter, 4.2.

18 *Pouertie & ſhame is to him that refuſeth inſtruction: but he that regardeth correction, ſhalbe honored.*

We do naturally feare pouertie, & would not be made a ſhame & reproche, but do greatly deſire to abounde in wealth, to be prayſed and honored. But we knowe not how to gouerne our ſelues for to flye & auoid that which we feare, and to obteine that which we would haue. And therfore our good God knowing what is needful for vs, and willing our good more then we our ſelues, hath by Solomon taught vs the way and meanes, to attaine to the true riches &
Pro.1.8.& 3 honors. Now againe he teacheth vs the ſame. Firſt of al, by a threat-
9.10.& 4.1. ning, ſaying, *Pouertie & ſhame is to him that refuſeth inſtruction.*
&.8.10.11.32 But the worldlings and carnal men doe nothing but mocke at ſuch threatenings: as they when they contemne the preaching of the worde, when they reiect al inſtructions, and ſay that we muſt turne our backe vnto GOD for to come to wealth and riches. The Lorde knoweth wel a fit and meete time to fulfil his threatninges, making ſuch riches to come to nothing, deliuering them to theeues and robbers, or elſe to conſume them by lawe, or by ſome other diſorder and euil gouernement: and thus hee bringeth the contemners of his woorde, which had a worldly harte, and was lifted vp in pryde, vnto pouertie, beggerie and extreeme neceſſitie: and in this manner hee bringeth them to ſhame, and are counted vile and contemptible, euen abhominable. If wee doe feare to bee threatened,

ued, and that in ſteade of refuſing inſtruction, wee take inſtruction, admonition, correction and reprehenſion thankefully, pouertie and ſhame ſhal flye farre from vs, and wee ſhal haue whatſoeuer is expedient and neceſſarie for vs. Solomon doeth ſignifie it by a promiſe contrarie vnto the former threatening, when hee ſaieth, *but hee that regardeth correction, ſhalbe honoured.* When hee ſetteth regarding of correction, againſt refuſing of inſtruction, hee doeth teache vs that to regarde correction, is to become attentiue, and to delight in the admonitions, inſtructions, and corrections, that GOD giueth vs by his woorde, euen in the chaſtenings and afflictions that hee ſendeth vs: according as wee are admoniſhed. Thus dooing, wee ſhal not want that which wee neede: ſeeing that GOD doeth offer himſelfe vnto vs as to his children, and doeth accept vs for ſuch, hee doeth honour vs, and wil for euer honour vs: Bleſſed is the man which abydeth temptation, &c. And when hee placeth honour, againſt pouertie and ſhame, hee giueth vs to vnderſtand that, to honour, is not a courtely reuerence with cap and knee, as is done vnto greate Lordes: but to bee honoured, is to bee wel counted of, and to haue his neighbours at his commandement, and to want nothing but that which may wel bee forborne, and which commeth not to a good ende. To honour, is taken in this ſignification. If ye wil haue examples of them which haue refuſed inſtruction, wee will ſet Caine, the worlde deſtroyed by the flood, Pharao, the ſonnes of Ely, Saule and Iudas. And they which regarded correction, were Abraham, Moyſes, Dauid, Iob, Ezechias, the Prophetes, and Apoſtles. Wee ſee by theſe examples what pouertie and miſery doeth come vnto thoſe which refuſe to receiue the woorde, for to learne to repent and amende their life: Moreouer wee ſee alſo what ſhame they haue gotten. Therefore let vs know, that if wee folowe them, wee ſhal come to the like ſtate. That we may auoid the ſame, let vs labour to folowe theſe good fathers, which haue beene ſo famous and renoumed: and wee ſhall bee their felowes, and partakers with them of one glory. And Saint Paule ſaieth, But to euery man that doeth good ſhalbe glorie, and honour, & peace, to the Iewe firſt, and alſo to the Grecian. And to them which ſeeke eternal life, glory, honour, and immortalitie of wel dooing.

Heb.12.5.
Ia.1.2.12.
Exo.20.12.
1.Tim.5.3.
Rom.2.10.

Let vs therefore take heede howe wee harden our ſelues againſt the ſpurre, and kicke againſt the pricke: let vs not deſpiſe the riches of Gods goodneſſe, &c. For to accompliſh it wel, let vs not deſire to haue Miniſters which wil ſpare vs, and flatter vs, ſpeaking ſweete & pleaſant things to our fleſhly deſire, & humaine reaſon: but rather let vs pray vnto GOD that hee woulde giue vs miniſters whoſe
Iere.1.9. mothes he hath touched, as he did to Ieremie, that they may feare
Eſay.58.1. nothing, but that boldely they woulde follow the commandement, Cry aloude, ſpare not, lift vp thy voyce like a trumpet, and ſhewe my people their trangreſſion, and to the houſe of Iacob their ſinnes.

19 *A deſire accompliſhed delighteth the ſoule: but it is an abhomination to fooles to depart from euill.*

When the wicked and vngodly think and iudge that they haue and enioy their pleaſures and deſires, they leape for ioy and exceed in all diſſolutions and inſolencies. I ſay expreſſly, when they thinke and not when they haue: ſith that all their deſires are wicked, the Lord doth not ſuffer them altogether to enioy them, as they would haue them. For with an vnbrideled licence they woulde take and giue leaue to themſelues to doe as they woulde euen to hurte an annoy the innocents: and ſo the poore faithfull ones which are weake in compariſon of them, ſhould haue no reſt nor peace. They would bring the Church of God to nothing, and woulde ſpoile him of his kingdome: And as they haue not the full poſſeſſion of their deſires, euen ſo alſo their ſoules haue not the true ioy, though they
Eſay.57.20. doe diſſolutely reioyce. If their ſoules had the true ioy, they ſhould
Pſal.37.12. haue peace and quietnes: the which they neither haue nor neuer ſhall haue: for the wicked are as the raging Sea, which cannot reſt.
1.Sam.9.2. The wicked practiſeth againſt the iuſt, and gnaſheth his teeth againſt him. A man might haue well ſaide of Saule whileſt hee was king, that he had, as a man might ſay, more then his ſoule coulde deſire, conſidering the degree whereunto he was called in the kingdome. Alſo a man might haue ſaide that Abſolom the ſonne of
2.Sam.15.1. king Dauid, had what his ſoule could deſire, ſeeing he had the heart of the people, in his fathers life time. But theſe people here (as wee may ſee by their proceeding) as they haue not had their deſire accompliſhed

complished, euen ſo haue they not had ioyful ſoules: as their ſorowful and miſerable ende hath wel ſhewed it. The deſires of ſuch and of their like tended to nothing but to euil and hurt: and therefore they came not to the ende of their enterpriſes. The Lord breaketh the counſel of the heathen, and bringeth to nought the deuiſes of the people. The wicked ſhal ſee it and bee angry: hee ſhal gnaſhe with his teeth and conſume away, the deſire of the wicked ſhal periſh. Moreouer Solomon doeth not heere ſpeake of the deſire of the wicked, when hee ſaith. *Pſal.33.10. & 112.10.*

A deſire accompliſhed, delighteth the ſoule: Hee himſelfe doeth ſhewe it by the Antitheſis, ſaying, *but it is abhomination to fooles, &c.* Wee may ſee that hee ſpeaketh heere of the deſires, thoughtes, enterpriſes, and deliberations of the wiſe, iuſte, and faythful men, who deſire aboue al things that God ſhould haue his kingdome in them and raigne in them. And to attaine to this, they labour to caſt of al infidelitie and incredulitie, al ſuperſtition and ydolatrie, and al euil affections againſt their neighbors, that they may walke in righteouſnes and innocencie according as Saint Paul doth admoniſh vs. The Lorde heareth ſuch deſires and thoughts: Lorde, thou heareſt the deſires of the humble, &c. In the fulfilling of theſe deſires, the faythful haue their delight. Put thou thy truſt in the lord and bee dooing good: dwel in the lande, and verilie thou ſhalt bee fedde. Delight thou in the Lorde: and hee ſhal giue thee thy hartes deſire. Moreouer the ſaintes being vnder affliction, deſire that it may pleaſe God to giue them ſome eaſe, and to deliuer them: as it is ſeene by their prayers and complaintes whereof the ſcripture is ful. Amongſt others: Turne thee againe (O Lord) at the laſt: & be gracious vnto thy ſeruantes. And when they feele that God is merciful to them according to their deſire, they are pleaſed: If the Lorde had not helped mee: it had not failed but my ſoule had beene put to ſilence. This ſenſe is true, but the firſt agreeth better with the Antitheſis to wit, that God delighted in the ſoules of the wyſe, iuſt & faithful men, when they are not ouercome of the temptatiō, which doeth ſtirre them to euil, but putting their truſt in the onely Lorde, doe giue themſelues to wel doing. Solomon doeth wel ſhewe that hee meaneth thus, when he ſaieth, A deſire accompliſhed delighteth the ſoule. Hee addeth againſt it, *But it is an abhomination to fooles*

Ephe.4.24. & 5.1. Col.3.8. Pſal.10.17. & 37.3.4.

Pſal.90.19. & 94.17.

to depart from euil. He ſheweth that the fooliſh haue neither feare of God, nor reuerence to his woorde: that they haue no deſire to doe wel, but do hate goodneſſe and them which folowe it: they loue wickednes and them which aſſiſt them to continue therin, and are companions with them in the ſame. Wee may plainely ſee this in the ydolaters and ſuperſtitions of the Papiſtes, wee may ſee it accompliſhed in the wicked, which paſſe nothing at all to committe wickedneſſe without number, and doe thinke and pronounce them to bee ignorant and without vnderſtanding which doe not as they do: we may ſee it in the perſecutors of the faythful, which doe thinke they offer ſacrifice and an acceptable woorke vnto GOD, when they ſlay the innocent. In this ſentence is the promiſe of eternal life encloſed, which is the perfection of their delight which haue truly ſet their affections and deſires to doe good: And thus wee are cloſely exhorted heere to folowe that which S. Paule doeth exhort vs to do: let vs then caſt away the works of darknes, &c. But I ſay vnto you, walke according to the ſpirit, &c. This is the wil of God, &c. The grace of God which bringeth ſaluation to al men hath appeared, and teacheth vs, that we ſhoulde deny vngodlineſſe, &c. Wherfore girde vp the loynes of your minde, &c. Deerely beloued, I beſeeche you as ſtrangers and pilgrims, abſtaine from fleſhly luſtes, which fight againſt the ſoule, &c. For aſmuch as Chriſte hath ſuffered for vs in the fleſhe, arme your ſelues likewiſe with the ſame minde, &c. Thus dooing wee haue life euerlaſting. There is then no condemnation vnto them that are in Ieſus Chriſt, which walke not after the fleſhe, but after the ſpirite, &c. Againe, For the wiſedome of the fleſh is death: but the wiſedome of the ſpirite, is life and peace, &c. In the ſeconde member of this ſentence is the threatening of death and eternal damnation threatened.

Rom.13.12.
Gala.5.16.
1.Theſſ.4.3.
Tit.2.11.
1.Pet.1.13.
1.Pet.2.11. & 4.1.
Rom.8.1.6.
Pſalm.5.5.

20 *He that walketh with the wiſe, ſhalbe wiſe: but a companion of fooles ſhalbe afflicted.*

There are ſome madbraines which deſire not to bee wiſe, and iudge it nothing but heauie ſtudie to learne wiſedome: and therefore wil heare no counſel: they ſcorne at al admonitions, and refuſe al corrections, and instructions, becauſe they woulde paſſe the time merily, and liue ioyfully. But if wee haue any ſparke of good vnderſtanding and ſounde iudgement, if wee had a ſetled and ſtabliſhed braine, wee woulde highly prayſe wiſedome, and deſire to bee partakers thereof. And becauſe for al the deſire that wee haue thereunto, wee knowe not howe to attaine it, Solomon hath often and diuers times exhorted vs to heare, and to receiue her woordes, her commandementes, inſtruction, counſel and correction. And not content heerewith, hee doeth inſtruct vs what our conuerſation ought to bee for to obteine wiſedome, when hee ſaieth, *He that walketh with the wiſe, &c.*

Let vs knowe that hee doeth not heere promiſe, that if wee dwell in one countrey or houſe with the wiſe, wee ſhall be come wiſe. Wee haue at all times ſeene the contrary in diuers, and ſo wee may ſee it ſtill. But he promiſeth vs, that if wee willingly do heare the wiſe, and receiue into our harts that which they teach and inſtruct vs, and that their company doth not grieue vs, but ſhall ſeeke it without diſſimulation, that we ſhal become wiſe, if we keep company, be friendes, and acquainted with the wiſe, and if we ſhall loue their doctrine, and that wee labour to be like vnto them. It is better for vs to becom the Schollers and Diſciples of the wiſe, then theirs of whome Eſay ſpeaketh. Woe vnto them that are wiſe in their owne eyes, and prudent in their owne ſight. If we become the Schollers of ſuch men, wee ſhall haue no vnderſtanding, and ſhall looſe the company of the wiſe, we ſhall learne of them nothing but pride and hypocriſie: through the which we ſhall become accurſed. And ſith that in this eſtate we are execrable, wee cannot but looke for grieuous affliction, from the which the ſchollers of the wiſe ſhalbe exempted, as Solomon doth cloſly ſignifie it, when he addeth *but a companion of fooles ſhalbe afflicted*. Wee muſt take heede from iudging after the ſight of our eyes. For ſeeing what hapneth dayly in the world, we cannot condiſcend vnto the opinion of Solomon. Fooles haue the rule of the world and doe proſper therein: they haue their eaſe, delightes and pleaſures: they haue glory and honour: they are in credit and authoritie, and abounde in wealth: and contrarily wiſe men want all theſe. Therfore we muſt open the eyes of our fayth, for to ſee and know that the felicitie of fooles is

Eſay.5.21. & 2.14. 15. 18.

of ſmal continuance: as hath bene often ſhewed, and that great deſtruction is prepared for them, from the which they cannot eſcape. Cōtrarily, let vs know that the ſuffrings of this preſent life are not *Rom.8,18.* worthy of the glorie to come. Therfore let vs not faint, but though *2.Cor.4.16.* our outward man periſh, yet the inwarde man is renewed dayly. Whē we were yet Papiſts we were thē felowes with fooles, who led vs to deſtruction for to bee afflicted euerlaſtingly: but now that the Lorde hath deliuered vs from this helliſhe companie, and hath called vs into the ſocietie of his Churche, it is our owne faulte, if wee doe not walke with the wiſe. Furthermore, they which haue ſome charge, or degree ought to learne to be wiſe, that their inferiours & vnderlings, their ſubiectes and ſeruantes which are vnder their ſubiection and gouernement, may become wiſe, and that both publikely and priuatly in houſes and families, wiſedome might ſhyne, and fooliſhneſſe bee rooted out. For as of fooliſhneſſe wee learne nothing but euil, ſo there can happen nothing but euil to them that folowe it. Wherefore, let euery man take heede to himſelfe, and that hee doe not lightly take familiaritie and acquaintance with all men indifferently: but that we labour to ioyne our ſelues with the beſt, by the cōpanie whereof wee may profit in goodneſſe, and we may be made better in thought, deſire and affection, in manners, woorkes and wordes. As Ionathas by the acquaintance and familiaritie hee had with Dauid, changed his manners to better: And king Roboam by walking with his yong counſellers, became worſe. For to take our profit of this preſent ſentence, let vs remember what is written: *1.Cor.15.33* Bee not deceiued: euil woordes corrupt good manners. *2.Cor.6.14.* Bee not vnequally yoked with the infidels: for what felowſhip hath righteouſneſſe with vnrighteouſneſſe? *Ephe.5.3.* But fornicatiō, and al vncleanneſſe, or couetouſneſſe, let it not bee once named amongſt you, as it becommeth ſaintes. &c.

21 *Al affliction foloweth ſinners, but vnto the righteous God wil recompence good.*

The wicked doe thinke, when they doe any thing ſecretly, or when they colour their malice for to hyde it, that none doeth ſee them: and therefore doe hope that no euil ſhal happen vnto them:

and though they commit euil openly, yet becauſe of their credite and power, they thinke that nothing ſhal hurt them, and labour to make them ſelues beleeue it is lawful for them to doe what they liſt: and for this cauſe thinke to be out of al danger. Againſt this falſe and vaine opinion, Solomon pronounceth, *That al affliction foloweth ſinners.* And this agreeth with the threateninges of the lawe. True it is, that according to the outward appearance and ſight of the eyes, we ſee not alwayes theſe threatenings executed: for the Lord doeth diſſemble for a certaine time, and in the meane while, the wicked inſteede of returning by repentance, doe harden themſelues and waxe obſtinate in euil, and inſteede of humbling themſelues by weeping and lamenting, they reioyce and are merry, ſeeing themſelues to triumph and proſper, and to haue rule in the worlde. But after ſome diſſembling and forbearing, the Lord putteth his threateninges in execution: as the children of Iſrael felt it in the wilderneſſe, and in the lande of Canaan: ſo alſo haue many wicked men felt it, and doe ſtil feele it. And Dauid alſo doeth wel ſhewe, that affliction doeth folowe the ſinner: and Eſai, Woe vnto them, that drawe iniquitie with cordes of vanitie, and ſinne, as with Carte ropes. Wherefore let the faithful take heede from enuying the proſperitie of the wicked, but be giuen vnto goodneſſe. And although it ſeemeth to bee in vaine that they labour to doe well, becauſe of the great and multitude of miſeries that they ſuffer, & that it ſeemeth alſo, howe God perſecuteth thẽ to deſtroy and condemne them, yet their wel doing ſhalbe recompenced, for God wil reward and recompence them. Wee haue examples thereof in Abel, Abraham, Iſaac, Iacob, Ioſeph, Daniel, Iob, &c. Wee haue the promiſes thereof: and Dauid doeth witneſſe the ſame of him ſelfe. And now Solomon promiſeth the like, ſaying, *But vnto the righteous God wil recompence good.* Let vs take good heede from thinking of any merite, or to conceiue that by our righteouſneſſe wee can binde God to yeelde vnto vs the good that hee oweth vs: for it is impoſſible that hee ſhoulde owe vs any thing. If a ſeruant or a ſlaue that is bought with the mony of his Lorde, dooing al the wil and commaundement of his maiſter, can not binde him to recompenſe him, much leſſe can wee merite towardes our Lorde, wee which

Pſal.12.5. & 64.6. & 99.3.
Eſa.28.14.15
Leu.26.
Deut.28.
Pſalm.37.1.
Eſay.5.18.
Leui.26.
Deut.28.
Pſal.18.17.

1.Pet.1.18.19 are redeemed not with corruptible things. Let vs looke vpon the ſimilitude of the ſeruant returning from his labour. Luke.17.7. And if the lawful and natural childe cannot binde his father to giue him any recompence of his labours, although they bee great, what can wee Ephe.1.5. deſerue of our heauenly father, who by his onelie grace hath ele- John.15.5. cted vs before the foundation of the worlde, and hath predeſtina- Phil.2.13. ted vs for to adopt vs vnto him ſelfe by Ieſus Chriſt, according vnto the good pleaſure of his wil? And if without Ieſus Chriſt wee can doe nothing: and that it is God that woorketh in vs both the wil and the deede euen of his good wil: what can wee pretende? Wherefore let vs humble our ſelues: and when it is ſaide that God wil recompence: let vs knowe that that which is recompenced, is not alwaies dewe, be it good or bad: as when we ſay, hee hath paide mee yll for good, and contrarily, he hath done to his enemies good for euil. Nowe if we ſpeake thus, we ought to vnderſtand that God ought to haue this credite with vs of ſpeaking of his gifts and graces in this manner, neither ought we to thinke it ſtrange: neither ought we to waxe proude for this kinde of ſpeeche, but to acknowledge that God of his only grace and mercy doeth recompence his righteouſnes in vs, wherewith hee hath indued vs, and whereby he hath done good workes. And let vs learne that the good which God doeth vnto vs after our good workes, is called, reddition, payement or rendring againe, recompenſe, or rewarde, becauſe it commeth after, and not that our workes are the cauſe thereof. Wee may nowe wel vnderſtand that the Papiſtes cannot alledge this text nor any other like too it for to builde their merites, and that they are deceiMat.7.17. ued through their pride. First of al in this that they woulde haue & 12.33. good workes to make a good man, as if the tree ought not firſt to be good, before it can bring foorth good fruite. Secondly, in this that they attribute goodneſſe and righteouſneſſe vnto the works which are nothing but abhomination before God, and are worthy of eternal fire. Thirdly, in this that they woulde make God for ſuch workes to ſtande bounde to giue them Paradiſe, from the which they goe backward, and fall into hel. That is, as if a ſubiect committed the horribleſt iniuries that he coulde againſt his Prince, to welcome him home, and yet woulde binde him to raiſe him vp to honour, and to make him riche.

22 *The good man ſhal giue inheritance vnto his childrẽs children: & the riches of the ſinner is layde vp for the iuſt.*

It is commonly ſaid that the third heyre ſhal neuer enioy thoſe goods that are wickedly gotten. And foraſmuch as wee deſire that our ſucceſſors, children, & cozens ſhould poſſeſſe thoſe goods that we ſhal leaue them, we muſt if we wil get goods, get them without ouermuch couetouſnes, & without a deſire to enrich our ſelues. If we do labour for them, let vs do it without deſire to hurt or hinder our neighbour, and let that which wee poſſeſſe, bee holden with good conſcience, being readie to diſtribute gladly of our riches vnto the needie, and alſo to forſake them, where it ſhalbee needful for the ſeruice, honour, & glorie of God, & to the edification and preſeruation of our neighbour. Thus doing, our goods ſhal not waſtefully bee conſumed, but both wee and ours ſhal haue a ſufficient aboundance. Solomon doeth promiſe vs this ſame, ſaying, *The good man ſhal giue inheritance vnto his childrens children.* Although there is none good but God onely, yet the ſcriptures fayleth not to cal him good, which God maketh partaker of his goodneſſe, giuing vnto him a right ſpirit, a ſounde and perfit conſcience, and a good affection to his neighbours, cauſing him to hate and abhorre al couetouſneſſe, ſpoyling, vſurie, fraude, diſceit and wicked trades: making him gentle, liberal, merciful and helpeful towardes them which haue neede. The man that is ſuch an one, ſhal obteine this bleſſing of God, that his children and cozins ſhalbe his heyres. The like bleſſing was promiſed vnto Abraham and vnto the other Patriarkes, vnto Dauid, and vnto al ſeruantes of God: I ſay expreſly that the good ſhal obteine a bleſſing of God: for albeeit it is ſayde, *He ſhal giue:* yet it is not to ſay, that it is in his power, or that hee can doe it of himſelfe: but becauſe that God hath giuen him wealth and alſo giuen him grace to vſe them ſoberly without waſting, the ſcripture doeth attribute to him, that hee giueth: and that as a miniſter and inſtrument of GOD: for that which is attributed vnto him, is the gift of God. Let vs not then folowe the arrogancie of the riche worldlings, which boaſt of making their children riche: but if we be rich, let vs acknowledge that it belongeth vnto GOD to giue our children the poſſeſſion of them after vs.

1.Tim.6.6.
Heb.13.5.

Gene.12.2.
& 13.15.
& 15.1.18
Pſal.132.11
& 102.28.

If hee

Dan.4.14. If hee doeth reigne ouer the kingdomes of men, much more ouer
that which is of farre leſſe importance. And albeit that diuers children
doe not enioy their fathers riches, yet neuertheleſſe ceaſeth
not the preſent promiſe to be true, and haue his effect. But foraſmuch
as it is ſaide, *The good man ſhal giue inheritance, &c.* Let
vs knowe, that that which hindereth children to inherite, is, either
that the father was not good, though hee appeared ſo before the
worlde, or if hee were good, that his children doe not folowe his
goodneſſe: and ſo before God are not counted the ſeed of the good
man: And therefore rightly doeth God depriue them of the inheritance,
giuing them ouer to bee ſpoiled, or vnto exceſſiue expences,
and vnto euil gouernement. Let vs therefore folowe goodnes, and
we ſhal not want an inheritance. The meeke, (as Dauid ſaieth) ſhal
Pſa.37.11.18 poſſeſſe the earth, &c. The Lorde knoweth the dayes of the righteous,
25.& 112.1. &c. Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lorde, &c. The
Lorde doeth truely performe his promiſes vnto his elect and faythful,
that they ſhoulde not want to periſhe. And by his free and liberal
bleſſing, and by his fatherly care he ſo prouideth for the families
of his, that before they haue neede, hee ſpoyleth the wicked of the
goods they occupie, or that they ſhoulde enioy according to the
world, and doth giue them vnto his ſeruants. Solomon doth ſignifie
Gene.15.5. it, when he ſaith, *and the riches of the ſinner is laid vp for the iuſt.*
& 17. 8. The Lorde doeth ſhewe this kindneſſe vnto Abraham, Beholde the
& 12.17. heauen, &c. After the order of nature, Eſau ſhoulde haue beene
& 25.23. his brother Iacobs Lorde and maiſter, and haue had the eldership:
1.Sam.13.13. but God kept it for the yongeſt and leaſt. Saule was elected king
14.& 15.11. ouer Iſrael, but for his fooliſhneſſe and wickedneſſe hee was rejected
& 16.12. of God, and Dauid anointed king. After this, wee may firſt
note, that what labour or care ſoeuer wee take for the wel diſpoſing
and ordering of our goods, and to keepe them, yet is it not in
our power to hold and keepe them, for to giue and beſtow them vpon
our children and nephewes. The bleſſing of God is neceſſarie &
required therein, without the which we do but looſe our labour to
Pſal.127.1. ſtudie to winne any thing. And therefore let vs not truſt to our
counſaile, ſtudie and trauaile: but wee muſt confeſſe that both
corporal and temporal riches are the giftes of GOD, and alſo
the poſſeſsion of the inheritance and holding thereof.

Our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doth well ſhewe it, when hee doeth teach vs to aske of our father, Giue vs this day our daily bread. We may learne then to aske of him that it may pleaſe him to keepe and preſerue them for vs. And if he ſuffer vs to be ſpoyled of them, let vs knowe that hee doeth it not without good and reaſonable cauſes: that is, eyther for our ſinne, or to prooue our patience, or for to teache vs too knowe that wee muſt not ſtay our ſelues vppon worldly riches.

Secondly, wee muſt note, that it is lawfull for fathers and mothers too keepe and lay vp in ſtore ſome riches for their children: but they muſt alſo be carefull too flie couetuouſneſſe. Thirdly, ſeeyng that the earth, and the contentes thereof is the Lordes, therfore it followeth that ſinners haue nothing in the worlde that properly belongeth vnto them, nor vnto thoſe which vſe the goodes of this worlde with a wicked conſcience. And therefore when Solomon doeth attribute any wealth vnto the ſinner, eyther hee ſpeaketh vnproperly, or after the iudgement of the worlde, which eſteeme the riches to belong vnto them which doe inioy them vppon the ſame title, to wit, that they are without fault before men. Fourthly, albeit that the lande is reſerued for the iuſt, yet is it not lawfull for the good and iuſt to take and vſe at their pleaſure what the wicked doe enioy and poſſeſſe, except they haue expreſſe commaundement from the Lorde, as when hee ordained that the people of Iſrael ſhould enter into the land of Canaan for to poſſeſſe and inherite it.

1.Tim.6.7.
2.Cor.8.7. & 9.6.
Heb.13.5.
Pſal.24.1.
Tit.1.15.
Exod.11.2. & 12.35.
Deut.1.7.

23 *Much foode is in the field of the poore: but the field is deſtroyed without diſcretion.*

There is none of vs but doth naturally deſire to haue abundance of victual, for to keepe both our ſelues and our familie from pouertie and beggerie. We are very glad when we ſee fruitfull ſeaſons, and are partakers thereof: but it is not ynough too deſire the ſame, as Solomon doeth ſhewe it vs: for wee may ſee that hee ſheweth therewith what we muſt doe for to get foode, as hee had done before. Nowe that wee may profitably tyll our lande, and get foode for to refreſhe vs, hee teacheth vs what we ſhoulde bee, when hee

Prou.4.& 12.11.

ſayeth, *Muche foode is in the fielde of the poore.*

If wee wil get much foode, wee muſt then become poore. This ſaying will bee iudged to bee verie ſtraunge at the firſt ſight: for wee can not deſire to bee poore, becauſe wee ſee oftentymes, yea daily, howe hardlie the poore liue, and ſuffer great ſcarcitie. Againe, the couetous and vſurers, the riche worldlings, and theeues which are like vnto vnſatiable gulfes, will mocke at this, hearing ſay that we muſt become poore to obtaine much foode. But when wee ſhal vnderſtande in what ſenſe Solomon ſpeaketh of the poore, wee will not thinke this ſentence ſtraunge, and ſhall knowe that in deede wee muſt become poore to obteine muche foode: and if the poore were not, al the worlde ſhoulde ſmart for it. By the poore: Solomon doth not vnderſtand them which are deſtitute of al worldly riches:

Suche kinde of people doe labour onely for other, and that which they doe, is not called their labour, but theirs which did ſet them on woorke and hyre them, and paye them for their daily labour or taskes. But in this place the poore are ſuche as doe not thinke them ſelues ſo riche that they can paſſe without labour, and lyue ydlely: they ſet not ſo muche ſtore by them ſelues, but that they wil abaſe them ſelues to doe euen the vileſt office that we can think of: ſo that in doing thereof, they may not bee vnprofitable. Of ſuche kinde of poore did Solomon ſpeake. In the fielde of ſuche people, there is oftentimes much foode: for God bleſſeth their labour, giuing them enough, and a contented minde, which is more then the great abundance of ſuche as are proude and ſwolne with their riches, and maketh no account to ſet them ſelues on woorke. For a certaine time their prouiſions ſhal abounde in their houſes, but afterwardes God bloweth vppon their riches, and they vaniſhe away.

Pro.12.9.

Contrarily, ſuche are the poore, that they are contented with a litle, and trauel duely and orderly about that which they poſſeſſe, and take not in hande more then they can doe, knowing that hee which gripeth too muche, can not long time holde it. The labour of ſuche kinde of people is oftentimes verie fruitful, and bringeth foorth muche, though there is no great boaſt of it: for it is done in time and ſeaſon.

Beholde, howe there is muche foode in the fielde of the poore. Contrarily, when a man taketh in hande verie muche, and more then hee can, his labour muſt needes periſhe, ſeeing hee can not doe it in due time. Solomon doth well expreſſe it, when he ſaith, *But the fielde is deſtroyed without diſcretion.* This needeth no expoſition, ſeeing it is knowne by experience: yet notwithſtanding, the want of diſcretion may be founde not only where more is taken in hande then can bee done, but alſo there where through negligence men make not account to ſet them ſelues on woorke, and are verie glad to doe nothing, but are delighted in idleneſſe and ſlouthfulneſſe. There the fielde which ſhoulde bee wel tilled, is loſt: and that whereof he ſhoulde rayſe profite, is vnprofitable: and ſo ſuch haue not muche foode, but ſcarcitie and pouertie, according to the former threatening. Euerie one of vs in our eſtate and calling are here exhorted to labour, if we wil haue much foode. For by the labour *of the poore*, Solomon ſignifieth all kinde of woorke and labour, which is done with care and diligence. But ſeeing that ſpare diet, faſting, abſtinence, and ſobrietie, are greatly commended in the Scripture, ſome wil aske, whither it is lawful to deſire abundaunce of victual, and to take muche thereof or no? I anſwere, That it is lawful for vs to deſire that which God doeth promiſe vnto vs by his Woorde: but it is not lawful for vs to burn with couetouſnes, neither that we ſhould be like vnto gluttons, and drunkardes, which the more they eate and drinke, doe more deſire the ſame, and are neuer ſatiſfied. It is lawful for vs to deſire that God woulde giue vs fruitful ſeaſons, and to bleſſe our labour and trauel, that wee may haue profite thereby, and not to trauell in vayne: and that our deſires ſhoulde not tende to enrich our ſelues, nor to fil vs and ſtuffe our bellies with exceſſe: but of the prouiſions and gayne that God ſhall ſende vs, wee woulde deſire to bee good diſpoſers and Stewardes, and woulde take paine to doe it.

Pro.6.10.11.

In this manner we ſhal haue enough, in the which chiefly conſiſteth the abundaunce of victualls, when it is conioyned together with a contented minde.

Secōdly, we are exhorted to be cōtēt with our eſtate, whē God doth allowe the ſame, ſith it is ſaide that the poore haue much foode by their labour, It commonly happeneth that they that are contented with a little, doe liue muche more at their eaſe then doe they which are riche.

24 *He that ſpareth his rodde, hateth his ſonne: but he that loueth him, chaſteneth him betimes.*

Beholde this is a leſſon which pleaſeth neither children, nor fooles, which haue neede of correction: and yet it is profitable for them, yea more neceſſary then eyther meate or drinke, wherein they are greatly delighted, and doe ſerue to ſtrengthen the perſon. When we are young and fooliſhe, geuen vnto vayne deſires and worldly and carnall pleaſures, we cannot delight to learne this leſſon, neither can we heare that children ſhoulde be corrected: but when we are come to age, though we be not inſtructed in the Goſpel, yet if we haue any ſparke of good naturall iudgement, wee vnderſtand then that it is needefull for children to be corrected, and doe commend and prayſe our parentes for that they did not ſuffer vs to liue as we liſted: and alſo there are ſome which can heauily lament and complayne that their parents haue ſpared them too much, and haue borne too muche with their follies and frowardneſſe of their youth, and for this cauſe, if they haue any children, they chaſten them, as they ſee to be neceſſary and expedient for them. The very heathen and Turkes doe know this: and there are ſome which will boaſt to bee reformed after the Goſpel, and yet notwithſtanding they will neglect to chaſtice the follies, inſolences and frowardneſſe of their children, and will not ſuffer them too bee beaten with rods, as is neceſſary: but rather they wil hate the Schoolemaiſters that ſhall correct them: and will be ready to reuile them, in ſteede that they ſhoulde loue them and thanke them, and alſo too pray them to chaſten theyr children ſharply in good time for to ſaue them from the gallowes: for it happeneth oftentimes that the hangman doeth handle & execute them which haue not byn corrected by their Parentes in theyr youth. Wherefore let thoſe fathers and mothers which loue the welfare honor and ſaluation of their children (or doe thinke to loue them) learne heere to correct them in good time : otherwiſe, ſo farre is it of, that they loue them indeede, that they rather hate them : and conſequently, are murtherers of their children : for whoſoeuer hateth his brother, is a murtherer. And foraſmuche as neither father nor mother woulde bee counted murtherers of their children, but contrarily, woulde giue them their blood, if their children had neede of it : ſeeing it is thus, I ſay, the parents muſt be careful to correct and chaſtiſe their children betimes. Likewiſe, Kinges, Princes, Magiſtrates, and Iudges of the earth, which ſhould bee the fathers of the people committed to their charge, if they loue their ſubiectes, they wil be careful and diligent to chaſten the fooliſhe, wicked, and diſſolute.

1.Ioh.3.15.

Moreouer, when the Miniſters of the worde doe by it engender and get ſonnes & daughters, they alſo are as fathers to the people committed vnto them, whome they ought to loue, and to ſhewe them their loue by admonitions, inſtructions, corrections, and threatenings. But for to returne vnto carnal and natural fathers, of whome Solomon doeth heree chiefly ſpeake, when hee ſaieth, *Hee that ſpareth his rodde, &c.* For heere hee teacheth fathers of houſholdes howe they ought to gouerne their children for to make them wiſe, ſober, modeſt, humble and good) there is heere alſo an harde pointe to bee reſolued : That is, that it may ſeeme that Saint Paule repugneth this ſentence, when hee ſayeth, Fathers prouoke not your children to anger.

Ephe.6.4.
Collo.3.21.

Againe, Yee fathers, anger not your children. For there is nothing that the children doe hate more then the rodde, nor wherewith they are more prouoked and angred, then when they are beaten with the rodde, and be made to feele it, ſo that if they durſt, or were able, they woulde riſe vp and withſtande their parentes, or maiſters, when they correct them. This is the ſolution of the former doubt, Let vs knowe, that Saint Paule doeth not forbid fathers that they ſhoulde not correct their children with roddes, but as it might ſeeme by this, that Saint Paule exhorteth children to giue obedience vnto their parentes, hee ſpeaketh chiefly vnto fathers which haue children, and are not diſobedient, nor diſſolute, nor rebellious, nor contemners : but with humilitie, feare, and reuerence, endeuour to pleaſe their parents, and to be at their commandement. For we ſhal ſee ſome fathers ſo ſharpe, churliſh, cruel, ſeuere, vngentle, and vntractable, which wil not ceaſe to beate and vexe their children which endeuour to yeeld their duetie. Saint Paule would not haue Chriſtian fathers to be ſuch towardes their children which doe their duetie, neither alſo towardes them which erre: and yet notwithſtanding, hee meaneth not that they ſhoulde not be corrected: as hee ſheweth, when hee ſayeth, But bring them vp in inſtruction, and information of the Lorde. Likewiſe when Solomon woulde haue the childe to bee corrected, hee meaneth not that his bodie ſhoulde be alwayes beaten with a rod, but that wee ſhoulde vſe exhortations, corrections, inſtructions and threatenings: hee meaneth chiefly, wee ſhould not ſpare ſuch kinde of roddes.

Moreouer let vs note, that al inferiours and vnderlings ought to ſuffer their ſuperiours with humilitie, patience, and obedience. And if wee ought to behaue our ſelues thus towardes men, by a more ſtrong reaſon, towardes God: as it is largely handeled in the 12. Chapter of the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes.

25 *The righteous eateth to the contentation of his minde: but the bellie of the wicked ſhal want.*

A man that is inſtructed in the worde of GOD, which laboureth to cleaue theretoo by Fayth, that hee may bee aſſured of the goodneſſe of the Lorde towardes him, in woorſhipping him, calling vpon him, prayſing and giuing thankes vnto him for al thinges: and alſo which laboureth by true repentaunce to followe his commandements, that he may gouerne him ſelf towards his neighbours with vnfayned loue, and to edifie them, in holding the true religion, and yet for al this, prayſeth him ſelfe neuer the more, but depending wholie vpon the grace of God, looketh for his mercie only: this man is a righteous man, & is neuer forſaken of God, but obteineth of him that which hee wiſheth & deſireth: ſo that he wanteth

Nothing that hee can deſire, Solomon doeth ſignifie it when hee ſaith, *The righteous eateth to the contentation of his minde.* Hee ſaith this, folowing therin the commandement of the lawe and the promiſes of God, let no man deceiue his neighbour, &c. The deſires of ſuch kinde of people are not outragious, but are contented with a litle, which is more worth then the great ſuperfluitie of the wicked. Then let vs not thinke that they reſemble and are like vnto gluttons and drunkardes, which knowe not when they bee ful, til their bellie pincheth them and ſwelleth: nor to wicked couetous men, vſurers and theeues, which are neuer ſatiſfied. And therefore albeit that after the outwarde appearance theſe wicked men haue ſomething to eate, and doe abounde therein, yet ought we not to bee abaſhed though Solomon ſaieth, *But the bellie of the wicked ſhal want.* This is according to the threatenings of God. The wicked doe not feare ſuch threateninges, becauſe they ſee the preſent proſperitie, by reaſon whereof they thinke that no euil can happen to them. But God knoweth wel howe to execute his woorde: as it hath beene and is dayly ſeene. For experience teacheth that thoſe which giue themſelues to ſerue their belly as it deſireth, many times become poore, and want to ſuſtaine themſelues. There is an other ſorte of wicked men which doe not ſo much deſire to deuoure meate and to ſwil in drink, as they are to deſire, to gather, and to ſpare mony, for feare, that the earth ſhould faile them: as are the couetous and vſurers for the moſt parte. The feare of ſuch men ſhal fal vpon them: for either they are conſumed by lawe, or elſe are robbed and ſpoiled: and ſo their bellie wanteth, the which commeth either becauſe they dare not ſpende, or by lawe and theeuerie which bringeth them to beggerie. If they feele it not here, yet can they not auoide it: God knoweth wel howe to finde them out in time.

Leui.25.19. & 26.24. Deut.28.8. Pſal.37.3. & 145.14.

Leui.26. Deu.28. Pſal.37.

Luke.15.13.

Moreouer let vs note firſt of al, that it is lawful for faythful men, and Chriſtians, to eate their fill, ſeeing that God doeth permit it them, aſwell in his lawe, as heere, and in Eſay: but it is not to ſay, that they ſhould eate till they burſt, as doe vnſatiable bellies, which when they are filled deſire nothing but too ſleepe, leape or dance after their gluttonye and drunkenneſſe

Luke.12.20 & 16.23. Eſay.65.13.

making themſelues vnprofitable vnto al good workes. Wee muſt ſo eate to the contentation of our mindes, that the meates & drinkes may not hinder vs to do our office, but may be made more nimble and more ſtrong, & better diſpoſed to doe our duetie. We ſhal then haue more care to feede our bodies, to ſuſtaine them therwith that wee may be occupied in our calling, then to ſatisfie the greedie deſire of our fleſh. And as we ought to abhorre gluttonie and drunkenneſſe, and to bee ſober and temperate: euen ſo muſt wee take heede to bee like vnto them which for want of taking (with thanksgiuing) the meate that God giueth vs, and that are neceſſarie for vs, wee become not ſlouthful and vnprofitable in wel doing. Truelie in ſuch things there is a certaine kinde of wiſedome. We ſhould therfore take our dayly nouriſhement, acknowledging and confeſſing that God maketh graſſe to growe for the cattel, and greene hearbe *Col.2.23.* for the ſeruice of men: That hee may bring foode out of the earth, *Pſa.104.14.15* and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oyle to make him a cheereful countenance, and bread to ſtrengthen mans harte. Secondly, let vs note that what promiſes ſoeuer GOD maketh vnto his faythful children of temporal goods, that neuertheleſſe he woulde not haue them to ſet, and fixe al their minde vppon them and to bee tyed to them, ſeeing hee doeth exerciſe them by diuers tribulations: but doeth tende to make them aſpire and lift vp their mindes vnto the ſpirituall and eternal refreſhing and contentation.

Contrarilie, foraſmuch as hee counteth the wicked vnworthy of temporal riches, as hee declareth by his threateninges, they ought not to looke to bee partakers of the heauenly and eternal riches, the which are infinitely and farre more excellent then al that wee can haue and deſire in this worlde. Thirdly, let vs note that foraſmuch as of our corrupte nature wee are all wicked, and woorthy to periſhe with hunger and by eternall death, that therefore by this promiſe and threatening we are exhorted to conuert vnto GOD by fayth and repentance. Fourthly, let vs not bee like vnto the infidells and idolaters, which doe attribute ſterilitie and ſcarcitie vnto the children of GOD, but beholding the vnſeaſonable times and harde yeeres, in what ſorte ſo euer they come, let vs confeſſe our faultes, and accuſe our ſelues, and not our neighbours, what wickedneſſe ſoeuer is in them.

The xiiii. Chapter.

1 A *Wiſe woman buildeth her houſe: but the fooliſh deſtroieth it with her owne handes.*

WOmen whiche haue any naturall ſenſe and wit, doe deſire that all thinges ſhould proſper in their houſes, and that nothing ſhoulde decay, nor want, but that al things ſhoulde encreaſe and bee mainteined for the entertaiment of their houſe: and euen there where all wanteth, they wil labour ſo wel with their handes, that they wil make a good & plentiful houſe, if it be poſſible. But what deſire ſoeuer they haue, or what care ſoeuer they take to raiſe their eſtate, yet come they not alwaies wel to paſſe. Our firſt mother Eue hath proued it. *Gen.3.6.* It is not then enough to deſire, and to labour, but to come vnto our deſires and enterpriſes, wee muſt eſchew and flie folly, abhorre it, and be indewed with wiſedome. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying: *A wyſe woman.&c.* Now if a woman muſt be wiſe for to builde her houſe, it followeth that the number of them which build, is very ſmal, ſeeing that it is very harde to finde a wiſe woman. I haue founde one man of a thouſande: but a woman among them all haue I not *Eccle.7.31.* founde. Hee ſpeaketh thus for to ſhewe that wiſe women are ſcant, and not that there are none at al: for wee finde that the Scripture doeth attribute wiſedome vnto ſome women: as vnto Sara, to Abigaile, to Debora. *Heb.11.11.* If the women and daughters of this age wil be felowes and daughters of theſe holy women and other, *1.Pet.3.6* they muſt labour to be wiſe, in diligently reſorting vnto the ſermons, *1.Sam.25.* and printing the pure worde of God in their heartes: *Iudg.4.4.* for it is ſaide, If thou

Pro.2.1.2.3.4.5.6.
1.Tim.2.3.5
Ephe.5.22
1.Tim.2.9.&.3.11.&.5.4.
Titus.2.3.
1.Pet.2.5
Ephe.2.19

receiueſt my wordes.&c. Therefore women and daughters muſt loue the worde of the Lorde, and muſt giue themſelues vnto continual prayer. So doing they ſhalbe ſuch as Saint Paule requireth them to be. If they continewe and hold on in this, ſorte they ſhal waſte nothing of their houſholde,but ſhal preſerue them, and ſhal encreaſe by the bleſſing of God,ſo much as ſhal bee expedient. And not onely ſo,but alſo (which is more worth) they ſhal builde their houſes with liuing ſtones, that they may bee a ſpiritual houſe, and an holy Prieſthoode. Wee al ought to endeuour to attaine thereto, that it may bee ſaide of vs: yee are no more ſtrangers and foreners, but citizens with the ſaintes: contrarily,if women bee fooliſhe, folowing their owne carnal nature, and committing fooliſhe actes to the diſhonour of God,and to the ſlaunder of their family, they deſtroy and ouerthrowe their houſholdes, not onely in this that God doth forſake them,for to bring al their temporal goods to diſorder and confuſion,the which they ſcatter and waſte in banketting and delicate fare,in gay & gorgeous apparel,in playes and paſtimes, and other diſſolutions and inſolencies: but alſo in this that they condemne themſelues,and no thank to them that their houſholdes doe not fal into eternal deſtruction. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame,when he ſayeth, *But the fooliſhe deſtroyeth it with her owne handes.* For wee ought too knowe that Solomon doeth in diuers ſentences inſtruct fathers and mothers of houſholdes, for to teache them howe they ſhoulde gouerne and guide their families temporally,and to defende the neceſſities of this preſent life, as it is lawful for them,and as they ought to doe (as wee may knowe by the promiſes of God, made vnto the auncient fathers, and by their complaintes,and prayers vnto God: and alſo when our Lorde teacheth vs to aske our dayly bread) notwithſtanding his principal marke, whereto hee tendeth,is that wee ſhoulde take care to prouide for our ſpiritual neceſſities and wants, and to builde and erect vp our houſes in the heauens. Thefore when hee ſpeaketh heere, of wiſe women, hee meaneth not ſuche as are eſteemed ſo before the worlde, becauſe they can richely make their temporal profite of their houſe, preferring and ſetting it aboue the honour of God, and the profite of their neighbours: but hee ſpeaketh of them which firſt of al ſeeke the kingdome of God, and the righteouſneſſe thereof.

Suche women haue laide a good foundation, which is, Ieſus Chriſte, and therefore they make a goodly and pleaſant building, and need not to feare that their building ſhould fall for want of a ſtrong foundation: for they builde vpon the ſtrong rocke, againſt the which the gates of hel ſhall not preuaile. Let vs learne therefore that if our houſes come to bee ouerthrowne, it is becauſe wee builde not vppon this foundation, or that the ſtones that wee wil lay are neither fitte, nor meete for the worke.

2 *Hee that walketh in his righteouſneſſe, feareth the Lorde: but hee that is lewde in his wayes, deſpiſeth him.*

The Lorde by his worde doeth exhorte vs to feare him: Gather mee the people together, and I will cauſe them to heare my woordes, that they may learne to feare mee al the dayes that they ſhal liue vppon the earth. Thou ſhalt feare the Lorde thy God, &c. And this it is that hee doeth chiefly demaunde: as Moyſes declareth. And nowe Iſrael, what doeth the Lorde thy God require of thee, but to feare the Lorde thy God, to walke in al his wayes, and to loue him, and to ſerue the Lord thy God with al thine heart, and with al thy ſoule? And albeeit wee are bounde to feare him, except wee wil miſerably periſhe with the worlde which was deſtroyed by the vniuerſal flood: yet that wee may bee lead to feare him willingly, hee promiſeth riches to them which ſhal feare him: and contrarily, hee threateneth and puniſheth them which do not feare him.

Deu.4.10.
& 6.13.
& 10.12.

To the end therefore that wee may not bee contemned of the Lorde, nor may periſhe, wee muſt feare GOD, and wee ſhalbee breſerued and ſaued for euer. But there are ſome which deceiue themſelues, making themſelues beleeue that they feare God, becauſe they giue themſelues vnto ſuperſtition, and obſerue mens traditions, and obey the commandementes of men, forſaking the

Deut.10.13
Pſal.34.10.
& 145. 19.
Leui.26.14.
1.Sam.2.29.

the right way of the law of the Lord, from the which we muſt not decline neither to the right hãd, nor left. Poperie is ful of ſuch people, by the deceipt & craſtie working of hypocritical frieres: who may iuſtly be reproched with this ſaying: ye haue made the cõmandemẽt of God of no authoritie by your traditions. Againe, Woe therefore *Mat.15.6. &.23.13.25 23.* bee vnto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites, becauſe yee ſhut vp the kingdome of heauen before men. Yee compaſſe Sea and land to make one of your profeſsion: yee tythe Mint, and Aniſe, &c. God of his mercy graunt that amongeſt vs there bee none ſuche like nor worſe.

Nowe to the end that wee ſhoulde not bee deceiued with ſuche kinde of people, Solomon doeth teache vs whereby we ſhal know whither wee haue the feare of God, when he ſaieth, *He that walketh in his righteouſnes, feareth the Lord.* For to knowe then whither wee feare the Lorde, wee muſt walke in our righteouſnes. *Deut.12.8.* But when Moyſes forbiddeth the Iſraelites, Yee ſhal not doe after *Pro.12.15.* al theſe thinges that wee doe heere this day, &c. and that Solomon hath ſaide heere before, The way of a foole is right in his owne eyes (nowe by our owne nature wee are fooles, delighting in our wayes, and ſtriuing to doe what ſeemeth vs right) it might ſeeme that wee haue no certaine argument or proofe of the feare of the Lorde, when wee walke in our righteouſnes. This ſhal ſerue for the anſwere, Let vs knowe, that there is no righteouſnes that can *Eccle.7.30.* be attributed vnto vs, as hauing it of our ſelues. It is true that God hath made man righteous, but they haue ſought many inuentions. Man hath no righteouſneſſe the which is of his owne, but of the gift of God: and yet by his fooliſhneſſe hee hath loſt it. Neuertheleſſe in folowing of the ſcripture, wee wil cal that ours, which belongeth vnto God, and which is by his grace and liberality giuen vnto vs: for in giuing it vnto vs, hee maketh it ours. Therefore when GOD giueth vs grace certainely to knowe that hee is our GOD, Father and Sauiour, and that for Ieſus ſake hee wil not impute our ſinnes vnto vs, but doeth forgiue them vs, and that alſo by this knowledge we are brought to abhorre and deteſt our wickednes & willingly and gladly to folow goodnes, & to giue our ſelues to do good works, which he commandeth, and hath ordeined that we ſhould walke in them : then doe we walke in our righteouſneſſe,and may bee certified that wee feare the Lorde : as is ſaide heereafter. *Prou.18.13.* And for aſmuche as wee are aſſured that wee feare GOD, wee may bee aſſured alſo that wee pleaſe him : wherevppon it followeth that we ought not to ſtande in doubt whether God doeth loue vs or not,and wil ſaue vs or not. *Pſal.51.19.* *Eſay.66.2.* But that we may not bee deceiued,let vs know that Solomon doth not ſpeake heere of ſuche a feare as doeth make vs to tremble and quake before God,as men do before a ſharp,ſeuere,& cruel iudge: but hee ſpeaketh of ſuche a feare as doeth leade vs to honour God, and to giue him willing obedience. Hee doeth wel giue it to vnderſtande,when,againſt feare hee ſetteth contempt, ſaying: *But hee that is lewde in his wayes, deſpiſeth him.* After what ſort ſoeuer wee take,this worde *his wayes*,either for the wayes of God,that is to ſay,for the kind of liuing and gouernment in this world,that god teacheth vs by his worde : or for the wayes of man, that is to ſay, for the conuerſation that man ought to follow : there ſhalbe no inconuenience at al,and the ſenſe ſhalbe al one. For ſeeing that man is the creature of God,hee ought not to haue other wayes then thoſe which God teacheth him and commandeth him,but ought to walk ſtraight in them,without turning from them, either to the one ſide or to the other : otherwiſe man doeth not feare God , nor honour him, but doeth deſpiſe him : as Solomon doeth pronounce : and heerein hee doth threaten al hypocrites and diſſemblers,al idolaters and ſuperſtitious, & al thoſe which worke iniquitie,ſhewing them that they can looke for nothing but deſtruction and damnation,ſeeing they deſpiſe the authour of life and ſaluation. Furthermore,let vs note that if wee wil turne this ſentence backwarde,and ſay,who ſo feareth the Lord, walketh in his righteouſneſſe : but hee that doeth deſpiſe him is lewd in his wayes: the later ſenſe ſhal not repugne the former,but we ſhal heere learne,(as the trueth is) that it is the feare of the Lorde which maketh men to walke in righteouſneſſe: and contrarily,that it is contempt of God which turneth mẽ aſide,and maketh them lewde in their waies.

3 *In the mouth of the fooliſh,is the rod of pride : but the lips of the wiſe preſerue them.*

It ſeemeth vnto the wicked which haue authoritie and power,
or thinke to haue maintenance and bee ſupported, that it is lawfull
for them to ſpeake what they liſt: and in deede they vſe their
tongues at theyr pleaſure, as a theefe doeth his ſworde, and muche
worſe: for they ſharpen not their tongues onely againſt men by
wicked wordes, by commandementes importable, by falſe witneſſe
bearing, lying, flatteringes and ſlaunderings, and backbitings, but
alſo againſt God, in forſaking him, and giuing themſelues vnto the
Diuel, in curſing, ſwearing, and forſwearing, blaſpheming, and taking
his name in ieſt, and in aſwel mingling it with the vanities and
filthineſſe, as with humane and diueliſhe doctrines, with vnſhameful
and wanton ſonges: in ſuch wiſe that a man may blame them,
Pſal.50.19. Thou giueſt thy mouth to euil, and with thy tongue thou forgeſt
&.7.9.11. deceite: euen ſo alſo wee may complaine that they haue lifted vpp
their mouthes to heauen. This is to haue the rod of pride in their
mouth, when they doe thus vſe it againſt God, and againſt their
Pſal. 10. 11. neighbours, & as they thinke, without hurt and danger it is lawful
&.94.7 for them to raile. For they ſay, God will neuer ſee it: neither
wil the God of Iacob regard it. And as touching men, becauſe they
open their mouth againſt the innocent and weake, they boldly ſay,
Pſal.12.4 With our tongues, we wil preuaile: and our lippes are our owne,
who is Lorde ouer vs? But wee may ſay vnto them, yee that are
without vnderſtanding, heare, and you fooles, when will yee bee
taught? Therefore albeit that they thinke to remaine vnpuniſhed,
yet ſhal they not eſcape nor auoide the hand of the Lorde: for it
is ſaide. Theſe thinges haſt thou doone, and I helde my tongue:
Pſalm.50.21 therefore thou thoughteſt that I was like thee: but I will reproue
Pſal.73.18. thee, and ſet them in order before thee. Againe, Surely thou haſt
Pſal.94.21. ſet them in ſlippery places, and caſteſt them downe into deſolation
Again, They gather them together againſt the ſoule of the righteous,
and condemne the innocent blood. Solomon doeth heere after
a ſorte threaten them with this deſtruction, when hee doeth attribute
Luke.16.15. pride vnto them: for that which is highly eſteemed before mē,
&.1.51. is abhominable before God. And the virgin Mary ſaith, Hee hath
ſcattered the proude in the imagination of their heartes. God reſiſteth
the proude, and giueth grace vnto the humble. Hee ſignifieth

alſo their deſtruction, when againſt the rodde of pride, hee ſetteth the preſeruation, and conſeruation of the wiſe, ſaying, *But the lippes of the wyſe preſerue them.* The preſeruation whereof hee ſpeaketh, is not worldly nor temporal, it is neither corporal nor carnal: for there are no people in the worlde counted more foliſhe, proude, and arrogant in wordes, then the wiſe, therefore are they hated and perſecuted, and put to death. They ſpeake trueth, which the worlde cannot beare: the which alſo the heathen haue knowne and ſaide, That trueth getteth hatred. But we muſt ſtay our ſelues vppon the worde of the Lorde. If the worlde hate you, *Iohn.15.18* yee knowe that it hated mee before you. Againe, they ſhal excommunicate you, *&.16.2* yea the time ſhal come, that whoſoeuer killeth you, wil thynke that hee doeth God ſeruice. This is not the conſeruation or temporal preſeruation that is heere ſpoken of, nor wherevpon wee muſt bee ſtaied: but Solomon ſpeaketh chiefly of the ſpiritual and eternal preſeruation, as alſo the deſtruction of the fooliſhe which doe proudly ſpeake, is eternal. True it is that as ſometimes God ſendeth temporal puniſhmentes too the wicked, and is viſibly reuenged of him: euen ſo according as hee ſeeth expedient, hee ſheweth and declareth himſelfe the preſeruer of the wiſe. Noe and other haue prooued it true. And foraſmuche as wee deſire to bee preſerued, wee muſt caſt from vs the rodde of pride, and take the lippes, which are opened with humilitie and modeſtie with trueth and temperancie. The which wee cannot doe of our ſelues: And therefore let vs pray, Open my lippes O Lorde, and my mouth ſhal ſhewe foorth thy prayſe. *Pſal.51.17.* Againe, Set a watche, O Lorde, before my mouth and keepe the doore of my *&.141.3.* lippes.

Thus doing wee ſhall not bee comprehended among them of whome the Scripture complaineth. For there is no conſtancie in their mouth: within they are very corruption, their throte *Pſal.5.9.* is an open ſepulchre, and they flatter with their tongue. My ſoule is *&.57.4.* among Lions: I lie among the children of men, that are ſet on fire: *&.64.2.3.* whoſe teeth are ſpeares and arrowes, and the tongue a ſharpe ſworde. Hide mee from the conſpiracie of the wicked, and from the rage of the workers of iniquitie, which haue whet their tongue *Pſal.140.3.* like a ſword, and ſhot foorth their arrowes, euē bitter words. &c.

They haue ſharpened their tongues like a Serpent: Adders poyſon is vnder their lippes. Such kinde of people fal into deſtruction, as in the places before alledged yee may ſee. Wee ought not to bee troubled with this deſtruction, as though it ſhoulde deſtroy vs with them. For euen as in vſing our tongues wiſely, wee are not their companions in euil ſpeaking, & proud words: euen ſo their deſtruction ſhal not come neere vs, but our lippes ſhall preſerue vs: that is to ſay, that God wil allowe of our wordes, and therefore he wil preſerue vs from deſtruction: not ſo, that wee can deſerue it by our lippes, as it ought to bee manifeſt vnto vs. For ſith wee knowe that it is the gift of God to gouerne wel our lippes, wee muſt not doubt but that it commeth by onely grace that wee are preſerued and ſafely kept. But the Scripture hath his proprietie, to attribute that to the inſtrument, which belongeth onely to the workemaiſter which guideth them: and this ſerueth to beare with our rudeneſſe, and to be made more eaſie.

4 *Where none oxen are, there the cribbe is emptie: but muche increaſe commeth by the ſtrength of the Oxe.*

There is none of vs all but loueth wel to haue greate rents, for to liue at eaſe in this worlde: but foraſmuche as there are many careleſſe and ſlouthful, which had rather be idle then to worke, and applie their minds to folowe ſome honeſt vocation, therefore they muſt ſuffer pouertie, and vtterly be deſtitute of riches: as Solomon hath exhorted and threatened them. And now vnder other wordes hee ſignifieth the ſame thing, ſaying: *Where none oxen are, there the cribbe is emptie.* Solomon applieth him ſelfe heere to our kinde of ſpeaking: for whē we are altogether deſtitute of al things, wee vſe to ſay, that wee are cleane emptie. Hee placeth one kinde of labour heere, vnder the which hee comprehendeth al others, and doth declare vnto vs that except wee doe diligently followe the eſtate whereunto wee are called, and vſe neceſſary meanes to prouide for our ſelues and our familie, wee cannot looke but for pouertie, as wee deſerue the ſame. Contrarily, if we doe imploy the power that God doeth giue vs, and duely doe our office, wee ſhall abounde

in all

in al wealth that is neceſſary for vs, and according as God ſhall ſee to bee expedient for to mainteine and keepe vs in his ſeruice. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame when hee ſaith, *But much increaſe commeth by the ſtrength of the Oxe.* We haue none other doctrine heere, then ſuche as wee haue hearde alreadie oftentimes: and it is not without cauſe that Solomon vſeth repetition. For we are ſlow, negligent and ſlouthful, and haue neede to be prouoked, & as it were ſpurred vp, and often to bee put in remembrance what wee haue to doe.

Furthermore, by the care that he hath to repeate this doctrine often, he doth ſhew vs how neceſſary for vs it is to labour. Euē as the oxen doe drawe the plough for to breake vp and turne ouer the earth, and to make it fit to bring foorth fruit: euen ſo alſo muſt euerie one of vs be occupied about our woorke after his calling, and beare the yoke which God hath laide vpon vs: neither muſt wee be aſhamed to be compared vnto Oxen, neither diſdaine to learne of them, ſeeing that the Scripture ſetteth them foorth before vs for to be our Maiſters and Doctours, not onely before the common people, but alſo before the greateſt: as Ieremy doeth complaine therof:
Thou haſt ſmitten thē, but they haue refuſed to bee tamed by diſcipline, *Ier.5.3.4.5*
&c. Let vs in no wiſe be like vnto ſuch rebels, but rather let *Mat.11.29.*
vs folowe the exhortation of the Lord. If wee muſt needes become ſubiect vnto worke for to obteine enough of corporal liuing: much more muſt wee ſubmit our ſelues vnto the lawe of the Lorde, and folowe the wayes, that God doeth teache vs, by the which hee woulde leade vs to eternal life. Otherwiſe, if wee ſay with the wicked,
Let vs breake their bandes: The Lord wil make vs ſubiect vnto *Pſal.2.3.*
cruel maiſters, as he hath done heretofore to the children of Iſrael, *Deut.28.48*
according as he had threatened them, And ſhalt be ſubiect to thyne *Iere.28.13.*
enemie, &c. Thou haſt broken the yoakes of wood: but thou ſhalt make for them yoakes of yron. The Papiſtes as we may knowe, are
vnder a very harde and heauie yoake, when they are vnder ſuch *Mat.23.4.*
maiſters as our Lorde deſcribeth. Let vs acknowledge and confeſſe the bleſsings that God doeth giue vs in employing vs in his ſeruice, and hee wil giue vnto vs abundance of reuenewes, & chiefly ſuch
as are ſpiritual. For ſeeing he commandeth, Thou ſhalt not muzzle *Deut.25.4.*

the Oxe that treadeth out the corne: hee wil not leaue vs deſtitute of neceſſary things. But if wee deſpiſe the bleſſings hee giueth vs, *Eſay.1.2.* and doe rebel againſt him, let vs looke for puniſhment: I haue nouriſhed and brought vp children, but they haue rebelled againſt mee: and conſequently the deſolations wherewith God hath threatened his people, came vpon them.

5 *A faithfull witneſſe will not lie: but a falſe recorde will ſpeake lyes.*

This ſaying of Solomon is ſo manyfeſt and knowne to all men which haue the leaſt good naturall wit and vnderſtanding, that it needeth none expoſition, but onely to bee conſidered vpon: and thereby wee ought to learne not to lye, but to ſay the trueth in all our talke. And the rather becauſe wee take it not wel to be counted or called lyars or falſe witneſſes, but faithful and true: but chiefly becauſe that God (which ought to bee preferred before al our deſires and affections, our honour and reputation) abhorreth falſeneſſe and lying: as hee hath declared by his Lawe, Deut.19: and *Exo.20.7.16. &.23.1. Leu.19.11.12. Deut.19.16* cōmendeth trueth vnto vs highly, which he loueth: otherwiſe hee ſhoulde denie himſelfe: the which we ought neither to thinke nor ſay: and alſo it cannot bee, Though we beleeue not, yet abideth he faithful, hee cannot denie himſelfe. *2.Tim.2.13.* Hee himſelfe alſo is the trueth: ſeeing that he neither is, nor can bee ſeparated from his word, which ſaith, *Iohn.14.6.* I am the way, the trueth, and the life. *&.17.17.* Sanctifie them with thy trueth: Thy worde is trueth.

But foraſmuch as euery man is a lyar, we muſt confeſſe that of our nature wee are al falſe witneſſes: and therefore if wee wil become true witneſſes, wee haue neede that God woulde ſend and communicate his holy Spirite vnto vs, who is the Spirite of trueth, which leade the diſciples of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt into all trnth: for the which to obteine, wee muſt pray, *Pſal.119.43.* Take not thy worde of trueth vtterly out of my mouth, for I waite for thy iudgementes. It is neceſſary for vs that in all our wordes and talke wee bee armed with trueth, if wee will not periſhe. For the Prophet Dauid ſaith, *&.5.7.* Thou ſhalt deſtroy all them which ſpeake leaſing. Wee haue a fearefull example thereof in the fifth Chapter of the Actes of the Apoſtles. And if all our talke ought to bee true, aboue all it is neceſſary that the wordes which concerne God and Chriſtian religion ſhoulde bee vttered with trueth. The Miniſters therefore of the worde ought chiefly to bee true witneſſes.

6 *A ſcorner ſeeketh wiſedome, and findeth it not: but knowledge is eaſie to him that will vnderſtande.*

It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that the firſt part of this preſent ſentence, repugneth againſt diuers places of the Scriptures. *Pro. 1.7.22.* For Wiſedome hath called, and her counſell is refuſed. And *24.* ſhee promiſeth the knowledge of GOD. And thus it ſeemeth *Pro.2.3.4.5.* that ſhee ſpeaketh agaynſt her ſelfe. Furthermore, foraſmuch as there is no wiſedome, but in GOD, and from God, wee can not ſeeke wiſedome, except that wee ſeeke God, who is contemned of ſcorners: and therefore they ſeeke neither him nor his wiſdome: but they ſay in their heartes, there is no God: The wicked careth not for God: The foole hath ſaide in his heart, There is no *Pſal.10.4.* God, On the other ſide, Wiſedome ſhineth and neuer vadeth a- *& 14.1.* way, and is eaſily ſeene of them that loue her, and founde of ſuch as *Wiſ.6.12.* ſeeke her. And our Lorde ſayth, Aske, and it ſhalbe giuen you, &c. *Mat.7.7.* We ſee by theſe ſcriptures that ſcorners do not ſeeke wiſedome, & that if they did ſeeke her, they ſhoulde finde her. I anſwere, For to finde God and his wiſedome truly, wee muſt ſeeke her with all our hart, as we ought to haue vnderſtood it before: And Moyſes doeth *Pro.2.3.* teache vs alſo the ſame. But if from thence thou ſhalt ſeeke the lord *Deut.4.29.* thy God, thou ſhalt finde him, if thou ſhalt ſeeke him with all thyne hearte, and with al thy ſoule. And to doe this wel wee muſt forſake our wickedneſſes: Seeke the Lorde whiles he may be found: *Eſa.55.6.* call vppon him whiles hee is neere. And wee muſt walke truely in *Pſal.145.18* the feare of GOD: The Lorde is neere vnto all thoſe that call vppon him: yea to al that cal vppon him in trueth. Mockers and ſcorners doe not ſeeke the Lorde after this ſorte: and therefore they doe not finde him. And yet Solomon doeth not lye, when hee ſayth, *That the ſcorner ſeeketh wiſedome.* For his intent is not to attribute ſuche care vnto ſcorners, which nothing at al regarde the worde of the Lorde, the which is our wiſedome, and vnderſtanding, when we receiue it in feare, and that by the ſame wee learne to aſſure our ſelues of the goodneſſe of God towardes vs: and that renouncing al wickedneſſe and abhorring it, wee ſet all our delight to follow the commandement of the Lorde. But becauſe that the ſcorners doe labour to make them ſelues beleeue that they tende to gouerne themſelues wiſely, and woulde be eſteemed wiſe (for if they be reprooued for their wickedneſſe, incontinently they crie with open mouthes, that they are honeſt men: & in deede, we ſhal ſee ſome of them which wil ſhew ſome ſignes wherby it ſhal ſeeme that they tend to none other thinge, but to behaue themſelues wiſely, euen to bee guides of other) for this cauſe Solomon ſaith, that the ſcorner ſeeketh wiſedome: but becauſe they ſeeke it not as they ought, therefore they finde it not: that is to ſay, that they neither wil nor can gouerne themſelues by wiſdome. But that it ſhoulde not trouble vs to ſeeke wiſedome, and that it might be eaſie for vs to find it, & rule our ſelues thereafter, we muſt haue knowledge. Solomō doth declare it vnto vs, whē he ſaith, *But knowledge is eaſie to him, &c.* By a man of knowledge, Solomon ſignifieth ſuch an one as is careful to print the pure woorde of the Lorde in his hearte and to delight therein. Such a man ſhal eaſily finde knoweledge: and as hee truely ſeeketh wiſedome, ſo doeth hee alſo finde it, and thereby doeth gouerne him ſelfe, bearing willingly and gladly the yoke of the Lorde, the whiche hee findeth eaſie. *Mat. 11. 30.*

7 *Depart from the fooliſh man, when thou perceiueſt not in him the lips of knowledge.*

Becauſe the worlde conteineth more fooles then wiſe men, and that the fooles doe proſper in outwarde ſight, are ſtrongeſt, moſt riche, and of greate credite and authoritie, working all thinges after their owne minde, and hauing flatterers to flatter them, and to ſay they do well, euen as they would, therefore it ſeemeth vnto the weake and vndiſcrete that they could do no better, nor gouerne them more wiſely then to ioyne themſelues with them, and to bee acquainted and ſamiliar with them, for too learne their knowledge, whereby they may rule themſelues as they doe, and to attaine vnto the degree of their proſperitie, credite and power. But they are deceiued in this opinion: for they can learne nothing to profit them. Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when hee ſaith, *Depart from the fooliſh man: when thou perceiueſt not in him, &c.* Hee forbiddeth vs the companie of the fooliſhe, their acquaintance and familiaritie alſo: for it commeth not of feare that we proſper, but rather in this, that we be not curſed as are the fooliſh, though they think farre otherwiſe, and this commeth becauſe they looke no further then to the earth, and haue no knowledge of God, but walke in darkeneſſe, and haue their mindes and vnderſtanding darkened with ignorance: the which is the greateſt plague they can haue in this life: for ſuche an ignorauce maketh them fall into muche wickedneſſe, in the whiche they become obſtinate and indurate: whereupon foloweth their ouerthrow and deſtruction.

Nowe that the fooliſhe haue no knowledge of God, Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee giueth the reaſon, wherefore hee warneth vs to departe from the fooliſhe man, and ſaith, *When thou perceiueſt not in him the lippes of knowledge.* Had they the knowledge of God, and that their hearts weregarniſhed with true knowledge they woulde ſpeake of that which they knew and vnderſtood: For from the abundance of the hearte, the mouth ſpeaketh. And thus wee might knowe in them the lippes of knowledge, and learne of them to gouerne our ſelues wiſely. The which can in no wiſe bee doone: for not onely they are emptie and voide of knowledge, but do alſo hate it: wherof it foloweth rightly, that they do not delight to ſpeake thereof, & to cōmen or talke therof for the inſtruction and teaching of their neighbours. In ſteede then to knowe in them the lips of knowledge, wee heare vanities, and filthie diſordered ſpeaches, which proceede from fooliſhneſſe and malice wherewith their heartes doe greatly abounde. Solomon doeth ſomewhat ſignifie the ſame, when he denieth them to haue the lips of knowledge: for ſith they are great talkers and babblers, they muſt needes haue lippes through whoſe infamouſneſſe wee may learne that they haue no knowledge of God, but are filled with malice and fooliſhneſſe. They are great medlers, as Solomon doth declare. And foraſmuch

Rom. 1. & 2.
Ephe. 4. 17. 18.
Mat. 12. 34.
Pro. 12. 23. & 13. 16.

much as euil wordes doe corrupt good manners, therefore it is not
1.Cor.15.13 without cauſe that Solomon exhorteth and commandeth vs to departe
farre from the fooliſhe man. And becauſe that Popery is
ſtuffed and repleniſhed with ſuche fooliſhe men, it were neceſſary
for them which haue any good beginning of the knowledge of
trueth, to departe from thence for to ſeeke the lippes of knowledge
and learning. Wee muſt be diligent to followe this doctrine, and
Mat.15.14. this ſame of our Lorde: Let them alone, they bee blinde leaders of
2.Cor.6.14. the blinde, &c. And this of Saint Paule, Bee not vnequally yoked
with the infidels. &c. If wee cannot departe with our bodies,
yet let vs take heede from conſenting vnto them, but let
vs rather rebuke them, as Saint Paul teacheth vs. It belongeth vnto
al Chriſtians to doe the ſame without feare of looſing either life,
goods, renowme, or credite, or the fauour of the worlde: but it ſerueth
Ephe.5.11. chiefly for the Paſtours of the Churche. Our Lorde doeth
giue vs an example thereof. If euery one of vs for his parte will
doe this, then muſt we arme our hearts & minds with the pure doctrine
of the Goſpel, and bee ſo filled there with, that from the abundance
Mat.10. of the knowledge that wee ſhal haue, our mouthes
&.23 ſhoulde bee opened for to vtter knowledge and learning, for too
make our neighbours partakers with vs thereof, that they might
take no occaſion to departe from vs, but to loue and imbrace
our companie, and to deſire our acquaintance and familiaritie. It is
not enough for vs onely to depart from the fooliſhe, but wee muſt
alſo labour to drawe others vnto vs, and chiefly the weake and ignorant,
and to ſhewe our ſelues ſoft, gentle, eaſie and tractable:
that they may knowe wee haue the lippes of knowledge, and to vnderſtande
that wee haue diſcretion and wiſedome, for to gouerne
our lippes: not as they which truſting in their wits and wiſdome,
ſpeake as they liſt, and wil for no reaſon that can bee brought them
giue place vnto other, nor hearken to any counſel: but to ſpeake as
the wordes of God, being readie to receiue inſtruction of them
which are indewed with the ſpirite of God, as they ſhewe by their
ſayings and doeings.

8 *The wiſdome of the prudent is to vnderſtand his way: but the fooliſhnes of fooles is deceite.*

There are many men which thinke themſelues wiſe, prouident and prudent, when they ſo gouerne themſelues that they ſaue themſelues from hurt and hinderance, and that none doe ſtop their profite: and in the meane while doe labour with al their power to get credite, authoritie and power, and to encreaſe their riches and wealth of this worlde, without caring whether they doe wrong or no to their neighbours, ſo that it bee not perceiued, or that men dare not rebuke thē for it. But ſith we muſt beleeue Solomō which ſaith, *The wiſedome of the prudent, &c:* let vs not eſteeme ſuch men to bee indewed either with wiſedome and prudencie, but onely with a diueliſhe wiſedome, ſubtiltie, and deceite, which wil bring them to deſtruction: for they vnderſtande not their way. Neither knowe they howe they ought to gouerne and guide them ſelues to doe their duetie and office belonging to their neighbour: though they labour to make themſelues beleeue that they are cunning and learned men, but it is to make their profite to the hurt of our neighbours, rather then they woulde miſſe and faile of their purpoſe. This is not to vnderſtand their way aright, ſeeing that by ſuch kind of doing, they wander and ſtray out of the way, ſo that they runne to deſtruction. If ſuche prudent men had their eyes open for to ſee their deſtruction, they woulde iudge that they did not vnderſtande their way: as at the laſt they ſhall both knowe and alſo repent it. We haue an example heereof in the rich glutton: Againe, the anſwere made vnto the Goates doth alſo ſhew it. But their repentance ſhal nothing profite them, but the more to torment thē: as our Lorde doeth wel ſignifie the ſame, when hee threateneth to ſende the vnprofitable ſeruant into darkeneſſe: and when he ſaith, that there ſhalbe weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth. Whiles wee haue time therefore let vs take paines to vnderſtande our way, that wee may followe it. But it might wel ſeeme, that it is not needeful for man to vnderſtand his way for to followe it, and that there is nothing but fooliſhneſſe and wickedneſſe therein, and that by flying from it, there ſhoulde bee rather wiſedome, and good diſcretion before God. For al the imaginations of the thoughts of mans heart are euil continually. Again, The imagination of mans heart is euil, euen from his youth. Wherof it foloweth, that al the waies of mā are nothing worth: we haue al gone aſtray: for their workes are wicked

Wiſ.5.3.
Luke.16.23.
Mat.25.44.
Mat.25.30.
Gen.6.5. &.8.21.

workes : Let the wicked forſake his waies,and the vnrighteous his Eſay.55.7.& 59.6. owne imaginations,and returne vnto the Lord.&c. The anſwere, Euen as the ſeruant which forſaketh the worke that his Lorde and Iere.18,6. maiſter hath commanded him,and giueth himſelfe to his pleaſure, is wicked and ſlouthful : euen ſo alſo,hee which deſpiſeth to walke after the worde of God,who is our Lorde to whom wee al doe owe obedience,and is giuen to liue after his fantaſie , is wicked and vnfaithful. Contrarily,as the ſeruant which wil truely ſhewe himſelfe faithful and wiſe,doeth carefully the worke of his maiſter , as if it were euen his owne : and in deede,hee calleth it his, becauſe hee is bounde to do it,and that it is his duetie and office to bee occupied therein. Likewiſe,if we wil ſhew our ſelues wiſe & prudent,as we ought,wee muſt apply our heartes and mindes, to knowe the way which the Lorde in his worde doeth teach vs : for to followe and walke diligently in the ſame. Thus doing , wee ſhal vnderſtande our way,not that it is properly ours,not that wee haue choſen it of our ſelues : but becauſe our duetie is, to apply our mindes to know and to followe the way which hee teacheth vs and commandeth vs to holde. Wee may ſay alſo that the way of Gods commandements is ours,when he giueth vs grace to guide our ſelues therein by his holy Spirite,who maketh vs to delite therein,and maketh vs Pſal.119.14 that wee may truely ſay,I haue had as gteat delight in the way of thy teſtimonies : as in al maner of riches. They which vnderſtand this way,are wiſe and prudent, and can gonerne themſelues as apperteineth : and as they know howe to auoide the ſnares of Satan, and wil not bee deceiued thereby : euen ſo their affections doe not ſtretche to deceiue any man. Solomon doeth ſomething ſignifie this ſame,when hee ſaith, *But the fooliſhneſſe of the fooles is deceit*. Againſt wiſedome, hee ſetteth fooliſhneſſe, and againſt the prudent,the fooles : and againſt to vnderſtande his way, he ſetteth deceite. Wherein he ſheweth vs that for aſmuch as the fooles do not vnderſtande their way,neither wil vnderſtand it,they are eaſily deceiued : and alſo are giuen vnto fraude and deceit. they are ſubiect vnto the baites of Satan,and cannot auoide them : as alſo they labour to entrap their neighbours, and to hurt them,euen to deſtroy them when they thinke they cannot obtaine their deſires

otherwaies.

otherwayes. Suche crooked deceit is deſcribed vntoo vs in the Pſalmes: Beholde he ſhall trauell with wickedneſſe: for hee hath conceiued miſchiefe, but he ſhall bring foorth a lie. Pſal.7.14. & 9.16.& 10.15.

The foole maketh a mocke of ſinne: but among the righteous there is fauour.

Let vs firſt of all note, when Solomon ſetteth the righteous againſt the foole, that he ſpeaketh of wicked fooles which hate knowledge, which deſpiſe wiſedome and inſtruction, and are frowarde, malicious, vnfaithfulll, arrogant and cruell. For thoſe are righteous which loue knowledge, which make great account of wiſedome & inſtruction: and are delighted with vprightneſſe, iuſtice, goodnes, and faithfulneſſe: and are ful of gentlenes, humanitie and beneuolence. Herein conſiſteth righteouſnes: as we may gather of the former Chapters, and alſo by this preſent ſentence, when Solomon ſetteth the foole againſt the righteous, and doeth attribute fauour vnto them.

Secondly, when againſt making a mocke of ſinne, he ſetteth fauour, wee muſt vnderſtande that this mocking is ful of crueltie, and that the fooliſhe doe not mocke as it were in paſſing by, when they haue committed any wickedneſſe againſt their neighbours by doing of them wrong and iniurie, in dooing of them violence to deſtroy them: but they runne ouer head and eares, and bathe themſelues therein, and are rauiſhed and caried headlong with a great abundance of wicked deſires and cruel thoughtes. And yet notwithſtanding, they make no great account of their miſdoings which they commit to the great detriment and deſtruction of their neighbours, as if it were a light thing. Solomon doeth ſomewhat ſignifie this ſame by the worde of making a ieſt or a mocke: and hath plainely ſignified it heere before in the tenth Chapter and 23. verſe. The worlde hath alwayes beene repleniſhed with ſuch fooles, as alſo was ſhewed in the ſame former place. Thirdly, when fauour is attributed vnto the righteous, let vs note, that wee can not boaſt our ſelues of righteouſnes, except we be led with ſweete & gracious affections towards our neighbours, and delight to doe them good, in folowing the exhortations of S. Paul: Let al bitternes, & anger, and Ephe.4.31.

wrath, crying, and euil ſpeaking bee put away from you with al maliciouſnes. Bee yee therefore followers of God, as deare children, *Ephe.5.1.2.* and walke in loue, euen as Chriſt hath loued vs, &c. But nowe put *Coll.3.8.* yee away euen al theſe thinges, wrath, anger, maliciouſnes, curſed ſpeaking, filthie ſpeaking, out of your mouth. But foraſmuche as it is verie harde to finde ſuche fauour and gentlenes on earth, we may wel know that the worlde is voide of righteous men.

10 *The heart knoweth the bitternes of his ſoule, and the ſtranger ſhal not medle with his ioye.*

The Scripture doeth transferre the bitterneſſe of the ſoule, after diuers ſortes, and ſundrie ſignifications. For firſt of all, when *Deut.29.18* Moyſes admoniſheth the children of Iſrael: that there ſhould not be among them any roote that bringeth foorth Gall and Wormewood: Hee taketh the roote bringing foorth Gall and Wormwood, for the inwarde malice of the heart, the which doth ſo poyſon man, that hee delighteth and aſſureth himſelfe in his wickedneſſe, and not feeling the puniſhment of his miſdoings, hee bringeth foorth nothing but bitterneſſe, angring and prouoking his frowarde and corrupted concupiſcence to deſpiſe God. Wee may gather this interpretation from the verie woordes of Moyſes, when hee after- *&.19.* wardes ſayeth, So that when he heareth the wordes of this curſe, hee bleſſeth himſelfe in his hart, &c. In this ſame ſignification is alſo bitterneſſe taken.

Hebr.12.15. Secondly, bitterneſſe is taken for crueltie, malice, and ſharpneſſe.

Eſai.38.17. Thirdly, when Ezechias ſaieth, Beholde, for felicitie I had bitter *Act.8.23.* griefe, but it was thy pleaſure to deliuer my ſoule from the pitte of *Ephe.4.31.* corruption: And when alſo it is ſaide, that Peter went out & wept *Iam.3.14.* bitterly; bitterneſſe is there taken for heauineſſe, ſorowe and griefe: *Luk.22.62* as it is alſo in this preſent ſentence, when it is ſaide, *The heart knoweth the bitterneſſe of his ſoule.* Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when againſt bitterneſſe he ſetteth ioye, ſaying, *And the ſtraunger ſhal not medle with his ioye.* Let vs vnderſtande, that wee are heere admoniſhed, not to ſeeke our ioye and conſolation in outwarde thinges of this worlde, when our heartes are troubled and ſorowful: but for to be deliuered and freed from our heauines & ſorow, and to obteine ioye, wee muſt runne vnto God, knowing that it is not without cauſe that hee is called the God of conſolation : For vnleſſe hee doeth comfort vs, what ioye ſoeuer wee haue, yet muſt the ſame bee turned into griefe and trouble. Contrarily, if hee giue vs ioye, and comfort vs, none can remooue nor take away our ioye. Dauid doeth wel confeſſe this, when he ſaith, If the Lord had not holpen mee, my ſoule had almoſt dwelt in ſilence. *Pſal.94.17. & 86.3.* Let vs not be blinded and caried away with the pleaſures of this worlde, but let vs ſay with Dauid, Be merciful vnto mee, O Lord : for I crye vnto thee, continually.

11 *The houſe of the wicked ſhalbe deſtroyed: but the tabernacle of the righteous, ſhal floriſh.*

The wicked labour ſo muche as they can, to make Solomon a lyer, as it hath beene alwayes their cuſtome either by deede or woorde, to belye thoſe which haue threatened and condemned them in the Name of God. *Hebr.11* *Gen.6.14.* *Mat.24.34* Noe the Embaſſadour of righteouſnes condemned the worlde of the wicked, and that in following the worde of God, but no thanke to them, that they laboured not to ſhewe that it was but in ieſt, wherewith they were threatened. In ſteede where they ought to haue conuerted vnto God by true repentaunce, and to feare his threateninges, they endeuoured to make them voide in banquetting and feaſting one with an other, for to put them out of remembrance : and for to preſerue theyr houſes and families, they made mariages : but for all that euer they could doe, yet was the hande of God ſtrongeſt, and the ende declared that they were not threatened in vaine. Thus their houſe was deſtroyed : as was alſo the ſame of the Zodomites, and Gomorrhians. *Gen.19.24.* *Luk.17.29.* *2.Pet.2.6.* *Mat.7.27.* The wicked ought to looke for no other ende. Let them labour to be riche, and to ſtrengthen them ſelues ſo muche as they can, eyther by heaping vp of goods and riches together, or by credite and power, or by leagues with the more mightie & more noble then them ſelues, yet muſt their houſe fall : for it is not built vppon the rocke. Albeit then that the wicked doe boaſt and brag and exalt and lift vp them ſelues, yet ſhal they not continue. They thinke they are verie ſure and ſtable : as Solomon doeth ſignifie it, attributing an houſe vnto them, and attributing vnto the righteous but a ſimple tabernacle, the which oftentimes is litle and lowe, and eaſily remoued hither and thither. Notwithſtanding hee compareth the floriſhing ſtate of the righteous vnto the appearance of the long continuance of the houſe of the wicked, and doth alſo preferre the ſame before it, when hee ſaith, *But the Tabernacle of the righteous ſhal floriſh.* Firſt of al let vs note that when a ſimple and weake tabernacle is preferred vnto an houſe which ſeemeth ſtrong and mightie, wee are taught not to ſtay, nor to truſt vnto the fayre ſhewes of this worlde : but rather to ſeeke humble thinges, and to be contented with a lowe degree: ſo doing, we ſhal be raiſed vp vnto an excellent and euerlaſting highneſſe. Secondly, foraſmuch as the ſtate of the wicked is compared vnto an houſe, wee muſt not therefore maruell though they bee greate in outwarde ſight, and doe long ſtande : as it ſeemeth to thoſe which haue not like proſperitie. Their ſtate is compared vnto an houſe ; but like to ſuch an houſe as ſhalbe deſtroyed, and ſhal ouerwhelme ſuch as are therein. Nowe there is none of vs but had rather dwel in ſuch a light tabernacle, then to dwel in ſuch a decayed houſe, how great and faire ſoeuer it be. They which know of deſtruction at hande, cannot dwel but in great feare. And foraſmuch as the ſcripture compareth the ſtate of the righteous vnto a tabernacle, againſt the wicked & their eſtate: therefore wee muſt not departe from righteouſneſſe, though that in folowing thereof wee bee deſpiſed of the worlde, and that our condition be worſe in outwarde ſight, then the ſame of the wicked. For the pouertie of the faythful patiently borne, is much more worth, then the great proſperitie of the wicked. Solomon doth ſignifie it, when againſt deſtruction, he ſetteth floriſhing, ſaying, *But the tabernacle of the righteous ſhall floriſhe.* But ſeeing that the floure is ſoone paſſed and gone, and that it withereth & becõmeth haye very quickly & dryeth, as we dayly ſee: and that the ſcripture compareth the moſt excellent thinges of this worlde, vnto a floure, to ſhewe therby their vnſtableneſſe, inconſtancie and vanitie: it may ſeeme therefore, that the excellent ſtate of the righteous, is not duely nor rightly ſignified, when it is ſaid, that their tabernacle ſhal floriſh. To the which I anſwere, albeit that the floure is of ſmal continuance, yet, after winter (in the which it ſeemeth that al herbes are

Iob.14.2.
Pſal.103.15
Eſay.4.7.
Iames.1.10.

dead)

deade when the ſpring time commeth (in the which all herbes and rootes of the earth doe waxe greene, ſpring and flooriſh) wee finde al things well and in good caſe, whereat we reioyce. The Scripture alſo for to ſignifie the proſperous and bleſſed eſtate of the faithful, doeth attribute to them, flouriſhing: it ſaith, Heereafter Iacob ſhall take roote: Iſrael ſhal flooriſh & grow, & the world ſhalbee filled with fruite. The deſert & the wildernes ſhal reioyce: and the waſt ground ſhalbe glad and flooriſh as the roſe, &c. Such as be planted in the houſe of the Lorde, ſhal flooriſh in the courtes of our God. And becauſe that this proſperous and flooriſhing eſtate is not outwardly ſeene, but that the faythfull moſt commonly are vnder affliction, as experience doeth teach it. The Scripture ſayth not that they doe flooriſh: for they are now as it were in the winter but it ſaith that they ſhal floriſh. And herein it ſheweth that their flowre ſhal continue euen for euer. Solomon doth wel ſhew it here, when againſt deſtruction he ſetteth flouriſhing.

Eſai.27.6. & 35.1.

Pſal.92.13 14.

12 *There is a way which ſeemeth right to a man: but the yſſues thereof are the wayes of death.*

When any thing is often done in the world, it ſeemeth there is no euil in it. Wherevpon it followeth that it ſeemeth good and right: ſeeing that betweene good and euill, betweene wrong and right there is no difference. There are but a fewe which be of this opinion, but in al eſtates almoſt cuſtome is made a law, though it be againſt the honour of God, and againſt the loue of our neighbour. We may ſee the ſame in ſuperſtitions and idolatries, in craftes and occupations, in trades and merchandize. Becauſe the way that ſuch folkes doe holde is commonly vſed, therefore it ſeemeth too them right: but they ſhal at the laſt feele that they wandred and went aſtraye after diuers ſortes and very greeuouſly: as Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame, when he ſayth, *But the yſſues thereof are the wayes of death.* Wherein he teacheth the very ſame thing that Moſes taught the children of Iſrae, Ye ſhall not doe after al theſe thinges that wee doe here this day: that is, euery man whatſoeuer

Deu.12.8.

ſeemeth

Deut.12.8. ſeemeth him good in his owne eyes. And immediately after, hee threateneth that if wee followe that which is right in our owne minde and opinion, that wee ſhal dye, not onely temporally and Eccleſ.3.19. &9.2. corporally, the which is common both to men and to beaſtes, to the iuſt and vniuſt, and alſo wee ſee that they which walke right, after the iudgement of the worlde, are not in ſo great danger of corporal death, as are they which ſeeke to pleaſe God, according to his word. Rom.8.36. Who are rather counted, ſheepe for the ſlaughter. But chiefly by eternal death, wherein the wicked ſhal knowe, that the way which they haue holden, was not the right way.

Suche knowledge ſhal profite them nothing, but further to torment them. Wiſ.5.3. Wherefore, let vs vnderſtande, that Solomon doth admoniſhe vs to walke cleane contrarie to our owne opinion and fantaſie, if wee wil auoide death, and obteine life.

Furthermore, hee ſheweth vs, that wee al of our ſelues do tend vnto death: for wee thinke that wee are ſo wiſe, that wee can alone guide our ſelues. This ſame is common to al men, vntil they be regenerate and ſanctified by the Spirite of God, who by his anointing doeth teach and leade them. To the ende then that we do Pſal.5.8. &25.4. not enter into the wayes of death, Let vs pray, Leade mee, O Lord, in thy righteouſnes, becauſe of mine enemies, &c. Againe, Shewe me thy wayes, O Lorde, and teache mee thy pathes, &c.

13 *Euen in laughing the heart is ſorowful, and the ende of that mirth, is heauines.*

When the worldlinges and carnal men doe feele them ſelues troubled and grieued, or when they wil put away and reſiſt griefe, they wil playe and paſſe the time away as merrilie as poſſibly they can: they eate, they drinke abundantly, euen til they be drunke or verie neere: they leape, ſing and daunſe: they delight to reaſon, to ieſt and talke of vaine thinges, yea filthie and vncleane: they turne their looke for to feede the ſame with the appearaunce of beautie. After this manner they laugh: but as Solomon ſaieth, *Euen in laughing the heart is ſorowful.*

For albeeit that in leading ſuch a liſe they labour to auoide griefe, yet they cannot: for they haue an hangman within in them, which doeth torment them, from whoſe handes they labour to bee deliuered, to wit, their conſcience which doeth reprooue them & feare them before the iudgement ſeate of God for their diſordered liſe: though they ſtryue to make themſelues beleeue that there is neither God nor Deuill, neither ſaluation nor damnation. And therefore they reioyce diſſolutely, as though euil ſhoulde neuer happen vnto them: but finally they ſhal feele that they haue beene deceiued: as Solomon doeth wel declare vnto them, ſaying,

And the ende of that myrth is heauineſſe. After that Adam had reioyced of eating the forbidden fruite, hee had great heauineſſe: the which had continued for euer, if God had not redreſſed it by his promiſe. The worlde which periſhed with the flood did no leſſe feele it, than did the Sodomites and Gomorrhians. The people of Iſrael was puniſhed for their idolatrie, The riche glutton was caſt into hell. Al theſe nations haue felt that which Solomon ſpeaketh of: and all ſuch like ſhal feele it. Woe vnto them, that riſe vp earelie to followe drunkenneſſe, and to them that continewe vntil night, til the wine doe inflame them. And the harpe and viol, timbrel, and pype, and wine are in their feaſtes: but they regarde not the woorke of the Lord, neither conſider the worke of his handes. And in that day did the Lorde God of hoſtes call vnto weeping and mourning and to baldneſſe and girding with ſackecloth, &c.

Gen.3.7.8.
Gen.3.6.& 7 & 19.
Exo.32.
Luke.16.
Luke.6.24.25
Eſay.5.11.12.
& 22.12.13.

14 *The hearte that declineth, ſhal bee ſatiate with his owne wayes: but a good man ſhall rule ouer him.*

Solomon hath ſhewed vs heere before what are the wayes of an harte that declineth, when he ſaide, My Sonne, if ſinners intice thee, conſent thou not, &c. For their feete runne after euill, &c. For except mans heart were alienated and eſtranged from GOD and his woorde, hee ſhoulde not haue ſuch wicked thoughtes, neither woulde hee giue himſelfe vnto ſuch wicked workes, the which doe worthily deſerue grieuous puniſhment: as Solomon doeth ſhewe.

Pro.1.10.

He doth nowe pronounce the ſame ſentence, ſaying, *The hearte that declineth, ſhalbe ſatiate with his owne wayes.* By to bee ſatiſfied, hee meaneth ſo greate and grieuous a puniſhment that a man can beare no longer, and that hee is as it were amaſed and filled, euen as a glutton and drunkarde doeth fil himſelfe with greate abundance of meates and drinkes, that hee becommeth as it were a dead man. And as ſuch gluttons and drunkardes are contemned and deteſted of temperate and ſober men, euen ſo they whoſe heartes are gone aſtray and alienated from God, ſhalbee as a footſtoole vnto good men, Solomon ſignifieth this ſame, when hee addeth, *Pro.1.24.31.32.*

But a good man ſhal rule ouer him. This is partly fulfilled in this worlde: though the contrary thereof oftentimes is ſeene before our eyes: for though that Ioſeph was good, who ruled ouer his brethren: and that Moyſes did vanquiſh Pharao and his people: yet, as it ſeemeth to fleſhe and blood, the wicked to whome Solomon attributeth a heart that declineth, doe holde in ſubiection, afflict and perſecute the good: but what priſon, torment and affliction ſoeuer that the good doe ſuffer, yet are they not vanquiſhed, but doe by patience ouercome the wicked. Their victorie and ſuperioritie ſhalbe plainely ſeene in the heauenly glory. When God ſhal haue made the wicked, the footeſtoole of Ieſus Chriſt, whoſe brethren and members the faythful are, who alſo are fellowe heyres, and ſhal reigne with him, and ſhal ſee the wicked ſuppreſſed, ſubdewed, caſt and beaten downe euen to the bottome of hel. Of this victorie the children of Iſrael had the firſt beginning, when throbgh the power of God they ſubdewed ſo greate a number of kings and nations which were farre ſtronger then were they. Wee alſo haue ſome beginning thereof, when in ſpite of Satan and al his miniſters the Goſpel is preached, and that the poore faythful Chriſtians are conſtant in the confeſsion of the name of God and of Ieſus Chriſt, and change not for any manner of tormentes that they are put too. And in this ſorte they beginne to bee alreadie aboue them.

Vnto the ſecond parte of this ſentence wee may giue other expoſitions, the which although they be diuerſe, yet are they not contrarie. For in ſteede of ſaying, *ſhall rule ouer him, &c.* wee may firſt ſay, *but a good man ſhall depart from him*. Wherein wee are taught that we cannot boaſt our ſelues to be honeſt men, if we loue the company of them which fall away, and follow their maners and doings. Secondly, and the good man ſhalbe ſatiſfied with his wayes. And thus this whole ſentence ſhould be, as if he did ſay with S. Paule, Euery man ſhall receiue things which are done in his bodie, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or euil. Thirdly, And the goodman ſhall liue of his leaues, or of his fruite: that is to ſay, that he wil be contented with a ſmall thing. Hee will not labour to gripe much, and to take any thing in hand to the hurt of his neighbours: as do theſe vnſatiable gulfes, which are neuer ſatiſfied, till their mouthes be full of earth. Fourthly, the Chaldee interpretour ſaieth, And the good man ſhalbe ſatiſfied with his feare, or with his God: for he vſeth a word which ſignifieth both feare, and God, whoſoeuer forſaketh thoſe which truſt in him, but prouideth all thinges neceſſary for them, that they may want nothing, but be ſatiſfied. After which way and ſenſe ſoeuer we take this ſentence, we are admoniſhed to giue our ſelues vnto goodnes, leaſt we be puniſhed with ſuch hearts as fal away: not ſo, that by our goodneſſe we can deſerue that God ſhould exempt vs from puniſhment, but it pleaſeth him thus to rewarde his goodneſſe, wherewith hee endeweth vs. For if there bee any goodneſſe in vs, it is not ours.

2.Cor.5.10.
Heb.13.5.

15 *The fooliſh will beleeue euery thing: but the prudent will conſider his ſteppes.*

For as much as there is none of vs, which woulde take in good part to be counted or called ſimple, fooliſh, or dolte; therefore muſt we not be light to giue or lende our eares, for to receiue all thinges indifferently, whatſoeuer ſhalbe tolde vs: though S. Iames doeth admoniſh euery man to be ſwift to heare: for there he meaneth not that any man wil put forth, nor that we ſhal heare any thing but the word of trueth: ſeeing he giueth ſuch warning, after that hee hath ſaide that God of his owne will hath begotten vs by the worde of trueth.

Iam.1.18.19.

Let vs not thē be like vnto thoſe that are deſirous to heare newes,
that they may paſſe away their time merily and careleſly, ſo vayne
and vnprofitable they are: and yet notwithſtanding, they thinke
verily they are not ſluggiſh and ſleepiſh, but are quicke and nimble.
As ſuch men doe eaſily beleeue lyes, euen ſo doe they delight to
make others beleeue them alſo, and they thinke a man a verie
foole, or that he doeth them wrong, when hee beleeueth not their
words ſo eaſily, as did their ieſters and flatterers. Secondly, let vs
not be like vnto them which loue to bee flattered, and too heare
nothing that may trouble or hurt them: but would haue men to
ſpeake ſuch thinges as doe pleaſe them, or that they thinke to bee
profitable for them. They wil diligently heare lyars, falſe witneſſes
Exo.23.1. and ſlaunderers. Now as God forbiddeth lying, falſe witneſſe bearing,
2.Tim.4.3. and ſlaundering, ſo doth he alſo forbid, Thou ſhalt not receiue
a falſe tale, neither ſhalt thou put thine hand with the wicked, to
be a falſe witneſſe.

Thirdly, let vs take heede we be not like vnto thoſe which haue
ytching yeares. The world almoſt is filled with none other people,
and chiefly Turkie, and the places where poperie reigneth. If we followe
them, we runne into deſtruction, and doe worthily deſerue to
2.Theſ.2.10. periſh, ſeeing that wee are warned therof in diuers places. Hauing
Rom.16.17. then ſo many teſtimonies, wherby we are admoniſhed, we do worthily
1.Tim.4.1. deſerue to be counted and called fooles and dolts if we beleeue
2.Tim.3.1. euery thing. And for as much as we cannot take it well to be counted
2.Pet.2.1. ſuch, but contrarily, would be holden and eſteemed for diſcrete
and wiſe, therfore we muſt ſtand vpon our watch, conſidering diligently
how we ſhould gouerne our ſelues, that wee goe not awry.
Solomon doeth teach it vs ſo, when he ſaieth: *but the prudent
will conſider his ſteppes*. For to conſider well our ſteepes, that we
Pſal.5.8.& may be well gouerned, and not to beleeue euery thing, wee muſt
25.4.119. pray, Leade me O Lord, in thy righteouſnes, because of mine enemies:
12.105.& make my way plaine before my face. Shew me thy waies, O
103. Lorde, and teach mee thy pathes. Bleſſed art thou, O Lord, teach
me thy ſtatutes. Thy worde is a lanterne vnto my feete, and a light
vnto my path. The entraunce into thy wordes ſheweth light, and
giueth vnderſtanding to the ſimple. Nowe for to enioy this ſame,

well wee muſt followe the order that Ieſus Chriſt hath placed in his Church. Thus doing, we ſhalbe wiſe, diſcrete and well gouerned, as S. Paule doth admoniſh vs. Brethren, be not children in vnderſtanding, but as concerning malicious nes be children, but in vnderſtanding be of a ripe age. But when S. Paule saieth, That loue ſuffereth all thinges, it beleeueth all thinges: it hopeth all thinges, it indureth all thinges: it may ſeeme therefore not to be fooliſhnes to beleeue euery thing. To the which I anſwere, The holy Ghoſt which hath thus ſpoken by S. Paule, hath ſaide alſo by Moyſes: If there ryſe among you a Prophet or dreamer of dreames, and giue thee a ſigne or wonder, &c. S. Paule himſelfe alſo hath ſaide, Trye all things, and keepe that which is good. Againe, S. Iohn ſaith, Dearely beloued brethren, beleue not euery ſpirite, but try the ſpirites whether they be of God. And therefore, when it is ſayde, that loue beleeueth all thinges, let vs vnderſtand it of ſuch thinges as may and ought lawfully to be beleeued. For a Chriſtian man ought not wittingly and willingly to caſt away wiſedome and right iudgement, and ſuffer himſelfe to be deceiued, that he ſhould not iudge between white & black: but ought very rightly to proceed in ſimplicitie and humanitie in iudgement, and not to be ſo wicked as to charge his neighbour with wrong and euill ſuſpition.

Ephe. 4. 11.
1. Cor. 14. 20
1. Cor. 13. 7.
Deu. 13. 1.
1. Theſ. 5. 21.
1. Iohn. 4. 1.

16 *A wiſe man feareth and departeth from euill: but a foole rageth and is carelesse.*

They which for the wickednes they haue committed, do feare to be puniſhed, and yet haue no minde to doe wel, nor abhorre the euil that they thinke and doe commit: ſuch doe not departe from euil, for all their feare: as wee haue examples thereof in Cayn, Pharao, Saule, and Iudas and others. Therefore when Solomon ſayth, that *A wiſe man feareth, &c.* hee ſpeaketh not of ſuch a feare, but of an holy and honorable affection that the faithful beare towards God wherby they abhor & deteſt al wickednes, rebellion & diſobediēce, & trēble for the euils that they eyther thinke or commit, knowing that they are greatly indetted to the iudgement of God: and becauſe they are not pardoned, they feele them ſelues guiltie of death and damnation. And yet notwithſtanding, by the truſt that they haue in the mercies of God, they loue the good that hee commaundeth, and labour to giue him obedience. This is the true wiſedome, and the feare which God requireth of vs, and as hath alreadie bene handeled. A wiſe man therfore feareth the iudgement of God, which hee deſerueth for his ſinnes, the which alſo hee abhorreth and deteſteth: and therefore by true repentance, hee laboureth to auoide them, and to giue him ſelfe vnto goodneſſe, and according as God doth command him by his holie woorde. And being rebuked and reprehended, eyther in his owne conſcience, or by his neighbours, hee waxeth not ſpightful, but confeſſeth that hee is verie miſerable, becauſe of his ſinnes and offences.

Deut.4.6.
&10.12.
Pro.1.7.
&2.51.&8.
13.&9.10.
Rom.7.24.

Contrarily, as Solomon ſaieth, *A foole rageth, and is careleſſe.* When Solomon ſetteth raging, againſt departing from euil: and careleſneſſe, againſt feare: wee may firſt vnderſtande that the foole through deſpight and anger that hee hath to bee rebuked of God in his conſcience which doeth pricke him, or to bee admoniſhed and corrected by men, which ſet the iudgementes of God before him, and doe threaten him with his vengeance: by deſpight I ſay, of ſuch admonitions, hee ſtriueth to tranſgreſſe his word, and to giue him ſelf foorth on to do euil with al inſolencie and diſſolutenes, with all iniuries & ragings, to the diſhonour of God, & hurt of their neighbours. The world deſtroyed by the flood, & the Sodomites & Gomorrhians, and Saule did ſo behaue them ſelues: as may be gathered by the Scriptures. And nowe at this day many wicked men doe rage after this ſort: euen as Iudas hath alſo raged & fought againſt Ieſus Chriſt. Secondly, Let vs vnderſtand that whē it is ſaid, that the foole is careleſſe, that Solomon doeth not attribute vnto him any true aſſuraunce. For the ſounde of a leaſe ſhaken, ſhal chaſe him, &c. There they ſhalbe taken with feare, becauſe God is in the generation of the iuſt. The wicked are like the raging ſea, that can not reſt, whoſe waters caſt vp myre and dirte. But hee doeth attribute arrogancie, boaſting and preſumption vnto him: whereuppon it commeth, that the foole againſt his owne conſcience, laboureth

Leu.26.36.
Pſal.14.5.
Eſa.5.20.

to make him ſelfe beleeue that hee ſhal wel atchieue his enterpriſes, and that nothing ſhal hurt him nor hinder him: and therfore, boldly and raſhely doeth hee giue him ſelfe to doe euil. The wicked with pride doeth perſecute the poore, Which haue ſaide, With our tongue wil wee preuaile, &c. Becauſe ye haue ſaide, We haue made a couenant with death, and with hel are wee at agreement: though a ſcourge runne ouer, and paſſe through, it ſhal not come at vs.

Pſal.10.2. & 12.4.
Eſai.28.

Foraſmuch as there is nothing but the only truth of God which can aſſure man, and deliuer him truely from al feare, the which truth the foole doeth deſpiſe and reiect: therefore it followeth, hee can not ſtande faſt, but after the former meaning. And albeit the foole doeth ſtande faſt or is careleſſe, yet is hee not aſſured, but ſtandeth ſtill in feare, and trembleth: euen ſo, albeit that the wiſe man feareth, and that hee ſtandeth not faſt, yet is he aſſured and certified of the helpe and goodneſſe of God. In this there is no repugnancie: as wee may ſee by that which hath beene alreadie ſaide, both of the wiſe man & foole, otherwiſe S. Paul would not exhort vs, to make an ende of our owne ſaluation with feare and trembling. Hee woulde not haue vs to doubt of the good wil of God towardes vs, nor of our ſaluation: but hee woulde that we ſhoulde witneſſe and approoue our obedience, in this, that wee abaſe our ſelues and become humble, confeſſing howe miſerable we are of our ſelues, and howe naked of al goodneſſe. This feare is contrarie to the careleſneſſe of fooles and wicked men, wherein they waxe proude and are delighted, or rather are puft vp with a vain confidence of their force and power.

Philip.2.12.

17 *He that is haſtie to anger, committeth follie, and a buſie bodie is hated.*

Albeit that al vertues doe agree together, and that there is no repugnancie betweene them, and that the worldly wiſe men doe ſay, that there is al one inſtruction of thinges contrarie: yet neuertheleſſe al vices which are contrarie vnto vertue, doe not agree altogether, but there are ſome, amongeſt the which there are great contrarieties. Amongeſt others, Solomon doeth heere ſet before vs two vices, and doeth ſet them one contrarie to the other. The one is choler, the which ſodainly breaketh foorth by woordes or by actes that are put foorth without regarde had to the ende thereof, whether it ſhalbe hurtful to a mans ſelfe or to his neighbours: whether we ſhalbe praiſed or diſcommended therfore: whether we ſhal eſcape as we would after anger is paſt: it ſufficeth to ſhew his impatiencie, for too make him afraide, and that there may be no reſiſtance. But that is not alwaies obteined: for oftentimes it hapeneth that the vnpatient doe meete with as angry folkes as themſelues are, or with other diſcreete men and well ruled, which can wel ſuppreſſe them, and make them feele that they doe not wiſely, but fooliſhly, which hurteth them. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying, *He that is haſtie to anger, committeth folly:* Hee foloweth heere our manner of ſpeaking. For wee often ſaye that a man woorketh folly, when that which he doeth ſerueth to nothing but to bring him to contempt, or to hinder him, & to deſtroy him in ſteede that hee ment to do that euil to his neighbour. And when he thus ſpeaketh, he doeth wel ſhewe vs, that wee ought to be careful to take heede, leſt we be ſodainly angry, ſeeing wee would haue no fooliſhe thing laide to our charge, but woulde haue whatſoeuer

Iam.1.19.20 we ſay or doe, allowed to be good. Saint Iames doth exhort vs, ſaying,
Mat.5.19. Let euerie man be ſlow to wrath. For to preſerue vs then from rebellion, and to auoid puniſhment, let vs folow the patience of our
Exo.34.6. God: The Lord is ſtrong, merciful, and gracious, ſlowe to anger, and
Pſal.103.8 abundant in goodneſſe and trueth. And for to folow this wel, let vs
Ephe.4.31. obey S. Paul, who ſaith, Let al bitternes, & anger, &c. be put away
& 5.1. frō you. But now put ye away euē al theſe things, wrath, anger, ma-
Collo.3.8. liciouſnes, curſed ſpeaking, filthy ſpeaking, out of your mouth. Thus doing, we ſhal not commit follie, but ſhal work wiſdō. The vice that Solomon placeth againſt haſtineſſe or anger, is a long & ſecrete purpoſe to hurt a mans neighbour, the which at the laſt is diſcouered, & maketh a man hated, who after hauing long diſſembled the anger & hate that he did beare to his neighbour, doth declare him ſuch as he is, labouring to put his deuiſes in execution. This is giuen vs to vnderſtande, when Solomon ſaith, *A buſie bodie*, or a man of imaginations, ſhalbe hated. He doeth here ſhew vs what reward the malicious are woorthie of, that is to ſay, that as they haue nouriſhed in their harts, wrath, & hatred, euē ſo it cōmeth to paſſe that they are

hated as they deſerue: firſt of God, as Solomon ſaith in his 6. chap. The Lorde hateth an hart that imagineth wicked enterpriſes. Hee maketh them alſo to feele this hatred, as Dauid ſaith: Thine hande ſhal finde out al thine enemies, and thy right hand ſhal find out thē that hate thee: Thou ſhalt make them like a fiery ouen in time of thine anger, &c. When the ſcriptures ſpeake thus in the name of the afflicted, againſt buſie bodies, it ſheweth in the ſecōd place that they are hated of mē, as they do alſo wel deſerue. But it is not to ſay that it is lawful for vs to hate them which imagine euil thinges, againſt vs for our owne ſakes: but inaſmuch as they bee the enemies of God. Oh that thou wouldeſt ſlay, O God, the wicked and blooddie men, to whome I ſay, departe from me: Which ſpeake wickedly of thee, being thine enemies are lifted vp in vaine. Albeit then that Solomon ſaith that the buſie bodie, or man of imaginations ſhalbe hated, yet it is not to ſay, that he alloweth vs to hate our neighbor, howe wicked ſoeuer he be, for his owne profit or diſprofit: but Solomon doeth ſhewe vs what doeth happen vnto the dreamers of malice, and what they deſerue to haue. And becauſe that we naturally deſire to haue the loue and fauour of our neighbours, and not their diſpleaſure, except we be voide of our right wits, we muſt here therefore learne to thinke wel and to do wel to our neighbours.

Pro.6.18
Pſal.21.8.9.
Mat.5.44
Rom.12.17.
Pſal.139.19

18 *The fooliſh do inherite follie: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*

When wee deſpiſe or reiect any thing, it is very harde to obteine and get it: but if we bee careful as wee ought to followe any thing, wee eaſily get the poſſeſſion thereof. Wherefore if the fooliſhe haue neither knowledge nor wiſdome, we ought not to wonder at it: for as wee haue ſeene, they reiect it. And in ſteede of that, they are earneſt after follie: and therefore, they obteine it: as Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying,

Pro.1.7.22

The fooliſhe doe inherite follie. It is not of late, but of old: as it is heere ſignified after a ſorte by the preterperfectence of the verbe which Solomon in his language vſeth, ſaying, They haue inherited. And ſo this inheritance is come or deſcended from father to ſonne, and hath beene more careſully kept, than if it had beene any good thing. But ſuche is the nature of man, when hee is left vnto him ſelfe, that hee is rather geuen to vanitie, then to any profitable woorke, rather to follie, then to wiſedome, and is more delighted with ignorance then with knowledge. Wherefore he is wel woorthie to inherite nothing that excelleth: and they which folowe him can gather no profite thereby, ſith hee hath nothing but follie: for a man can not take that of his heritage which it hath not. *Pro.1.26.* Let vs therfore firſt vnderſtād that we are here admoniſhed not eaſily to beleeue all kind of words, and to ſuffer our ſelues to be deceiued as fooles: for of ſuch ſimplicitie or lightneſſe, there can come but folly, which is not onely vnprofitable, but alſo hurtfull. Secondly, let vs not greatly deſire the companie of the fooliſh, and to gette their acquaintance and familiarite: for ſith they poſſeſſe nothing that is ought worth, we can haue nothing but hinderance to keepe them company, though there were no other euill but this, that wee looſe our time amongſt them, except we rebuke, chide and threaten them, as they deſerue: partly to declare that we will not communicate with their vnfruitefull workes of darkenes: partly, for to labor to bring them againe to a ſounde vnderſtanding, that they may bee turned away from folly, and to giue them ſelues vnto wiſdom, for to be diſcrete and well gouerned. By this meanes they ſhall not come to be blamed nor ſhamed for their folly, but to bee magnified and honoured. Solomon doeth pronounce it, when he ſaieth; *but the prudent are crowned with knowledge*. As good worldly huſbandes doe labour to get and to haue their poſſeſſions and heretages about them, and do therin greatly delight, for to ſee their houſes to be compaſſed round aboute with goodly fieldes, meddowes and vineyards and other earthly commodities: and when they can ſafely keepe and defend their goods, they are praiſed and honoured of the worlde, and eſteemed as young kinges: *Pro.13.16.* euen ſo the prudent which do ſpiritually labour, which are gouerned by the leading of the holy Ghoſt, and worke all by knowledge, do ſo abounde in the ſame, that they are therefore in great eſtimation and account with them, which do abhor fooliſhnes & loue knowledge, & whatſoeuer is done and ruled therby.

After this ſorte are the prudent crowned with knowledge:

and it is very meete ſo to vnderſtande it. For the Scripture hath a
crowne, and alſo vſeth to giue a crowne, for ornaments of glory, honour,
and magnificence, & alſo for abundance: as it is ſaid, He hath
ſpoyled mee of mine honour, and taken the crowne away from my
head. For thou haſt made him little lower, then God, and crowned *Iob.19.9.*
him with glory and worſhip, &c. For abundance. Euen as it is ſaid *Pſal.8.6.*
of the fooliſhe that they inherite folly, becauſe they haue nothing *&21.4.*
elſe about them, & that for this very cauſe they are cõtemned: euen *&5.43.*
ſo it is ſaide of the prudent, they are crowned with knowledge, becauſe *&65.12.*
that the ſame is abũdantly ſhewed foorth both in their words *&103.4*
and deedes: this is the cauſe, and why they are eſteemed. And that
wee bee not deceiued in this worde *knowledge*, let vs not thinke to
be prudent, when wee haue muche read and reteined humane ſciences:
for humane ſciences are but vanitie and folly of themſelues,
and doe nothing ſerue but to puffe vp a man, & to make him boaſt
and bragge, which is great folly. But then are we wiſe and crowned
with knowledge, when wee giue our mindes and wittes vnto the
worde of the Lorde, following after his wil, ſtudiyng diligently and
faithfully euery one in his vocation. Moreouer, let vs firſt note,
that albeit the ſtate of the faithful, which are diſcrete and wel ruled,
is bace and naught ſet by before the worlde, yet before GOD
(who giueth them the crowne of knowledge) they are in a kingly
ſtate: whereof that wee may bee partakers, let vs followe this exhortation
of Saint Paule: Brethren, bee not children in vnderſtanding,
but as concerning maliciouſnes, be children, but in vnderſtanding *1.Cor.14.20.*
bee of a ripe age. If very conſtantly wee followe this exhortation,
and that wee ceaſſe not to perſeuer (for all the temptations
which happen) tyl wee come vnto vnitie of faith: after the crowne *Ephe.4.13.*
of knowledge, wee ſhal obteine the crowne of life. Secondarily, *Iam.1.12.*
let vs note that as a crowne is ſet vpon the head, that it may bee
ſeene: euen ſo God crowneth the prudent with knowledge, not
that they ſhould hide their talent in the earth: but that they ſhould
bring it foorth to light and open ſhewe, by ſounde doctrine and *1.Pet.2.9.*
good workes: for euen therefore are they crowned kings. And
heerein wee muſt perſeuer, what perſecution ſoeuer is raiſed vp against *1.Tim.2.11.*
vs. For this is a true ſaying. For if we bee dead together with *12.*

him, wee alſo ſhal liue together with him. If wee ſuffer, we ſhal alſo raigne together with him:

19 *The euil ſhal bowe before the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.*

It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that this preſent ſentence repugneth diuers proofes and experiences. For firſt of al, Caine was wicked: and ſo farre was it of, that hee woulde bowe before iuſt Abel, that rather hee roſe vp againſt him, and ſlue him. Secondly, the people of Sodome were wicked: and they greatly ſtroue againſt Lot who was righteous. Thirdly, Iſmael ſcorneth Iſaack. Fourthly, Eſau hated Iacob. Fifthly, the ſonnes of Iacob ſpoyleth Ioſeph their brother of his precious garment, and ſolde him. And alwaies wee haue ſeene the wicked after the outwarde apparance to bee ſtronger and higher in authoritie, and to giue no reuerence to the good, but to eſteeme them as doung and filth, to reiect and perſecute thē, for to kil and vtterly to deſtroy them. And alſo our Lord ſaith vnto his Diſciples: Bleſſed are they which ſuffer for righteouſneſſe ſake. If the worlde hate you, knowe it hated mee before you. They ſhal excommunicate you out of their Synagogues. Again, In the worlde yee ſhal haue affliction, but bee of good cheere, I haue ouercome the worlde. I anſwere, albeit, for the exerciſe of the faithful, and to trie their patience, God doeth ſuffer the wicked to riſe vp againſt them, contemne them and moleſt them: yet neuertheleſſe at the time appointed, and when hee ſhall ſee meete, hee will beate downe the arrogancie of the wicked, and ſuppreſſe their furie and crueltie, and ſubdue them vnto the good and righteous. Eſau had ſurely thought to haue ſlaine Iacob: but hee came to receiue him. The king of Sodome went to meete Abraham: And the brethren of Ioſeph came and bowed before Ioſeph, &c. Then Pharao called Moſes & Aaron, and ſaide, pray ye vnto the Lord, that hee may take away the frogges from mee, and from my people, and I will let the people goe, that they may doe ſacrifice vnto the Lorde. The Lorde gaue the people fauour before the Egyptians, &c. Rahab, beſought the ſpies. &c. And the Gebonites became the ſeruants of

Gen.4.8.
&13.13.
&19.4.
2,Pet.2.7.
&27.41.
&37.23.28.

Mat.5.10.
Iohn.15.18.
&16.2.33.

Gen.33.4.
&14.27.
&42.9.

Exod.8.8.
&12.36.
Ioſu.2,12.
9.25.

Ioſuah of the people of Iſrael. To bee ſhorte, the people of Iſrael, who for the moſt part were wicked, was conſtrained to bow before Moſes, Ioſua, the Iudges, Kinges, and Prophetes. Saule humbled himſelfe vnto Dauid, when hee confeſſed and acknowledged his innocencie and righteouſneſſe. *1. Sam. 24.18* The wicked doe now alſo reuerence the good, when the iudges and Magiſtrates know howe to humble the ſworde of iuſtice: and when by the preaching of the worde, they are confounded, and haue their mouthes faſt ſtopped, or els that they returne from their wickedneſſe by true repentance ſubmitting themſelues to the exhortations and inſtructions that are *Heb. 13.17.* made vnto them by the worde of the Lorde: in following that which is ſaide, Obey thẽ that haue the ouerſight of you, & ſubmit your ſelues. Therefore this preſent ſentence is true, vpon the which let vs firſt note, that the iudgements in the olde time were holden in the gates: & thither men came for to obey iuſtice. For this cauſe for to declare howe the wicked are conſtrained to ſubmit themſelues, and to giue obedience vnto the righteous: Solomon ſaith, that they bowe at the gates of the righteous. Secondly, foraſmuche as wee muſt chiefly bowe vnto kinges and gouernours, they *Rom. 13. 13.* are heere admoniſhed to lay aſide al malice, to flie al iniuſtice, and to *1. Pet. 2. 13.* giue themſelues vnto goodneſſe, and to ſhewe themſelues truely iuſt, in rendering to euery man. &c. And if any do fal away and become diſſolute and rebellious, as there are which wil not encline to them, and wil not obey them as they ought, let them then knowe, either that God wil trie their forces & boldneſſe, and whether they bee of good courage to withſtande the wicked, and to ſuppreſſe their inſolencies: either that God doeth puniſhe them, becauſe they apply not them ſelues vnto goodneſſe and iuſtice as they ought.

Therefore when any inſurrections are, let the Magiſtrates humble them ſelues before GOD, weeping and lamenting their faultes: and yet for al this to looſe no courage, but manly to vſe the ſworde which is committed vnto them. Thirdly wee are admoniſhed what kinde of men wee ought to place in authoritie.

Fourthly, albeit that the wil of GOD bee (as it appeareth heere) that the wicked ſhoulde bowe before the good, yet is it not too ſay that wee ſhoulde deſire men to bow and kneele before vs,

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but ſo much as is required for the honour and glory of God, for the common peace, and for the order of pollicie. For our goodneſſe and righteouſneſſe can neuer bee ſo excellent, that it ſhould deſerue that men ſhoulde bowe and reuerence vs. Fiftly, ſith that vnto God the king euerlaſting belongeth all honour and glory, and that it is before him that euery knee ſhoulde bowe, wee muſt therefore vnderſtande that he maketh his Maieſtie ſhine at the gates of the righteous, when hee maketh the wicked to bowe before them. And for aſmuch alſo as hee greatly eſteemeth the good and righteous, when he maketh them partakers of the glory, which apperteineth vnto him onely: it is therfore a true argument that hee woulde haue vs highly to eſteeme goodneſſe and righteouſneſſe.

20 *The poore is hated euen of his owne neighbour: but the friends of the rich are many.*

Solomon pronounceth heere that which is commonly doone in the worlde, and not that which ought to bee doone. And ſo hee doeth not giue vs doctrine that wee muſt follow: but hee accuſeth men of ingratitude, of diſcourteſie and crueltie, when hee ſaith, *The poore is hated euen of his owne neighbour.* The ingratitude which is committed in the hate of the poore is againſt God. For whoſoeuer hateth the poore, hee doeth not acknowledge the benefites which hee hath receiued of God, without his deſertes. Wee are al naturally borne poore both in body and ſoule, and are voide and naked of all benefites, and cannot obteine either corporal or ſpiritual, vnleſſe God of his onely grace and free goodneſſe doe giue them vs without hauing reſpect vnto vs: for wee are ſo corrupted and malitious of nature, that wee prouoke him ſo much as wee can to make vs poore, and to deſtroy vs rather then to doe vs good, and ſaue vs. Firſt of all, touching our body, if wee conſider our conception in the wombe of our mother, wee ſhal knowe, how poore a thing wee are: that wee were very weake and ſickly, and that wee coulde haue no nouriſhment nor increaſe but of God: for ſeeing the gouernment of mothers, which is then very diſordered, and their luſtes vnbrideled, immediately man ſhould periſhe, if God did not wonderfully as it were preſerue and fortifie him. This poore ſtate of man,and the helpe of God are wel expreſſed in Iob . And when wee are borne wee bring no riches with vs. If wee haue any neceſſay and profitable thing for this body,it is the gift of God : as wee confeſſe when we aske our dayly bread. And our Lorde doeth teache it vs, when hee woulde not haue vs to take care for this life. Secondly,as touching our ſoule, wee are no better furniſhed then was Dauid,who confeſſeth,Beholde,I was borne ininiquitie,and in ſinne hath my mother conceiued mee : And Paul ſaith, That wee were by nature the children. Therefore if wee be partakers of the ſpiritual and heauenly riches, it commeth of the grace and gift of God,as Saint Paul doth pronounce afterwardes. Now the Lorde making vs prtakers of his benefites(for al is his)would haue vs to confeſſe the goodneſſe and liberalitie that hee beſtoweth vpon vs. The which wee cannot trnely doe : except wee ſubmit our ſelues wholy to obey the commandementes of his wil, which is, that the riches which hee giueth vs, we ſhoulde vſe them as good diſpoſers of them,diſtributing by loue vnto thē which haue neede. Let there bee no poore man amongeſt you. Againe,When one of thy brethren with thee is fallen into pouertie,thou ſhalt lende him. Again,Thou ſhalt giue him,and let it not greeue thine heart to giue vnto him. See that thou deale thy bread to the hungrie, &c. If we be not diligent to followe this wil, we are vnthankeful vnto God,conſidering the bountifulneſſe hee vſeth towardes vs. Vngentleneſſe and crueltie is made manifeſt,in the hatred of the poore. For hee that hateth his neigbour is a manſlear : and that is becauſe hee exerciſeth not the charitie hee ought. They then that charge & burden their neighbours with impoſtes, vſuries, and oppreſſions, which doe moleſt them with lawe and other wronges to deſtroy them,are heere righly accuſed of churliſhneſſe and crueltie. Beſides the ſaid accuſatiō, Solomon doth ſhew that it is a very miſerable thing to be poore,except we can patiently beare it ,and do not feare what man can doe vnto vs. As touching the ſecond part of this preſent ſentence,which is,

Iob.10 8.
&1.21.
1.Tim.6.7.
Mat.6.11.
25
Pſal.51.6.
Epheſ.2.3.4.
Pſal.24.1.
&50.12.
Deu.15.4.7.
7.10.
Eſa.58.7.
1.Iohn.3.15.

But the freendes of the riche are many: Solomon doth not rebuke and blame thoſe which are truely the freendes of the rich : for it is not lawful for vs to hate any man,but it is rather commanded vs to loue our neighbours, without regarde of perſons.

Likewiſe they which truely loue the riche, doe not procure to them ſelues any profite to their purſe : but if it bee needeful, doe exhorte them to occupie them ſelues about their ſaluation, in giuing
Luke.6.9 almes to the needie, according to the doctrine of our Lorde, and of
2.Cor.8.7. Saint Paule. But hee accuſeth the worlde of flatterie, of accep-
&.9.6. ting of perſons and of couetouſneſſe. They which thus behaue
1.Tim.6.17 themſelues towardes the rich, are called their freendes : not that
Iam.2.1 they are ſo in deede, but becauſe they ſeeme ſo to bee, and woulde bee counted ſuche.

21 *The ſinner deſpiſeth his neighbour : but he that hath mercy on the poore, is bleſſed.*

Solomon doeth ſhewe vs that the worlde is ful of ſinners, when hee ſaith, *The ſinner diſpiſeth his neighbour* : for it is an ordinary thing, that they which haue welth, and do not acknowledge that that which they enioy, commeth of the gift of God, do greatly flatter themſelues, & think that it cōmeth of their owne labour, trauaile, wiſedome, and cunning, that riches come vnto them, they confeſſe not that they bee ſtewardes of God, but make them ſelues beleeue that it is lawful for them to doe as they liſt with the goods they poſſeſſe : and therefore they haue no care of the needineſſe of their neighbours, but doe deſpiſe them, as they doe ſhewe it in diuers ſortes. Firſt of al, in not helping their neceſsities by almes. Secondly, in vſing ſubtil meanes, to drawe vnto them that little they haue. Thirdly, in pulling their ſubſtance from them parforce and violence, or conſuming them by ſutes, by vſuries and other wicked trades. So that the contempt which is heere ſpoken of, doeth not onely ſtand in negligence, but in churliſhneſſe and cruelty that they commonly exerciſe through all the worlde, as men doe feele it.

Eze.22.29. Wherefore it is not without cauſe that the Scripture complaineth hereof, euē through al the Prophets. This crueltie is ſomwhat ſignified, when it is not ſaide that the ſinner doeth deſpiſe ſtrangers and vnknowne, his enimies and aduerſaries : but it is ſaid that he deſpiſeth his neighbour : that is to ſay, him of whome hee ought to take care and compaſſion, and to helpe him by loue in his neceſſities. The crueltie alſo is ſignified by the Antitheſis that Solomon maketh heere, when he ſaith: Luke.10.30.

But he that hath mercy on the poore, is bleſſed. For againſt deſpiſing, hee ſetteth mercy, which is contrary vnto crueltie. For by crueltie men ſpoyle and rauiſhe, and doe all the hurt they can in the worlde to their neighbour: and by mercy, wee lende, and giue liberally, as alſo the worde which Solomon vſeth doth ſignifie. And when the merciful man is ſet againſt the ſinner, then doeth it ſhew vs that albeit by the corruptiõ of our fleſhe, ſinne, dwelleth in vs: yet is not the ſame imputed vnto vs, nor wee counted ſinners but righteous, ſo long as wee are mercifull. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not againe: but the righteous is merciful and giueth. Pſal.37.21

Againe, A good man is merciful and lendeth: he hath diſtributed and giuen to the poore, &c. & .112.5.9. Not that our mercifulneſſe can deſerue ſuch reputation: but becauſe God of his onely grace doeth accept and allowe it, and is authour thereof. It is not ſimply ſaide, *that hath mercy*: for they which are at their eaſe, and haue all thinges neceſſary for them, haue no neede of mercy to bee ſhewed to them: and therefore Solomon addeth, *on the poore*. Theſe are they which haue great neede to bee pitied: as alſo God doeth carefully wil the ſame by his worde, and it is not without cauſe: for they haue the moſt neede of fauour, ſuccour, and helpe: and there are no people in the world more deſpiſed, worſe handeled, nor more troden downe and oppreſſed then are they. By experience wee may ſee it: and alſo God often complaineth thereof, by his Prophetes. Therefore if it happen vs to fal in to the number of the miſerable, & afflicted, and that wee are deſpiſed, yet let vs not bee diſcouraged, nor diſpaire, as though God had forſaken vs, and careth not for vs. For if wee be deſpiſed, it is of ſinners who are not acquainted with GOD. But looke what ſinners doe eſteeme, that is reiected of GOD, and that which they doe deſpiſe and reiect, is receiued and allowed of God. Pſal.5.5. Therefore we muſt not feare the contempt of the worlde, nor yet be coupled with ſinners, for to conſent with them to deſpiſe the afflicted, when wee feele our ſelues at our

eaſe, and haue proſperitie : otherwiſe it woulde turne to our woe.
Luk.24. Solomon doeth not heere ſignifie it, when hee promiſeth bleſſing
& 16.22. vnto them that are merciful vnto the afflicted. This bleſſing ſhal
not onely continne in this worlde, but for euer : as alſo ſhal the
woe of the wicked. And albeit that proſperitie and felicitie is
Pſal.41.2. promiſed vnto our mercy, yet is it not enough to obteine ſuch
Mat.25.34. bleſſing : but becauſe that GOD receiueth and alloweth it,
& 5.7. becauſe wee are elected before all time, and hath prepared for
vs this bleſſing before the beginning or foundation of the world
was laide.

22 *Doe not they erre that imagine euill? but to them that thinke on good thinges, ſhall bee mercy and trueth.*

Foraſmuch as the worlde is ful of men which imagine malice, and which deuiſe euil thinges againſt God, and againſt their neighbours, it followeth right well that the number is right great of them which hold not the right way, but doe erre and goe aſtray, folowing the wayes of deſtruction. Solomon doth ſignifie this ſame, whē hee asketh, ſaying:

Doe not they erre which imagine euill? And foraſmuche as there is none of vs al which deſireth to erre, that is to ſay, to goe aſtray, and wander out of the way, but woulde al walke in a right path, and come vnto the ende of our purpoſe, and not to bee put beſide our intentes, except wee bee out of our wittes, voide of ſounde iudgement, and perfect reaſon : ſith I ſay wee deſire the ſame, or at the leaſtwiſe doe labour to make our ſelues beleeue that our wil is ſuch : therfore for to obteine the ſame, wee muſt diligently take heede that wee followe not them which imagine euil. And for to doe this let vs not bee like vnto the ſuperſtitious and idolaters, which forge idols, ſome of wood, golde and ſiluer, or of other viſible, palpable and groſſe matter : otherſome, of traditions and mens inuentions, good cuſtomes, fantaſies and intentes. They deuiſe and imagine nothing but euil, though they falſly beleeue that by ſuche traſhe and abhomination, they do honour and ſerue God.

But the Lorde, whome no good thing can diſpleaſe, doth wel ſhew, that there is nothing but euil in ſuch ſeruice, when hee declareth, that he abhorreth and reiecteth them: as it is wel taught vs by the firſt table of Moyſes, and by the Prophetes. They make themſelues beleeue that they ſerue GOD, heerein they fayle and knowe not what they doe, ſo at the laſt they ſhalbe confounded: The Idolaters ſhal not inherite the kingdome of heauen. Secondarily, let vs not ioyne with theſe mockers and ſcorners, which boldly deſpyſe and blaſpheme God and his doctrine: as though that were but fables and dreames, which the Paſtours and Miniſters of the Churche doe preache to them. Such kinde of people are imaginers of euill, when they fight againſt God, who is enemie vnto al euil, and when they ſet his holy lawe (which is the rule of al goodneſſe, ſo much as poſſible they can) at nought. In the which doing, they doe greatly erre, and are farre wyde: as appeareth by this ſaying: Wo vnto them that ſeeke deepe, to hide their counſel from the Lorde, &c. Such men thinke, or at the leaſt labour to make themſelues beleeue, that there is neither God, nor Deuil, neither heauen nor hel: but at the laſt they ſhal feele that they haue erred. For the cruel man ſhall ceaſe, and the ſcornefull ſhalbee conſumed. Therefore will I chooſe out their deluſions, and I will bring their feare vppon them, becauſe I called, and none woulde anſwere, &c.

Eſay.29.15. & 40.18. & 41.6. & 44.9.

Eſay.29.15.

Eſay.66.4.

Thirdly, let vs not thinke that in hurting and dooing euill vnto our neighbours wee can proſper: though the greateſt parte of the worlde bee of this opinion. For as we may ſee, ſome thinke to creepe aloft by pryde and ambition, by rebellion and diſobedience: ſome by murthers, ſeditions, hatreds, malice, and inſurrections: ſome by theftes, ſnatching, vſurie, and wicked bargaines: ſome by whoredomes and adulteries, and other ſome by flatteries, falſe tales and ſlaunderings. But they erre and be deceiued, ſeeing they turne themſelues from the right wayes of the commandementes of the Lorde, and folowe the wyde and broade way which leadeth to deſtruction. This deſtruction is wel ſignified by errour, and alſo by the Antitheſis that Solomon maketh, when hee ſayeth,

Math.7.13.

But to them that thinke on good thinges, ſhalbee mercie and trueth. When hee ſpeaketh thus, hee denyeth mercy and truth vnto thoſe that imagine euil, Wherevpon it foloweth that they cannot looke but for deſtruction and damnation, partly in this worlde. For as they are filled with malice, craft, deceit, wrong, violence and crueltie againſt GOD and their neighbours: euen ſo doeth God render and pay them the like, ſtirring vp enemies againſt them, euen ſuch as they haue beene to others. And finally, for to fyl vp the meaſure of their deſtruction, he wil vtterly depriue them of his fauour & mercie, beſtowing no parte of his gracious promiſes vpon them and wil ſende them to eternal damnation.

Contrarily, vnto them which thinke wel, that is to ſay, which haue ſet their loue on the lawe of the Lord, for to giue him the honour which hee demandeth thereby, and for to ſerue & profit their neighbours, ſhal be graunted mercy and trueth. For as they labour to be faythful vnto God, by giuing true obedience vnto his worde, and beeing gentle vnto their neighbours, giuing them faithfully all their duetie: euen ſo the Lorde wil make them partakers of his true and vnfallible promiſes: he wil raiſe them vp, according as they ſhal haue neede, ſuch men as wil ſhewe them fauour, and intreate them with al meekeneſſe and gentleneſſe, & ſuch as wil imagine no treaſon or other wickedneſſe againſt them: neither ſhal ceaſe to doe thē good, according to his faythful and gracious promiſes, vntil that in the heauenly ioy and felicitie he giue thē the ful fruition of thē. For his merciful kindneſſe is euer more and more towardes vs: and the truth of the Lord endureth for euer. Let vs note that Solomon doth not preache vnto vs the merite of our workes, when he promiſeth mercy & truth vnto them which thinke good things: but he would haue vs while we giue our ſelues vnto goodnes that we ſhould not praiſe our thoughts & operations, as though there were any worthineſſe or excellencie in vs, which might moue or binde God to do vs good. But that we ſhould ſtay our ſelues vpon the gentlenes, goodneſſe, or mercy of the Lord, by the which only, he is moued to loue vs, & to do vs good according to his gracious promiſes, in the performing wherof he ſheweth the truth of his grace only, & not for to giue vs that which our workes do deſerue: for he can owe vs nothing.

Pſa.117.2.

Rom.4.13.

nothing. For the promiſe was not made vnto Abraham to bee the heyre of the worlde by the lawe, but by the righteouſnes of fayth. Secondly, let vs note, that Solomon is heere no lawe giuer, but an Euangeliſt, leading vs vnto Ieſus Chriſt. For we obteine no mercy, but by him only. For the promiſes of God are yea and amen in him.

Rom.3.24. 25.& 15.2. 2.Cor.1.20.

23 *In all labour there is abundance: but the talke of the lippes bringeth onely want.*

Solomon heere before hath ſpoken many ſentences, for to exhorte vs vnto care and diligence, vnto labour and trauaile. And if wee were ſuch as we ought to bee, to wit, very careful to obey the word of the Lorde, and willing to beare the burthen which hee layeth vpon vs: Solomon ſhoulde not haue needed to haue pronounced theſe ſentences. But becauſe we are like vnto aſſes, which make no diligent ſpeede, except they bee often beaten: and vnto reſtie iades which when they are ſpurred, runne backwarde, except the riders doe pricke them ſharply with the ſpurre, with ſtroke vppon ſtroke: for this cauſe, Solomon doeth exhorte vs nowe againe to labour: when he ſaith,

Pro.6.6.& 10.45.& 12. 11.27.13.4.11. 23.& 14.4. Gene.3.19.

In al labour there is abundance. It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that Solomon repugneth that which is written, The earth ſhall bring foorth vnto thee, thornes and thiſtles, and thou ſhalt eate the herbe of the fielde. When thou ſhalt til the grounde, it ſhall not hencefoorth yeelde vnto thee her ſtrength. And I wil breake the pride of your power, and I wil make your heauen as yron & your earth as braſſe. And your ſtrength ſhalbe ſpent in vaine, &c. Againe, Curſed ſhalt thou be in the towne, and curſed alſo in the fielde, &c. And this ſame which is pronounced in theſe ſcriptures, commeth often to paſſe, as experience ſheweth it. I anſwere, That Solomon ſpeaketh of the nature of labour, and of that which naturally happeneth, ſo that wee doe not hinder it by our ingratitude, infidelitie, idolatrie, ſuperſtition, rebellion, diſobedience, pride, vngentlenes, crueltie, and other wickednes, wherewith the worlde is wholy infected & corrupted. Hee doeth then teache vs, that if wee hate, deteſt and abhorre al kinde of wickedneſſe, wee walke in the

Gene.3.18. &.4.12. Leui.26.19. 20. Deut.28.16.

feare of God reuerencing his woorde, by putting our whole truſt in his goodneſſe, and to folowe his wil, that GOD will bleſſe our labour, and make vs abounde in wealth, and whatſoeuer wee take in hande, or apply our mindes and ſpirite vnto, ſhal proſper.

Heerein hee ſpeaketh agreeably vnto that which the Saintes haue felt, and according as God hath promiſed in his lawe and by the Prophets. The Patriarkes were bleſſed of God, who proſpered their labour and the woorke of their handes: in ſuch wiſe that they did abounde in riches. And the promiſes are written in the *Pſal.128.* places alledged before, and in the 128. Pſalme. And albeeit that in the ſight of the eyes wee iudge not that there is abundance in the *Eccle.9.2.* labour of them which feare God: for oftentimes the ſame accidents happened to them as to the wicked: & alſo they are robbed, or their hire is keepe from them, or elſe they are contented with a little gaine: Neuertheleſſe, the labour changeth not his nature, and GOD is true in his promiſes, after the which wee muſt not giue them abundance, the which doeth not alwaies conſiſt in ſuperfluitie, nor in multitude of great riches of this worlde: but chiefly in contentation, and in this that God knoweth to bee expedient. For the ſame doeth better furniſh, and is alſo of greater profit, then greater abundance of the wicked.

Furthermore, though they which feare GOD and are diligent in labour, ſhoulde ſuffer greate want, yet is it not to ſay but that God is true in his promiſes: for howe much ſoeuer we feare God, yet doeth hee alwaies finde ynough in vs to bee amended, and may iuſtly chaſten vs as hee pleaſeth. Therefore let vs not iudge of Gods promiſes after mans reaſon, nor after the ſight of our eyes: but let euery one of vs carefully and faythfully occupie himſelfe in his woorke, praying vnto GOD that it woulde pleaſe him to giue it good ſucceſſe and proſpering it as hee ſhal knowe to bee expedient. And let vs not bee like vnto thoſe which giue themſelues vnto ſlouthfulneſſe and ydlenes, to vanitie and fooliſhnes, and paſſe away their time in ieſting and ſcoffing in merie tales, and ydle woordes: and yet notwithſtanding, they deſire abundance to liue plentifully and wealthily, and at their eaſe, as if they were wel woorthy. But they doe not obteine according to their deſire: for euen as they deſerue, God bringeth them vnto extreeme pouertie. Solomon doeth ſignifie it when hee ſayth,

But the talke of the lippes bringeth onely want: When hee
ſetteth the talke of the lippes, againſt labour, and that hee threate-
neth it with want, let vs knowe that vnder the talke of the lippes,
hee comprehendeth not thankſgiuing, prayers, prayſes, holy exhor-
tations and inſtructions which the faythful make with their lippes:
for ſith they proceede from a pure and perfite heart, they ought not
to bee attributed vnto the lippes, nor threatened with want. For,
for ſuch holy exerciſes the faythful wil not giue ouer nor forſake la-
bour. But yet that popiſh diuine ſeruice, and al the diſputations and
ſermons of their diuines and hypocrites, ought to bee attributed
vnto the talke of the lippes: ſeeing they proceede not from a good *Rom.10.17.*
hart, nor ſounde iudgement: for they knowe not what they ſay: they *18.*
are led with curiouſneſſe, tending vnto oſtentation and vaineglory, *1.Tim.6.3.*
not deſiring to ſerue Ieſus Chriſt, but their belly. Such rakehelles *4.5.*
doe worthily deſerue to want and periſhe for hunger, and not on- *2.Theſ.3.6.*
ly with temporal hunger, but doe deſerue eternal damnation. *Phi.3.18.19.*

24 *The crowne of the wiſe is their riches: and the follie of fooles is fooliſhneſſe.*

It is a thing more often prooued then were to bee wiſhed, that they are nothing ſet by which haue nothing or very litle: and they which cannot or doe not labour to gather riches abundantly, are iudged fooles and dizzardes. But they which are riche, are highly honoured and praiſed: the which cauſeth them to be ſo greatly deſired of al men. For beſides this that men are glad not to want, they alſo loue to bee in eſtimation and honour: and they that can ſo guide themſelues, are counted wiſe, and men of honeſtie. Whereto it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that Solomon agreeth heere, when he ſaith, *The crowne of the wiſe, &c.* But if we conſider the thing throughly, wee ſhal eaſily ſee that Solomon is not of this iudgement and opinion. For hee ſaith not generally, riches: as if it behoued the wiſe, for to haue glorie and honour, to bee riche with the abundance of worldly wealth: ſeeing that they which are truely wiſe, doe deſpiſe and reiect the wealth of the worlde, and doe gather it, but onely meanely for to get their dayly bread, without a diſordered deſire, with dooing wrong vnto their neighbour, eyther by catching, or by too great ſparing and niggardlineſſe. But hee ſaieth, *their riches:* that is to ſay, the riches which belong vnto the wiſe, and by the which they become truely riche. Therefore for to vnderſtande what is meant by the crowne of the wiſe, wee Pro.1.5.8.9. & 2.1.& 3.13 & 4.5.& 8.10 11.14.& 10 14.& 14.18. muſt knowe what their riches are. Solomon hath ſhewed vs heere before, that the feare of the Lorde is wiſedome, knowledge, and vnderſtanding. Such kinde of riches are the chiefe crowne of the wiſe. And yet if they abounde in the riches of this worlde, as the holy olde Fathers did, they are alſo their crowne: for with wiſedome can they poſſeſſe them, and ſpende them as neede requireth. Now that by their riches Solomon chiefly meaneth the former vertues, hee doeth ſhewe it, by the Antitheſis hee maketh, when hee ſaieth,

And the follie of fooles is fooliſhneſſe. For hee ſetteth follie, (which is contrarie vnto wiſedome) againſt the riches of the wyſe: as if he ſaide, The follie of fooles cannot bee, nor knowen but for follie, the which is ſo deteſtable as none dare challenge the ſame to bee his: albeit that ſhe is as an Empreſſe in the worlde, and that the great Emperours, Kings, and Princes doe obey her, and make their pleaſures of it: as they doe ſhewe, when they take it not in good parte, that any man ſhould turne them from it to bring them vnto wiſedome: but they hate and cruelly perſecute the wiſe. And yet for al this they wil not bee counted fooles, but wil bee prayſed and honoured as wiſe, and knowe wel, howe to mainteine their honour, as they thinke, when they prayſe themſelues more then God. For if any of them doe neuer ſo grieuouſly offende God, they care not for it: but if a man chance to ſpeake of their worſhip or Lordſhip, otherwiſe then they woulde, that man hath committed, in their iudgement an vnpardonable offence. Al theſe kindes of doing doe wel ſhewe that naturally wee al praiſe and extol wiſedom: but by the corruption of our nature wee haue a wrong iudgement: in Eſay.5.20.21 ſuch wiſe that wee iudge wiſedome, to bee follie, and doe extol follie in ſteade of wiſedome, the which is no ſmal offence. As touching the reſt, as the wiſe doe vſe the riches that God giueth them, as they ought, and therein doe declare their wiſedome, for the which they be praiſed: euen ſo the fooliſh, which know not or will not know, for what vſe God hath created the riches of this worlde, do vſe them with al intemperancie and diſſolution, or with great auarice doe make more ſpare then needeth, fearing leaſt the worlde woulde fayle them. And thus do they declare their follie, the which doth diſhonor & make them conteptible before the eyes of them which haue a right iudgement: as they wel deſerue, not onely for that they rule themſelues as fooles and dizzardes, hurting themſelues by too much prodigalitie or nigardlineſſe, but chiefly by that that they are vngentle and cruel: ſeeking nothing but the hurte of their neighbours: although that at the firſt ſight it ſeemeth not ſo, & alſo that they are perſuaded, it is not yll done to vſe their wealth at their pleaſure. They are eaſily perſwaded theretoo, when wealth commeth in as they woulde, and that they proſper after a worldly manner. For then they cannot peaceably and reaſonably vſe their cōmodities: but the fleſh which feeleth too much of his eaſe, doth ouerflowe and play the foole: as wee haue ſeene the people of Iſrael to haue done. The people ſat downe to eate and to drinke, and roſe vp againe to play. *Exo.32.6.* And Moyſes doeth blame them for it: but hee that ſhould haue beene vpright, when hee waxed fat, ſpurned with his heele. *Deut.32.15.* Wee may nowe ſee the ſame chiefly in Kings and Princes, to whome it ſeemeth, that what they haue, is rightly dewe to them, & wil neither knowe nor vnderſtande that the glory, power & riches they haue, come from God, and that it is a ſingular gift of GOD, euen his woorke, for a man to rule wel in theſe matters. In this ſort they forget God and their neighbours, and doe exalt themſelues, not caring whome they hurte. It is inough for them to be at their eaſe, and to bee earneſt to puniſhe and torment others: as Saule did to Dauid.

25 *A faythful witneſſe deliuereth ſoules: but a deceiuer ſpeaketh lyes.*

There is none that beareth good wil but deſireth to pleaſure his neighbours, and wee thinke that wee al haue this deſire, and wee make our ſelues beleeue ſo much as wee can, wee woulde not leaue them in neceſsitie, but to deliuer them as we are able, euen out of the greateſt neceſsities, for to ſhew and for to be counted their great friendes. Nowe the greateſt good turne that wee can doe for any man, is to helpe to ſaue his life: as it is very plaine. For there is no man which had not rather looſe al his goods, then to looſe his life. But becauſe euery man knoweth not the way how to proceede to ſaue his neighbours life, therefore Solomon doeth teache it vs, when he ſaith,

A faythful witneſſe deliuereth ſoules. And foraſmuch as there is none but God only which is true, vnleſſe hee communicate his trueth by his woorde, wee cannot doe this pleaſure vnto our neighbours, to ſaue their liues, except we be diligent to receiue the woorde to ſpeake after it, and to giue our ſelues to doe the workes which it teacheth vs. This is the way which wee muſt holde for to bee a true witneſſe. But albeit there is but this one way, yet may wee ſhewe our ſelues true witneſſes in diuers ſortes. If being called in iudgement for to beare witneſſe of the trueth, or beeing ordeined iudges, wee ſpeake trueth: although that vpon our depoſition, othe or ſentence, they leade our neighbour to the gallowes, and that hee be hanged, yet doe we not ceaſe to be true witneſſes, and to deliuer ſoules. For when Solomon ſpeaketh of the deliuerance of ſoules, hee meaneth the innocent who are wrongfully troubled, & are in danger of their liues, except that God rayſe them vp true witneſſes. And alſo when wee witneſſe, or ſpeake truth againſt the wicked for to ſende him to death: though wee ſaue not his life, yet doe wee not ceaſe to bee a true witneſſe, and to ſaue liues. For in purchaſing the puniſhement of the wicked, wee are cauſe that diuers doe liue in peace and reſt: and thus doe we preſerue and ſaue liues: the which is a very acceptable thing before God, who wil haue the Magiſtrate to puniſh the malefactor vppon the othe of twoo or three witneſſes, that the euil being purged, wee might liue in peace. Now if the Lorde be careful of ſuch corporal and temporal ſauing and preſeruing, let vs vnderſtande that by a farre ſtronger reaſon hee taketh care for the ſpiritual and eternal ſauing of liues: as hee hath alwayes ſhewed, when hee hath rayſed vp true men which haue gi-

Deut. 17. 6.
Rom. 13. 3.
1. Tim. 2. 2.

uen themſelues to ſhewe the way of truth vnto his people: as were Noe, Abraham, Loth, Moyſes, Ioſua, the Iudges, the holy kings and Prophetes. And not content heerewith, hee hath ſent his owne Sonne, who not onely was a true and faythful witnes for to preach deliuerance as a miniſter and ſeruant: but by himſelf hath made the purgation of our ſinnes, sheadding his moſt precious blood for the eternal redemption of our ſoules. And if the deliuerance of our ſoules be ſo precious before God, that he hath not ſpared his owne Sonne, it foloweth therefore that we muſt be careful thereof before al other things: otherwiſe we are great contemners of God, and renoūce to be ſaued & redeemed by Ieſus Chriſt: the which is to do him greate iniurie, and conſequently to put our ſoules in bondage with the Deuil, for to looſe them and not to deliuer and ſaue them. Nowe for to be careful of our deliuerance, we muſt as Ieſus Chriſt hath ſent vs his Apoſtles and diſciples for to be true witneſſes vnto vs, and aſmuch as lay in their miniſterie, haue deliuered vs from death and damnation: euen ſo ſtil nowe wee ſhoulde demande of him ſuch Paſtours and miniſters, which wil bee true witneſſes, who wil declare nothing vnto vs but the pure woorde of God, to the which if wee cleaue by fayth and repentance, they ſhal deliuer our ſoules. But if in ſteede heereof, wee haue itching eares, let vs looke for bondage and deſtruction: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, when hee ſaith, *But a deceiuer ſpeaketh lyes*. Foraſmuch as he ſetteth the deceiuer againſt a true witneſſe, and lyes againſt deliuerance, hee teacheth vs that falſe witneſſes ſeeke nothing elſe but to holde their neighbours captiue, and to deſtroy them: folowing therein their father the Deuil, who from the beginning, hath beene a lyer and a murtherer. But as they are the moſt profitable witneſſes, which preach vnto vs Ieſus Chriſt: euen ſo the moſt exquiſite deceiuers are they which vnder the ſhadowe of religion doe ſet foorth mens traditions, and doctrines of Deuils, vaine ſpeculations and ſubtill queſtions. For ſuch, ſo much as they can, doe ſhut vp the kingdome of heauen from men, and doe deliuer them vnto the Deuil. And the other deceiuers doe bring hurt either vnto our goods, or to our name, or to this preſent life, the which is but a ſmall damage in compariſon of the loſſe of our ſoules. Neuertheleſſe the worlde is ſo much giuen vnto temporal riches, and maketh ſo great account

Heb. 1. 3. & 9. 12.

Rom. 8. 32.

2. Tim. 4. 3.

Iohn. 8. 44.

of his

of his good name and loueth this life ſo wel, that he careth nothing for his ſaluation, and feareth more the deceiuers which bring temporall hurte, then thoſe which deſtroy them for euer: yea hee is ſo blinde that he honoreth them.

26 *In the feare of the Lorde is an aſſured ſtrength, and his children ſhall haue hope.*

It is a great comfort for vs, when we thinke that our neighboures are ſo wel affectionate towardes vs, that we may truſt them that they wil not labour to doe vs any hurte, but ſhewe vs al fauour pleaſure, and gentlenes. Nowe foraſmuch as al men are lyers and their helpe vayne, and that there is none but God onely true, and that hope onely in him confoundeth not: in as much as hee neuer fayleth to graunt as he requireth: wee muſt therefore conclude that they which truſt in him, ſhal not looſe their hope. If we may once knowe his good affection towardes vs, and ſo truſt in him, aſſuring our ſelues that he would vs nothing but good, we ſhould be therby a greate deale more be comforted then with all the good opinions wee can conceiue of men. For let the man bee neuer ſo wiſe or good, yet is hee vnconſtant and mutable: but God is faythfull and changeth not his mynde. But to the ende that we conceiue not a vayne conſolation, falſely beleeuing that we haue a ſtrong hope in God when we haue but a light opinion of his promiſes, and yet wil giue our ſelues licence to doe after our owne fantaſie, and are bold to folow our good intentes, or to liue in al diſſolutenes after the affection of our corrupt nature, the which demandeth nothing but libertie of the fleſhe, to the ende (I ſay) that wee conceiue not this vayne conſolation, Solomon doeth teach vs, where wee ſhall finde ſtrong hope, when he ſaith, *In the feare of the Lord is an aſſured ſtrength.* If then we wil be aſſured that God wil not deſtroy vs, but aſſiſt vs and prouide for vs al thinges neceſſarie, both for our ſoule and bodie, and will not forſake vs til he hath placed vs in his heauenly kingdome, we muſt then haue the feare of the Lord as the good olde fathers fearing God ſtayed themſelues vppon him by fayth, as we may ſee by the hiſtorie of their lyfe. We are exhorted to receyue this feare: and alſo taught what we haue to doe for

Num.23.19.
Eſay.55.8.9
10.11.

Heb.11.4.
Pſal.34.8.
& 145.19.20

to liue therein. And Dauid promiſeth ſaluation to thoſe which feare him. But ſeing that we cannot ſtrongly truſt in God, except we loue him, as he requireth, it might ſeeme that to haue a ſtrong hope, wee muſt not then feare: for feare ſtandeth not in loue, I anſwere, if wee knowe that God loueth vs, wee doe ſurely truſt in him, and wil not feare to preſent our ſelues before him, and are wel diſpoſed & minded to tarie the laſt day of iudgement, being perſwaded of the fatherly loue of God towards vs, who neuer faileth vs at neede. For perfit loue caſteth out feare: yea the feare which terrifieth, troubleth and tormenteth the conſcience, cauſing man to feele himſelfe charged and burdened with great burdens of ſinne, dare not offer himſelfe to God: but doeth feare him, as a theefe that is taken, feareth the preſence of the iudge, and trembleth being deliuered into the handes of the hangman for to bee executed. This is the feare which tormenteth, the which is not in his hearte that is perfit in loue, that is to ſay, which is wel perſwaded that God loueth him. Solomon doth not ſpeake now of ſuch kinde of feare, but of the ſame that Dauid teacheth, and which alſo hath bene often ſpoken of. Solomon calleth the truſt which is in this feare, ſtrong, for to aduertiſe vs that it is but vanitie, when without this feare we thinke we truſt in God: contrarily, he that feareth God, ſhal neuer be ſhaken to fal. For the feare he hath in God, is as an inuincible fortreſſe. The Angel of the Lorde doeth pitche his tentes rounde about them which feare him, &c. The Lorde is exalted: for hee dwelleth on high: hee hath filled Sion with iudgement and iuſtice: and there ſhalbe ſtabilitie of thy time, ſtrength, ſaluation, wiſedome, and knowledge: for the feare of the Lorde ſhalbe his treaſure. Wherein wee may ſee that the Papiſtes haue not the feare of the Lorde, when they ſtande in continual doubte, whither God loue them or not: for they haue no ſounde knowledge. After that Solomon hath taught vs that in the feare of the Lorde there is aſſured ſtrength, hee ſheweth vs who they bee which haue this truſt, and conſequently the feare of the Lorde, when hee ſayeth, *And his children ſhall haue hope*. Foraſmuch as the aſſurance or ſtrong truſt is in the feare of the Lorde, and there are none but the children of God which are exhorted vnto this feare, & none beſides thẽ do receiue it, therfore it foloweth wel, there are none but they which haue aſſured ſtrẽgth.

1.Iohn.4.18.

Pſal.34.1
Pro.1.7.& 2.
5.& 3.7.&
8.13.& 9.1
& 10.27.
& 14.2. 16.
Pſal.34.8.
Eſay.33.5.6

Pſal.34.12.

Therefore if wee deſire to bee aſſured of ſtrong hope, we muſt then
1.Iohn.1.12. become the children of God to obteine it. The which wee ſhal obteine, if wee receiue Ieſus Chriſt. And although, being the children of God we ſhal ſuffer much, and that it ſhal ſeeme by the euils that we ſhal ſuffer, that God hath reiected vs, and that for this cauſe we haue good occaſion to bee afraide and to be troubled as pore ſlaues vnder the bondage of a cruel tyrant: neuertheleſſe, ſeeing that therin we are made like vnto the Sonne of God, who hauing borne the ſhame of the croſſe ſitteth on the right hande of God, we muſt bee aſſured that our miſeries cauſe not God to denye vs for his chil-
Heb.12.2. dren. Therefore when afflictions ſhal pricke and pinche vs, let vs
Rom.8.35. not doute of the fatherly goodneſſe of GOD towardes vs, but
Heb.12.5. let vs aſke of him his holy ſpirite, and wee ſhal not bee refuſed nor
Mat.7. denyed.

27 *The feare of the Lorde is a wellſpring of life, to auoide the ſnares of death.*

Solomon ſheweth vs that there is ſtrong hope and aſſurance for the children of God, which feare him, when hee compareth it vnto the liuelie ſpring, and that hee compareth the children of God vnto beaſts, which are hunted and driuen into the nets & toyle which are ſet for them that they may be taken and ſlaine. Nowe it is not without cauſe that hee vſeth ſuch compariſons or ſimilitudes for to ſhewe the eſtate of the children of God which feare him. For firſt of al the children of God are Pilgrims and paſſengers in this world:
Heb.13.14. for we haue no continual abyding citie heere: for the land is mine,
Leui.25.23. and yee are but ſtraungers and ſoiourners with me. Wherefore let
Pſal.39.13. vs confeſſe, I am a ſtranger with thee, &c. And in this voyage they are ſubiect vnto many labours, afflictions and temptations: wherewith they are ſo changed, that if they were not watered with the feare of the Lorde, they ſhoulde faint through diſpaire, & ſhoulde haue no ſure truſt in God: and ſo ſhoulde periſhe. As a wayfaring man, wearie and thirſtie in his way, if hee can finde no water to quenche his thirſt, doeth periſh: but if he knowe of any fountaine or ſpring that is neere, hee reioyceth, hoping that ere it bee long hee wil refreſhe and coole himſelfe, and ſlake his thirſt, and bee more

ſtrong: euen ſo, he that truely hath the feare of the Lorde, knoweth hee is neere vnto the liuing water, alſo that hee is compaſſed about therewith and hath it in himſelfe: for the ſpring of liuing waters, which is God, dwelleth in him, who mainteineth him, quickeneth and comforteth him in al his temptations, labours and calamities. Thy mercie, O Lorde, reacheth vnto the heauens, and thy faythfulneſſe vnto the cloudes. Contrarily, Ieremy ſaieth, O Lorde the hope of Iſrael, al that forſake thee, ſhalbe confounded: they that departe from thee, ſhalbe written in the earth, becauſe they haue forſaken the Lorde, the fountaine of liuing waters. Nowe as God is the fountaine or liuing vaine, and that hee is the ſpring, it is not by it to prouide for himſelfe, but for them which feare him: for it is for them, for whome hee careth. What man is hee that feareth the Lorde? him wil hee teache the way that hee ſhall chooſe. And to him wil I looke, euen to him that is poore, and of a contrite ſpirite and trembleth at my woordes. Likewiſe the faithful are partakers of this ſpring, not to water themſelues alone therewith, but to the ende that they may powre out ſtreames of riuers vnto their neighbours: and to the ende that as God hath giuen them his feare, for they haue it not of themſelues: Gather my people together, and I wil cauſe them heare my woordes, that they may learne to feare mee al the dayes that they ſhal liue vppon the earth, and that they may teach their children. And I will giue them one hearte and one way that they may feare me for euer, for the welth of them & of their children after them. So alſo they may teach others according to that which is written, Come children, hearken vnto me, I will teach you the feare of the Lorde. Solomon doeth ſignifie it alſo ſomewhat, in his. 5. chapter and. 16. verſe, but more manifeſtly in other places. We muſt not be niggardes in diſtributing of theſe waters: for in giuing of them, we diminiſh nothing at all thereby, but rather encreaſe, and in ſo doing we giue nothing of our owne, but are onely the miniſters and ſtewardes of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt to whom onely belongeth theſe waters, and hee onely giueth: and therſore we muſt reſort to him for he alſo doeth call vs. If we obey to this calling, wee ſhal want nothing. Beholde thus much concerning the firſt ſimilitude. As touching the ſeconde where-

Pſal. 36. 5.
Iere. 17. 13.
Pſal. 25. 12.
Eſay. 66. 2.
Deut. 4. 10.
Ier. 32. 39.
Pſal. 34. 12.
Pro. 10. 11. & 13. 14.
Eſa. 55. 1.
Iohn. 4. 10. 14 & 7. 37. 38.

where Solomon ſayth, *to auoyde the ſnares of death*: Let vs note Rom.8.36. that the ſtate of thoſe which feare God, is ſuch, that as it is written, For thy ſake are wee killed al day long, and counted as ſheepe for the ſlaughter. And Satan, the worlde, and their owne fleſhe doe ſet nettes for to take them, and to deſtroy them for euer: but by the feare of the Lord, they which doe leade them to conforme themſelues vnto his wil, to obey him, and to put their truſt in him, doe auoyde death: for albeit that the wicked kil the body, yet haue they no power ouer the ſoule: the which not conſenting vnto the temptations of Satan, nor to the luſtes of the fleſhe, ouercommeth death and al his forces, and perceth vnto the heauenly bliſſe, from the which it ſhal neuer bee put backe. And thus they auoyde the ſnares of death, not of themſelues, but for that that the Lorde Pſa.34.18. doeth heare them and deliuer them. Wee ſee therefore that it is very Phi.2.12. profitable for vs to obey the exhortation of Saint Paule, which ſayth, So make an ende of your owne ſaluation with feare & trembling. Pro.13.14. That which Solomon attributeth heere vnto the feare of the Lorde, hee doeth in an other place attribute vnto inſtruction of the wiſe, and that very fitly: for whoſoeuer is truly wiſe, hath the feare of the Lorde, and hee that feareth him, is wiſe, and his inſtruction tendeth to leade his neighboors vnto this feare, which is the firſt & chiefe parte of wiſedome.

28 *In the multitude of the people is the honour of a king: & for the want of people commeth the deſtruction of the Prince.*

Solomon by the king and by the Prince, doeth vnderſtande all thoſe which haue power, and are ordeined for to gouerne ſome countrie or religion. Such kinde of men commonly do thinke themſelues in high honour and maieſtie, when by the credite and authoritie that is giuen to them by flatterers, eyther by violences that they exerciſe, or by the abundance of their riches, they make themſelues to bee reuerenced and feared, and that no man dare beholde them, but in trembling wiſe, or in hauing them in more highe admiration then they ought: for they alſo knowe wel (as (they thinke) howe to mainteine their honour, euen with the contempt of God, without whome neuertheleſſe they haue no preheminence, nor authoritie. And if it were not that God cauſeth his maieſtie to ſhine in them, for to make his ordinance to be regarded, and that pollice ſhould be ordered, to put away confuſion, and that the good and innocent might liue in peace and reſt, no man woulde make any more account of them, then of the wormes of the earth: for their owne partes, they are no better, albeeit that for the degree and dignitie that God hath giuen them, they are called the children of God, and that wee ought to ſubmit our ſelues, with al humbleneſſe, reuerence and obedience vnto them, ſo that it bee according as God wil haue it. But in ſeeking magnifically theſe former things, they abuſe themſelues greatly: as Solomon doeth ſhewe it when he sayth, *In the multitude of people is the honour of the king, &c.* The Lordes and Princes of the earth for to come to honour, muſt labour then to get a multitude of ſubiectes, and to hold them vnder their obedience and gouernement. The which ſhal eaſilie bee done, if firſt they doe yeelde themſelues obedient vnto God, folowing his commandement, and that they become not like vnto Pharao, king of Egipt, who afflicted the children of Iſrael, leſt that they ſhoulde multiply in his lande: but let them cauſe the lawe touching ſtraungers, to be obſerued: and let them folowe good Kings, as Dauid, Ioſaphat, Ezekias, and Ioſias. So doing, they ſhal defende themſelues, and ſhalbe truly reuerenced and feared, and ſhal not falſly and in vaine vſurpe theſe titles ſo honourable, the which doe not appertaine vnto fauourers and nourriſhers of ſeditious and rebelles, of diſſolute and careles, of wicked, ſcorners and contemners of God and of his worde: but doe belong vnto them which truly confeſſe their ſoueraigne Lorde, of whome they receiue their honour, & vphold good pollicie, not only Ciuil, but alſo Eccleſiaſtical: to the ende that their people may learne to feare and honour God, by liuing in peace and quietneſſe, in loue and good brotherly concord togither. Otherwiſe the people ſhalbe conſtrained to ſcatter abroade, and to bee diſperſed as ſheepe going aſtray, when they haue no ſhephearde. Nowe as a ſhephearde looſing his flocke, is vndone: euen ſo Kinges and Princes, ſuffering by euil gouernement their people to

Pſa. 82. 6.

Deut. 17. 16

Leui. 19. 33. 34.

ſcatter heere and there, are voide of honour, and doe ouerthrowe and deſtroy themſelues. Solomon doeth ſo affirme, when hee ſayth, *And for the want of people commeth the deſtruction of the Prince.* Firſt of al let vs note that the want of people commeth not chiefly through changing of countrie, when they flye from the yoake of their natural prince: but when there is confuſion amongſt the people by diuiſions, ſectes, conſpiracies, ſeditions, inſurrections, ſturres, debates, vproares, and rebellions. Then principalities and kingdomes cannot ſtande: whereupon followeth the deſtruction of the prince: for he can bee no prince without a princedome, no more then an head is a head of thoſe members that cleaue and ioyne not vnto him. Secondly, let vs note, that foraſmuch as the honour of the king ſtãdeth in multitude of people, & not in a cõfuſed & ſcattered multitude, that thereof it wel foloweth, that ſuch a multitude is not worthy to bee named a people, but a ſorte of Lyons, wolues, ſerpents, dogges, ſwyne, yea Deuils incarnate. Thirdly, that it is laweful for kings and Princes to deſire a greate people, and to labour to increaſe the number of their ſubiectes by good gouernement, and not by warres: for ſo farre is it of that by ſuch troubles the number ſhoulde increaſe, that rather it doeth decay, and the Princes come to deſtruction, as experience ſheweth. Alſo it is lawful for them to ſeeke honour, and to mainteine their honour for the profit and ſauegarde of the people, and to holde them vnder feare, leaſt they ſhoulde fal away and reuolte. And for to doe it rightly, let them diligently take heede from ſeeking honor as did Abſalom, and as did Roboam, Nabuchadnezer, and Balthazer.

2.Sam.15. & 16.
1.Kings.12.
Dan.4.26. & 5.1.

29 *He that is ſlowe to wrath, is of great wiſedome: but hee that is of an haſtie minde, exalteth follie.*

There are diuers in the worlde which wil count a man to bee a foole and an aſſe, and to haue no heart when (as they ſay) he dares not looke a man in the face, for to bee angrie immediatly, and is not readie for to bee ſodenly reuenged vppon him that hath done him wrong. Wherein they ſhewe that they knowe not God nor his wayes, or elſe do iudge God to be but a foole & an Aſſe: for from the beginning of the worlde hee hath beene outraged by man, euen in ſuch wiſe as hee hath deſerued that God ſhoulde roote him out, but hee hath ſhewed him ſelfe to bee ſlowe to anger, and not onely then, but alſo in al ages: for hee hath not puniſhed men ſo ſoone as they haue prouoked him to wrath againſt them by their tranſgreſsions & rebellions, but hath ſhewed himſelfe to be patient, gentle, pitiful, and merciful, looking & calling mẽ vnto repentance. The Lorde, The Lorde, ſtrong, merciful, and gracious. ſlowe to anger, and abundant in goodneſſe and trueth. &c. The Lord is ful of compaſsion and mercy, ſlowe to anger, and of great kindneſſe. They which knowe the Lorde to bee ſuch, wil not count him a foole and an aſſe, but wiſe, prudent, and diſcrete: and they alſo would eſteeme them to bee of great wiſedome which followe the wayes of their Creator: as Solomon doth heere, when hee ſaith, *Hee that is ſlow to wrath, is of great wiſedome*. It is not without cauſe that he calleth this wiſedome, great: for firſt of al it is giuen of God, whoſe gifts we muſt not count of ſmal price, litle worth, and contemptible: for there commeth nothing from him, but is of great value and excellent, and ought to bee eſteemed highly. Secondly, wee haue the luſtes of our fleſhe, which belong naturally vnto vs, by the corruption that is in vs: ane for this cauſe are very hard to bee tamed: and therefore the wiſdome requireth to be great, which may ouercome them, and keepe them vnder ſubiection: otherwiſe we ſhould burne with impatiencie, and ſhoulde bee kindeled with anger and wrath, and ſhoulde be violently caried with a deſire of ſoden reuengement vpon thoſe which do vs wrong, or which are too good in our opinion: as Cain was againſt Abel, the Phariſes againſt our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, the careleſſe and diſſolute againſt them which ſeeke nothing but their ſaluation. Now not to be like vnto ſuche furious felowes, let vs obey our Lorde, who ſaith, Loue your enimies: and S. Paule, Thus doing, wee ſhal giue true ſignes, that wee are ſlowe to wrath, and that wee are of great wiſedome: not that it is lawful to deſire to bee praiſed for our wiſedome, but that thereby wee ſhoulde giue example of gentleneſſe, meekeneſſe, ſoftneſſe & clemencie vnto our neighbours, and ſhoulde giue them cauſe to praiſe GOD, who maketh his giftes and graces to ſhine in vs. And yet let vs

Exo. 34. 6.
Pſal. 103. 8.
Eſay. 55. 7.
Rom. 2. 4.

Mat. 5. 44.
Ephe. 4. 2.
Col. 3. 12.

take heede from eſteeming our wiſedome to bee great, as though there coulde be added: but let vs knowe, as the trueth is, that wee greatly erre, and haue great neede that God ſhoulde mainteine vs in wiſedome, and encreaſe the ſame in vs, otherwiſe wee ſhoulde ſoone bee deſtitute thereof, and ſhould become amaſed and furious, and in ſteede to ſhewe foorth great wiſedome, wee ſhoulde vtter and ſet foorth openly folly: as though it were ſome great vertue, for which it were laweful too ſeeke honour and glory, Solomon doth ſignifie it, ſaying,

But hee that is of an haſtie minde, exalteth folly: as do now theſe madde and branſicke men, which riſe vp without any cauſe againſt the ſeruants of God. They are not aſhamed to haue their folly ſeene: They are like Lions or Wolues, roaring after the poore ſheepe, and yet woulde haue men beleeue that they haue a good cauſe, and doe vertuouſly, not to ſuffer themſelues to bee gouerned, after their appetite which ſeeke nothing but their ſaluation. Heerein they ſo exalt folly, that wee are compelled to ſee it, except wee wil cloſe our eies, as doe their fauourers and nouriſhers which mainteine ſuche mad men, in their wicked and malicious folly. Beſides this, let vs note, that if our wiſedome bee required to bee ſhewed, and not to bee marked with folly, let vs be ſlowe to wrath and to be angrie with them which doe vs wrong without cauſe: muche leſſe ſhoulde wee ſodenly deſpite and murmure againſt our good God when he doth correct vs, but let vs patiently beare the croſſe he layeth vppon vs: ſeeing hee maketh vs beare no more then we haue worthily deſerued: moreouer, & that by this chaſtiſemēt he ſeeketh not our hurt, as doe men, but our profites and ſaluation: for by this he calleth vs vnto repentance.

30 *A ſounde heart is the life of the fleſhe: but ennie is the rotting of the bones.*

Gene.1.26. & .2.7. Man at the beginning was made, to liue, and not to die: for firſt, God ſaide, Let vs make man like vnto our image, &c. And the Lorde God made man of the duſt of the earth, and breathed in his face the breath of life, and the man was a liuing ſoule. Heereof was the tree of life, as a Sacrament. And not onely hee created

him for to liue,but alſo to bee in felicitie and ioy : as appeareth by
that which is ſaide, The Lorde alſo planted a garden in Eden. &c. A- Gene.38.18
gaine, Afterwardes the Lorde ſaide, It is not good that man ſhould
liue alone, &c. And alſo this preſent life is not counted a life, but
a very bitter, & troubleſome death, except we liue with ioy & glad-
neſſe. Now as we haue been created for to liue, euen ſo doe we de-
ſire the ſame naturally, and woulde not die : but if followe the cor-
ruption of our nature, wee cannot obteine our deſire, but muſt die.
Wee ſee how God giueth iudgement and ſentence of death againſt Gene.6.7.13
al fleſhe, becauſe that malice was great vpon the earth. They which
periſhed by the ſame ſentẽce, receiuing the iudgemẽt of eternal fire,
haue beene ſet foorth for an example to thoſe which ſhal liue with-
out reuerence and feare of God, wallowing and delighting in this 2.Pet.2.6
corruption. And therefore Solomon deſiring vs to auoide death, Luke.7.
doeth teache vs wherein ſtandeth the life of man, when he ſaith, *A
ſounde hearte is the life of the fleſhe.* By a *ſounde hearte*, Solo-
mon doeth ſignifie, the deſires, purpoſes, and merciful, ſoft, graci-
ous, and pitiful affections, free from wickedneſſe, bitterneſſe, from
rigour and crueltie. Vnto theſe doeth hee attribute the life of the
fleſhe, that is to ſay, to man. If wee wil vnderſtand it of corporal
life, there ſhalbe no inconuenience : for good and ſounde affections
make a man to liue ioyfully, which is one of the chiefe partes of this
preſent life : for wee count our ſelues to bee in death, except wee
liue ioyfully, not after a worldly & carnal maner, which is not to re-
ioyce in holineſſe and honeſtie. Neuertheleſſe though this preſent
life be common both to the elect and reprobate, yet is it moſt meete
to vnderſtande this ſentence to apperteine to the life to come :
not that our ſounde deſires ſhoulde bee worthie thereof, but by the
grace of God it doeth followe it : and it is a certaine trueth that
they which are guided with ſuch affections, ſhal enioy eternal life.
Bleſſed are the pure in hearte, for they ſhall ſee God. Nowe there
is none of vs which are naturally ſounde and pure in heart : and of Mat.5.8
our ſelues wee cannot haue them ſuche, vnleſſe that GOD doeth Gene.6.5. &
cleanſe and heale them. Wherefore when Solomon promiſeth life 8.21.
(the which wee al deſire) vnto a ſounde heart, hee doeth aduertiſe Iob.14.4.
vs to aske, Lorde haue mercy vpon mee : Heale my ſoule, for I
haue ſinned againſt thee, Heale me, O Lord, & I ſhalbe healed, &c.

Pſal.50.20. Make mee a cleane heart, O God : and renewe a right ſpirite within
&.4.5. mee. If wee wil obteine ſuch requeſtes, wee muſt receiue the doctrine
Iere.17.14. of the Goſpel, by faith, the which is called a ſound and wholſome
Pſal.51.12. doctrine, not onely becauſe it is pure and cleane, exempted frõ
all filthineſſe, from lying and deceiuing : but alſo becauſe it clenſeth
purifieth, and quickeneth the heartes of thoſe men, whome it pearceth.
Saint Paul doeth giue vs this ſame wel to vnderſtand, when
1.Tim.6.3 hee ſetteth lyes and fables which corrupt the mindes and ſpirites of
2.Tim.4.3. men againſt it. Heereby wee may ſee there is neither health nor life
Titus.1.9. but onely where the Goſpel is purely preached and receiued. By the
ſame it is that Ieſus Chriſte hath brought vs life into light : and this
is the power of God for to ſaue al beleeuers. Likewiſe wee may
2.Tim.1.10. knowe there is not much health nor life in the worlde : for though
Rom.1.16. men doe purely preache the Goſpel, yet are wee like vnto ſicke men,
to whom Phiſicke is offered for a remedie to reſtore life and health,
and they refuſe and wil none of it : and therefore we haue neede to
bee ſharpely reprooued, as them of Crete. Nowe that ſoundneſſe
of the hearte conſiſteth in the former good affections and deſires,
Tit.1.9. Saint Paule doeth ſhewe vs, when hee woulde haue vs to be ſound
&.2.2. in faith, in loue, & in pacience. Solomon alſo doeth declare it vs
heere, when againſt a ſounde hearte, he ſetteth enuie, ſaying : *But
enuie is the rotting of the bones.* For enuie ſignifieth al ſiniſter,
malicious and cruel affections : albeit that the worde which Solomon
vſeth, may be taken in good part, and chiefly when it is attributed
vnto God and to his ſeruantes, which deſire nothing but
his glory, and the ſaluation of their neighbours : but when it is ſet
againſt ſounde deſires, then muſt we take it in the euil part, for the
contrary affection wherwith they are ſtained, which are ſory, when
they ſee the affaires of their neighbours to haue good ſucceſſe,
Exo.20.5. though thereby they ſuſteine no hurte : but they woulde
&.34.14. bee alone in proſperitie and reputation, and that other ſhoulde bee
1.Kin.19.10 put backe and deſpiſed : and cannot ſuffer their neigbours, which
Pſal.69.10. are better then they, to proſper, nor to bee prayſed : but inuent and
ſeeke their deſtruction, without cauſe. The Diuel is the father of
ſuche people, which neuer ceaſſed til that he had almoſt quite
ouerthrowne mankinde: And Caine is their Captaine, whome
diuers haue followed : as the brethren of Ioſeph, Saule againſt

Dauid, the Scribes and Phariſees, and Iudas againſt Ieſus Chriſte: and nowe the moſt part of thoſe which perſecute the poore faithful Chriſtians. The deſires of ſuch men are as the rotting of the bones. For as by the rotting of the bones man falleth to death: euen ſo ſuche affections doe kill men. For in this worlde hee hath no ſoundneſſe nor reſt in his conſcience, but is continually tormented, albeit that hee labor to purge melãcholie, the which is alſo a death: and afterwards he goeth vnto damnation and eternal death, except that (with the brethren of Ioſeph) he come to confeſſe his malice, and to be diſpleaſed therewith.

31 *Hee that oppreſſeth the poore, reproueth him that made him but hee honoureth him that hath mercy on the poore.*

Although wee be very wicked, and that there be many which of ſet purpoſe are giuen to doe thinges which they knowe to ſerue to the diſhonour of God: yet there is none that wil bee counted wicked, and alſo there is none but wil bee very ſory to bee called or eſteemed a contemner of God. And therefore, to auoide this reputation, and that none ſhoulde thinke wee woulde diſhonour God, the worldlings and carnal men, yea the moſt wicked will labour to ſhewe themſelues very zelous of the honour of God, in doing ſome thinges which ſhal haue an outwarde apparance of holineſſe and religion: as Caine, Core, Dathan and Abiram, and Saule. Otherſome, to colour their wickedneſſe, and the diſhonour they doe vnto God, wil deſire to haue ſome honeſt vocation, and wil labour therin, ſpeaking of God and of his workes: as Iudas and Simon Magus: but therein they avoide not the diſhonour of God, as it appeareth when God declared that hee alloweth not ſuche kinde of ſeruices. As by theſe things doone, with an euil conſcience, we honor not God: euẽ ſo alſo his diſhonor ſtandeth not in the omiſſion of them: but it ſtandeth in this, when wee forſake and doe contrary to that which hee chiefly commandeth, and without the which nothing can pleaſe him. It is true that the principal honour wee can giue to God, & that he asketh of vs before al things, is declared vnto vs in the firſt table of Moſes: but wee cannot giue vnto him

Num.16.18
1.Sam.15.15
Act.8.18.

Pſal.50.8
Eſay.1.11.
&.29.13.
&.58.11.
Mat.7.21.

that hee requireth , except wee render vnto our neighbours that which wee owe them, without doing them wrong, and chiefly the poore. So that God doth diſalowe al the honour that men can doe him, and doeth holde it for diſhonour, if wee doe wrong vnto our neighbor, and aboue al, vnto the needie. Solomō doth briefly touch it, when he ſaith,

Hee that oppreſſeth the poore, &c. We do wrong vnto a man, when we giue him not that we owe him, or when we take frō him that which hee poſſeſſeth iuſtly, and without the which he nor his family can bee mainteined in this life. And this wrong is doone moſt commonly vnto them which are poore, and haue no abundance of wealth, foraſmuch as they haue no power to defend them ſelues, and that no ſeruice nor pleaſure is looked for at their hands. This commeth alſo becauſe of their weakeneſſe, why God abhorreth thoſe which doe them wrong, and counteth it diſhonour doone by them: not that it is laweful to doe wrong vnto the richer ſort, nor to pul away from thē that which they poſſeſſe, though they bee wicked, and haue nothing ſanctified to their vſe. Nowe although wee ought to doe no wrong vnto ſuche kinde of people, yet haue they no neede to bee commended: for they wil not willingly ſuffer to bee wronged: and as they wel thinke, they are ſtrong enough to defende themſelues: and do rather pul away the goods of others, then to ſuffer loſſe or hinderance. Likewiſe God hath no care to commende them, but hee commendeth vnto vs the needie, pronouncing that the wrong that is done them, turneth to his diſhonour, and that the euil and iniurie that is doone vntoo the poore, is doone vnto himſelfe: ſo that when a poore man is wronged, we do not iniurie to a man onely, that hath no power, but we ſtande vp againſt almightie God, who knoweth wel howe to reuenge the wrong that is doone vnto him. Solomon doeth note this power, when by ſignifiyng God, hee ſaith, *reproueth him, that made him*: yea, who is aſwel a man as the moſt excellent. And if God hath made man, who is the moſt excellent creature of the world, it followeth wel he is of power to make al other things, and to defende and deliuer the needie from him that doeth him wrong. Neuertheles by this woorde, *Hath made him*, Solomon doeth not

chiefely

chiefly and onely pretende to marke the power of God, but rather would ſignifie that a man, though he be poore and needie, yet ceaſſeth hee not to bee the worke and creation of God, aſwel, or better than the richeſt: and foraſmuch as he is his worke, that hee wil take care of him, and not forſake him. And ſo this worde *Hath made him*, ought to be a great comfort to the needie, and to aſſure them of the fatherly care of God towards them, as they are admoniſhed. On the other ſide it ought to feare and terrifie the vnmerciful and cruel: for they are admoniſhed, that in doing wrong to the needie, they doe not deſpiſe the worke of a man, but ſo much as lyeth in them, they deſtroy what God hath made. Wherein they take a worke in hand, which they cannot bring to an ende, and the wrong that they inuent for their neighbour, ſhal fal vpon them ſelues. The number of them which doe wrong vnto the needie is verie great, as wee may ſee. The wordle is ful of ſuche. Whereuppon it foloweth, that God is greatly diſhonoured, although al the worlde woulde be eſteemed that they reuerence, and feare God. Nowe Solomon deſiring that wee ſhoulde not be of that number which doe diſhonor God, doeth teache vs howe wee ſhould behaue our ſelues towards our needie neighbours, for to honour God: when he ſaith,

Heb.13.5.6.
Pſa.7.16.17.
Luk.16.23.

But hee honoureth him that hath mercie on the poore. If we wil then doe acceptable honour vnto God, wee muſt haue mercie vpon the poore, and vnderſtand that Solomon ſetting mercy againſt wrong, doeth ſhewe vs, that whoſoeuer hath not mercie vpon the poore, doeth wrong vnto him, though hee neither curſe nor ſtrike him, nor take ought of his from him. It is to do him double wrong, when he wil not giue him that which he oweth him: the which he doth, when he hath power and abilitie for to helpe his needineſſe, and careth not to helpe him. He doeth him great wrong: for in this caſe hee hateth his brother, and is a murtherer of him. Let vs not then loue in worde nor in tongue: but in deede and truth, and wee ſhal do honour vnto God, which ſhal very much pleaſe him. I wil haue mercie and not ſacrifice: and our Lord Ieſus Chriſt doth ſhew it when he ſaith, Come ye bleſſed children of my Father, &c. For I was an hungry, and ye fed mee, &c. And the Apoſtle ſaith, To doe good and to diſtribute, forget not: for with ſuch ſacrifices God is pleaſed.

1.Iohn.3.15.
Mat.12.7.
Mat.25.34.
Heb.13.16.

32 *The wicked ſhallbee caſt away for his malice: but the righteous hath hope in his death.*

Many are giuē to do euil, and beare enuie vnto the ſenſeleſſe, ſeeing the proſperitie of the wicked. It ſeemeth vnto mans wit & carnal reaſon, that ſuch proſperitie ought to continue, and that the wicked ſhal alwaies floriſhe: for the worldlings and carnal men haue no further regarde then to that which they outwardly feele, and ſee before their eyes: but the Spirite of God doth teach vs farre otherwiſe by Solomon when hee ſaith, *Pſal.73.3*

The wicked ſhall bee caſt away for his malice. The which Solomon doth here expreſſe briefly, and in another place doeth declare at large. There is nothing ſayde there, but the wicked hath already felt it and we confeſſe it, if we wil open our eyes as we ought for to beholde the iudgementes that God hath executed vppon the wicked, as vpon Cayn, vpon the world deſtroyed by the vniuerſal flood, vpon Sodome and Gomorrhe, and other wicked men. By ſo many examples as haue happened, and doe dayly come too paſſe, we may knowe that God caſteth away the wicked for their malice, and maketh them to fall and periſhe in affliction and miſerie: were it not that we eſteeme not to regarde the prouidence of God, and to haue pacience til he hath in time fulfilled his counſel: but we attribute almoſt al vnto fortune. We may geue vnto this firſt parte two other ſenſes: wherof the one is, that the wicked ſhal be caſt away in his miſery: that is to ſay, he ſhal not ſtand when aduerſity ſhal aſſault him, but ſhalbe ſo beaten downe, that he ſhal fal and periſhe. The other ſenſe is, that the wicked ſhalbe caſt away in his euil: that is to ſay, that the euill that he thinketh to doe vnto his neighbour, ſhall fall vpon him ſelfe by the iuſt vengeance of God. Theſe three ſenſes are diuerſe, and not contrarie: For trueth doeth not withſtande trueth, ſeeing there is but one trueth: the which notwithſtanding is declared after diuers ſortes. Now theſe three ſenſes are all true, as the Scriptures doeth prooue, and alſo as the wicked haue felt & tried it. And with this that theſe three ſenſes conteyn truth, they agree alſo with the Antitheſis. For when Solomon ſaieth, *but the rightoous hath hope in his death:* he ſheweth that the righteous

Leui.26.
Deu.28.
Pſal.37.
Pſal.7.16.

ous ſhal be ſure and ſtable, and that he ſhalbe preſerued that no euil ſhall happen to deſtroy him. His body may be put to death: but it ſhal not be to caſt him away for his malice, for the faith hee hath in God, the which worketh by loue, is imputed vnto him for righteouſneſſe, and no malice is attributed vnto him, but all his iniquities are blotted out, neuer more for to be remembred before God. His body ſhal ſuffer much affliction & calamities, by the which he might faint, but becauſe he hopeth in God, the which confoundeth not, he ſhal obteine according therevnto, & ſhal not be caſt away in his afflictions, but the Lord wil receiue him to himſelfe, and deliuer him. His body ſhalbe ſubiect to receiue much euil, euen to be ſlaine, but ſeeyng that his conſcience doth not reproue him to haue inuented euil againſt his neighbor, he feareth not by dying to be caſt away frõ God, for to be recompenſed him: but ſhal ſtande ſure in this hope, that by his death he ſhal obtein the reward of the righteous, which is euerlaſting life. Herein doeth Solomon geue vs a ſufficient proofe for to make euery one of vs to cõſider whether we ſhalbe caſt away, or whether we haue hope. For ſith it is the righteous that hath hope, it doeth wel followe that they which are geuen vnto wickedneſſes cannot hope, but do looke to bee caſt away, and too receiue a worthy rewarde of their mallice. Contrarily, ſith that righteouſnes is ſet againſt malice or euil, it followeth that the righteous, who is contrary vnto al euil, and doth abhorre it, hopeth not to bee caſt away. For albeit that his righteouſneſſe is not worthy of that which he hopeth for, yet he knoweth, and is aſſured that God is true in his promiſes, according to the which he cannot periſhe. And therefore what grieuous afflictions ſoeuer he ſuffer, and albeit he haue motions, and ſightes which are harde and ſharpe for him to beare, yet doeth he not vexe himſelfe, for to diſtruſt the mercy of God. On the other ſide, foraſmuch as we cannot haue this hope, but by the woorde of God, which is refuſed almoſt of al, it foloweth that the number of the righteous is very rare, and that very few haue hope. True it is, that ſo long as afflictions ſhal not preſſe vs, we make our ſelues beleeue to be of ioly courage: but when wee bee touched to the quicke, or thinke thereof, then wee faint. Furthermore let vs note, though that by the corruption of our nature, the malice of vs al is ſo great, that wee deſerue to bee caſt away: yet God is ſo mer-

Pſal.34.20.

ciful, that he imputeth our hope vnto righteouſnes, and doth not ſuffer vs to periſhe. Wherein we may know that it is very neceſſary for vs, continually to meditate the word of our Lord, and to labour to conforme our liues thereafter.

33 *Wiſedome reſteth in the heart of him that hath vnderſtanding, and is knowne in the middes of fooles.*

There is none but doth naturally eſteeme himſelfe to be wiſe, & alſo there is none that would endure to be counted a foole: and yet almoſt al do deſpiſe knowledge and vnderſtanding and chiefly diuinity, the which is the moſt neceſſary: and that there are but a very few, but wil be troubled, when a man ſpeaketh to thẽ therof. Some of thẽ would think themſelues hypocrites and ſuperſtitious, if they gaue themſelues therevnto: ſome thinke themſelues too young for to ſet their heartes therevppon, and thinke it is nothing but Melancholy, the which agreeth not with young folkes: but that it belongeth vnto thoſe which are olde to be geuen to learning and vnderſtanding. And when they are waxen old, it is great paine & trouble for them to leaue their wonted trade. And thus alwayes they refuſe knowledge and vnderſtanding: and yet they ceaſe not to attribute to them ſelues wiſedome, though they be altogether voide therof: as Solomon doeth wel ſignifie, when hee ſaieth, *Wiſedome reſteth in the heart of him that hath vnderſtanding, &c.* Therefore of what age ſoeuer wee be, we muſt, (if we wil get wiſedome) be prudent: and for to be ſuche, let vs not reiect knowledge and vnderſtanding, as doe the fooliſh, which nothing eſteeme the pure worde of God, which is the prudence and intelligence of the faithful which loue wiſedome, and are careful to ſeeke and enioy her. And when he ſaieth, that wiſedome *reſteth*, let vs not thinke that ſhee is idle and of no power: but let vs vnderſtand, that if we be prudent, wee are ſo ſeaſed of wiſedome, and doe ſo carefully poſſeſſe her, that we can not ſuffer to bee depriued thereof. And notwithſtanding ſhee is not vnprofitable, and they which poſſeſſe her, doe not diſdaine to open her, and to ſende her foorth, that ſhee may doe her office, and may gaine that whereabout ſhe is appointed. Alſo the prudent doe cauſe their wiſedome to ſhine euen amongſt fooles, and if it ſay in them, the fooles ſhoulde bee made wiſe and prudent: for from the abundance of the hearte the mouth ſpeaketh, and other members alſo doe execute their office. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying,

And is knowne in the mids of fooles. It is not to ſay that the fooles doe receiue her to bring her foorth into light, and to imparte her vnto their neighbors: for if they ſhould vſe her ſo, they ſhould not be fooles, but wiſe: but it is to ſay, that the prudent man walking amongſt fooles (whereof the world is ful) doth not frame himſelfe after their maners, nor foloweth their trade: as they which ſay, wee muſt barke with the dogge, and houle with the wolfe: and diſguiſe our ſelues after al faſhions for to apply vs to them with whom we chance to meete, but hee ſheweth himſelfe wiſe and prudent in his deedes and wordes: ſo that they which haue ſounde iudgement, doe eaſily knowe him from amongſt other. Al true faythful Chriſtians ought to bende theretoo: Brethren, bee not children in vnderſtanding, but in malice be as children. *1.Cor.14.20* Againe, Take heede therfore that ye walk circumſpectly, not as fooles, but as wiſe. *Ephe.5.15.* Againe, Walk wiſely toward them that are without, and redeeme the ſeaſon. *Col.4.5.* This is the cauſe alſo why the Goſpel is preached. And hee therfore gaue ſome to be Apoſtles, and ſome Prophetes, and ſome Euangeliſtes, and ſome Paſtours, and teachers. That we hencefoorth be no more children, wauering and caried about with euery winde of doctrine, &c. *Ephe.4.11. & 14.* But the Paſtours of the Church ſhould chiefly make their wiſdome to bee knowne in the mids amongſt fooles. For to them doth Ieſus Chriſt ſay, Ye are the ſalt of the earth, &c. *Mat.5.13.* And S. Paule demandeth of them greate prudence. *2.Timo.3.2. Tit.1.6.17.* The Nicodemites cannot boaſt that they are prudent, nor that wiſedome reſteth in their heartes. For ſeeing that the good man out of the good treaſure of his hart bringeth foorth good things, therefore ſhal their wiſedome be knowne in the mids of fooles. *Mat.12.35.* As Nicodemus gaue it openly to be known in the mids of the madde & raging Iewes. *Iohn.19.39.* And foraſmuch as it is not lawful for vs to dwel amongeſt fooles, to conſent with them, but ought to withſtande and reproeue them, correcting and threatning thē: otherwiſe we ſhould be partakers with thē of their folly, & be like vnto thē: it foloweth that they which faine not to ſee their inſolences, cannot challenge wiſedome. Likewiſe albeeit that wiſedome muſt bee knowne in the mids of fooles, both by works, and doctrine, yet muſt wee diligently take heede from dooing our woorkes to bee ſeene of men: but wee muſt labour onely to make our tallentes (that the Lorde hath committed vnto vs) to profit and increaſe.

34 *Iuſtice exalteth a nation, but ſinne is a ſhame to the people.*

The peoples and nations of the earth deſire to bee praiſed and honoured, to bee famous, and renoumed, for the which they are feared and reuerenced: they deſire to haue greate titles. And for to obteine this, they inlarge their limites, and increaſe their lordſhips, in ioyning towne to towne, countrie to countrie: they build ſumptuouſe pallaces and caſtels which they labour to make impregnable and vnacceſſible, and care not though in their dooings they wring their neighbours and take not heede whither they doe things pleaſing or diſpleaſing God. It is ynough for them to obteine their deſires, and to finiſh their enterpriſes. They thinke by ſuch kind of doings to bee magnified and exalted, but they are much deceiued: ſeeing they haue not onely to do with mortal, tranſitorie and frayle men, as they are, but with the eternal and almightie God, who can tel how to mocke their enterpriſes, and to fruſtrate their deſires. For hee reſiſteth the proude: as ſayth the virgin Mary, hee hath ſhewed ſtrength with his arme, hee hath ſcattered the proude in the imagination of their heartes. The very gyants hade felt it: for though they were mightie, and alwayes famous, yet coulde they not auoyde the general flood. Noes childrens children laboured to get fame and to fortifie themſelues, but God ſcattered them ouer all the earth through theconfuſion of tongues which he ſent amongſt them. The Canaanites thought themſelues highly exalted, when they were multiplyed, and their cities ſtrongly furniſhed & fenced with all riches: but at the comming of the people of Iſrael, GOD knewe wel howe to beate them downe and deſtroy them. A man might here alledge the Aſſirians and Babylonians, & almoſt al the

1.Pet.5.5.
Luke.1.51.
Gene.6.& 7. & 11.4.
Gene.6.& 7 & 11.4.

all the nations of the earth, and in them to beholde how men doe not rightly proceede to be exalted, if we followe their maners.

For as we read in the ſcripture, God hath vtterly humbled & abaced them. Therefore if we wil be exalted, let vs not deſire to bee like vnto theſe nations: but let vs learne at Gods mouth what gouernment we muſt folowe. If thou doeſt obey the voyce of the Lord thy God, he wil ordeine thee head oueral the nations of the earth. According too this ſame, Solomon ſaith, *Iuſtice exalteth a nation.* We wil here take iuſtice, for the obediẽce of Gods voyce, the which is imputed vnto vs, when we beleeue and repent: wherby we lead a pleaſing & an acceptable life vnto God. For by fayth we renounce all vayne confidence, which is deteſtable before God, and cleaue vnto him onely, according as he demandeth in the Scripture. By repentance we abhorre the euill that God forbiddeth, and loue the good that he commandeth. Thus doing, we ſhal honour and glorifie him, and he wil alſo exalt vs according to his promiſes. And ſith we are exalted by faith & repentance, the which are taught vs by the word, it followeth that we haue no righteouſnes but therby, and ſo thereby we are exalted. But this exaltatiõ is not ſeene of thẽ that beholde it with a carnal eye, and require nothing but external pompe. Alſo they beleeue not that by the worde we may be exalted, but rather ſuppreſſed and beaten downe. And therefore they reiect this word, and do perſecute them which receiue it, and beare it, as though they were ſworn enemies to kingdomes and principalities for to deſtroy and bring them to naught. We muſt not wonder hereat: for the exaltation which proceedeth of righteouſnes, is not knowne but onely of them which are ſpiritual: for it is ſpiritual, chiefly touching the temporal, it appeareth ſo little in outwarde ſight that they make no account thereof, but onely that they be eaſily contented. For God procedeeh not (according to our eſtimation, neither after the maner, nor affection of men) to exalt nations by iuſtice. Wee may knowe by this that they which folowe iuſtice are moſt commonly ſcorned, deſpiſed and reuiled in the worlde: but yet they ceaſe not to be exalted before God, who doth honor & glorifie them before men, after as he knoweth to be expedient for them. Nowe ſuch nations as are truely geuen vnto righteouſnes, are contented with ſuche kinde of temporal exaltation as it pleaſeth GOD too geue

Deut. 28. 1.

them, and are not ſtayde thereat, but haue their hearts and mindes fixed vpon the eternal exaltation, the which was prepared in heauen before the foundation of the worlde was layde, and the which they meditate and beholde by fayth and hope. Nowe that iuſtice ought in this place to bee taken for the obedience to the voyce of God, Solomon doeth ſhewe, when againſt iuſtice, hee ſetteth ſinne, ſaying, *But ſinne is a ſhame to the people.* For there had beene no ſinne in the worlde, if Adam had not diſobeyed the voice of God: This is ſeene by the reproche that God made him: and Saint Paul doeth plainely pronounce it: For as by one mans diſobedience many were made ſinners, ſo by that obedience of that one, ſhal many alſo bee made righteous. Therefore as God by obedience exalteth nations, euen ſo likewiſe, by obedience hee bringeth nations to ſhame: as he threatened the Iewes therewith. And becauſe that they feared not the threatenings, but hardened them ſelues ſo much the more, in perſecuting the Prophets, Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde, and his Apoſtles: for this cauſe God hath ſo put them back & caſt them of, that they haue iuſtly prooued and doe feele, that ſin is the ſhame of nations: neuertheleſſe, they neither woulde nor wil yet vnderſtande. The faithful Chriſtians amongſt them haue wel felt it: as we may knowe by their complaintes and confeſſions. But now thou art farre of, and putteſt vs to confuſion, &c. Againe, Thou makeſt vs to be rebuked of our neighbours, &c. Againe, Againſt thee onely haue I ſinned, and done this euil in thy ſight: that thou mighteſt be iuſtified in thy ſaying, &c. Wee haue ſinned, and haue committed iniquitie, & haue done wickedly, &c. They which neuer knew, nor yet wil knowe, ſhal fall into euerlaſting ſhame. They which perſecute mee, ſhal fal, their ſhame ſhalbe eternal, &c.

Gene.3.11.
Rom.5.19.
Leui.26.
Deut.28.
Pſa.44.10.
14.& 7.4.
Pſa.51.4.
Dan.9.5.
Ier.20.11.

35 *The pleaſure of a king is in a wiſe ſeruant: but his wrath ſhalbe towarde him that is lewde.*

Although it is a true and ſure thing, that God who is our high King, doeth delight in that man which can gouerne him ſelfe with ſuche wiſedome and prudence as is requiſite for his vocation, and that he which doth contrarie therto, doth diſpleaſe him, as the ſcripture doth witnes both by promiſes & threatenings, and alſo by ex-

amples: Bleſſed is the people, (O Lord) that can reioyce in thee: they Pſa.89.16.
ſhal walke in the light of thy countenance. The Lordes delight is in &.147.11.
them that feare him: he that dwelleth in heauen, ſhal laugh them to &.2.4.9.
ſcorne, the Lord ſhal haue them in deriſion. Again, Thou ſhalt bruiſe
them with a rodde of yron. He hath iuſtly ſhewed his wrath againſt
Caine: againſt the world deſtroyed by the flood, and by other infi- Pſal.32.9.
nite examples which ought to mooue vs to folow this exhortation,
I wil informe thee, and teach thee in the way wherin thou ſhalt go:
and I wil guide thee with mine eye. And leaſt the riche and great
men doe thinke that this doctrine doeth nothing perteine to them,
let them giue eare. Be wiſe nowe therfore, yee Kinges: bee learned,
ye Iudges of the earth. Serue the Lord in feare, and reioyce in trem-
bling. Albeit (I ſay) that it is a thing true and ſure, that God deligh- Pſal.2.10.
teth in a man of vnderſtanding: yet we wil take this ſentence for an 11.
inſtruction that Solomon giueth vnto the Kings of the earth, and to
their ſeruants & officers. Wherin, firſt he ſheweth that the affection
of Kings & Lords of the earth, ought not to be ſet vpon vanitie and
folly (vpon pleaſures & paſtimes, vpon ſuperfluities & pomps, vpon
filthines and couetouſnes, and other worldly and carnal thinges: as
doe almoſt al Princes and earthly Lordes, who thinke that al things
are made for their paſtime, and that they ought to doe nothing els
but to liue in pleaſure and voluptuouſnes, & to doe al thinges after
their ſenſual appetite, ſo drunken are they in their carnal ſenſe:) but
their heartes and mindes ought to bee giuen vnto the lawe of the
Lorde. For if they be not wiſe nor learned, they can not delight in Deut.17.18.
wiſe ſeruantes and learned officers: as Solomon hath warned them 19.
heere, ſaying, *The pleaſure of a King is in a wiſe ſeruant:* and
doeth ſhewe them that they ought to take example of Dauid. Se-
condly, he ſheweth that a King ought not him ſelf alone to gouern Pſal.101.2.
and guide the people committed vnto him, but ought to haue ſer-
uants which may ſerue and helpe him to ſet order in the pollicie af-
ter the counſel of Iethro: and as did Ioſaphat. Thirdly, that Kings Exo.18.1
and Princes ought not to gouerne after their fantaſie, but accor- 2.Cor.19.5.
ding to the counſell of their learned and wiſe ſeruantes. And then 6.7.
they ſhal ſhewe that they delight in them, and eſteeme and honour
them. Contrarily, if they haue none other lawe but their wil,
and wil not yeelde vnto the counſel of wiſe and learned ſeruantes,

then

they doe plainely ſhewe that they doe not delight in wiſe ſeruants. Nowe if kings muſt followe the counſel of ſuch as are learned and wiſe in the ciuill gouernment, by a greater reaſon they ought very diligently to beleeue the true and faithful Paſtours of the Church, which beare the word of the Lorde: and to attempt nothing in the *Deut.17.18* Eccleſiaſtical pollicie without the aduiſe and counſel of thoſe which are appointed to feede the flocke of the Lorde. This is wel ſhewed them, when it is ſayde, that the king ſhal write out this law into a booke for himſelfe, by the Prieſtes of the Leuites. For the Prieſtes lips ſhould preſerue knowledge, as they ſhould ſeeke the law at his *Mala.2.7.* mouth: for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſtes. Fourthly, that offices and adminiſtrations of kingdomes, principalities and Lordeſhips ought to be committed vnto wiſe and learned men, and not vnto ſuche as are ignorant. Beholde this is it which is ſhewed to vs by the firſt parte of this preſent ſentence, vpon the which let vs note that delight is here taken for a louing and fauourable affection: and a wiſe ſeruant, for him which can ſo wel gouerne in the adminiſtration committed vnto him, that his Lord reioyſeth thereat and praiſeth it, and is not aſhamed to commend the ſame. Solomon doth ſo teach it vs, when agaynſt delight, hee ſetteth wrath, and againſt a wiſe ſeruant, him that is lewde, ſaying, *But his wrath ſhalbee towarde him that is lewde*. Let vs note, ſith that the lewde ſeruant, or that hee worketh confuſion, is ſet againſt a wiſe or learned ſeruaunt, we muſt vnderſtand that he is a lewd ſeruant which is voyde of a right affection, of ſounde iudgement, and deſpiſeth wiſedome and vnderſtanding, and careth not too labour in the charge and adminiſtration committed vnto him, except he labour to ſet all in diſorder and confuſion, and yet notwithſtanding would be counted a good and faythful ſeruant. The kingdomes principalities, dominations & Lordſhips, haue but too many ſuch ſeruãts, as experience techeth. But we muſt not maruel thereat: for if the kings, Princes, & Lords of the earth doe diſobey, rebel & be vnfaithful vnto their Soueraigne Lord & king, they doe wel deſerue to haue ſuch ſeruantes officers & ſtewards, or rather ſcatterers & deſtroiers: & alſo ſuche men are cõmonly beſt welcõe & receiued into the courts & houſes of great men, becauſe they can beare good face, goe braue and gay, flatter & ſlaunder. Wherin we may wel know that ſuch adminiſtrations,are diſordered and haue yll ſucceſſe: for they which are the beſt welcome and receyued , ought too bee reiected , driuen away and rooted out, if the Lordes did their duetie. Solomon doeth wel ſhewe it vs,when he ſaith heere,that the lewde ſeruant ſhalbe vnder the wrath of the king. For when hee ſpeaketh heere of wrath , let vs not onely imagine ſome euil vſe and cuſtome ſome crooked looke,or ſome blunt ſpeech or ſharpe threatninges : But as the king ought to maynteine a wiſe ſeruant,in dooing him good, and preſeruing him from euill, ſo much as poſſiblie hee can, (otherwiſe he ſhould not delight in him,)euē ſo the office of a king requireth ſuch anger againſt a lewde ſeruant,that hee ſhoulde make him to feele it in puniſhing him,as the confuſion and lewdnes that he hath done deſerueth,according to the Scripture. I ſhall ſoone deſtroy all the vngodly that are in the land : that I may roote out al wicked doers from the citie of the Lord.

*Pſa.*101.8.
*Rom.*13.4.
1.*Pet.*2.14.
*Pſa.*101.11.

The fifteenth Chapter.

1 *A ſofte anſwere putteth away wrath: but greeuous woordes ſtirre vp anger.*

Although we be inclined and readie to doe euill vnto our neighbours, (as Caine hath well ſhewed it vntoo his brother Abel,and the children of Iacob vnto their brother Ioſeph)and that many doe nothing care though their neighboures are prouoked againſt thē, ſo arrogant and lofty they are, and preſume vpon their authority: neuertheles,after we haue offended them, or that we vnderſtand that they holde themſelues offended with vs, if we feele or think vs to be more weak, we feare their wrath, and deſire to auoyde it,and would be very glad to bee aſſured that they beare vs no grudge,and deſire no reuengment againſt vs. Now what force and power, or credite and authoritie ſoeuer we haue aboue our neighbours.if we haue offended them, we muſt think we are the weakeſt. For in offending our neghbours,we doe

*Gene.*4.8.& 37.4.20.

not only ſet our ſelues againſt men, but againſt almightie God, who
can tel how to take the quarel of thoſe in hand, that are vniuſtly oppreſſed,
& can ſoone take vengeance in his wrath & fury, without any
reſiſtance. Cain did iuſtly feele it: ſo did they which vexed the holy
ancient fathers, & which roſe vp againſt the people of God: as it
may be ſeene in the holie hiſtories: and in beholding the promiſes
and threatenings contained in the bookes of Moſes. Albeit thē that
Gene.12.2.3. after the feeling of the fleſhe and outward appearance, we ſeeme vnto
&.15.1.14. our ſelues to be the more mightie, yet whē we haue offended our
Deut.32.35. neighbours, how weak ſoeuer they be, let vs eſteeme our ſelues the
Zach.2.5.9. weakeſt, and feare the wrath that is kindeled againſt vs, becauſe of
the offence that wee haue committed, & let vs endeuour to auoide
it in quieting our neighbours offended. And to come to this, let vs
folow the way that Solomon doth teach vs, when he ſaith, *A ſofte
anſwere putteth away wrath, &c.* By a ſoft anſwere, let vs vnderſtand,
an humble confeſſing of the faltes & offences which haue bin
committed, with requeſts & praiers to obteine pardon of God, and
reconciliation with them that haue bin offended: and chiefly when
we are exhorted & required. And not only the ſame, but alſo, let vs
vnderſtand euerie ſoft & gentle word, whereby we labour to quiet
thoſe which are angrie, whether it be wrong or right, and to obtein
their fauour. Iacob knew wel that ſuch words were fit for to turne
Gene.32.4.5. away wrath: and therfore he vſeth them towards his brother Eſau.
& 33.5.& He had not offended Eſau, but hee knew wel that Eſau had threatened
27.41. to kil him. And Dauid for to turne away the wrath of Saul, who
1.Sam.24.9. did wrongfully perſecute him, vſeth alſo a ſoft anſwer. Likewiſe our
&.26.18. Lord Ieſus Chriſt doth wel teach vs, If thou wilt offer thy gift to the
Math.5.23. Altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt
thee, leaue there thine offering before the Altar & go thy way: firſt
be reconciled to thy brother, & then come and offer thy gift. Again,
Loue your enemies, &c. Speake wel of them which perſecute you,
&c. not rendering euil for euil, &c. And if we muſt vſe a ſoft anſwer
Math.5.23. towards them which doe vs wrong, by a ſtronger reaſon towardes
24.44. God & our neighbours, whom we haue offended. The brethren of
Rom.12.44. Ioſeph did wel vnderſtand this, as they ſhewed it: and Abigaile:
Dauid alſo did prooue, that a ſoft anſwere putteth away wrath. As
he

hee confeſſeth, I haue ſinned againſt the Lorde, &c. Wee may 2.Sam.12.
ſee heere howe wee muſt vſe a ſoft anſwere, for to turne away the 13.& .24.10
wrath, chiefly of God. (For curſed is the fauour which men beareth Pſa.32.5.
vnto vs, except wee haue peace with God: the which for to obteine,
let vs take heede wee vſe not ſoft anſwere vnder diſſimulation and
hypocriſie: as they which ſay, Lorde, Lorde, and labour not to doe
his wil). Secondly, of men: following the counſel of S. Paule, If it be Math.7.21.
poſſible, ſo much as in you lyeth, haue peace with al men. And in Luke.6.46.
our ſoft anſwere let vs take heede of treaſon: as Iudas Iſcarioth, Rom.12.18.
which ſaluted Ieſus Chriſte, kiſſing and calling him maiſter, and yet Math.26.49
betraied him into the handes of his enimies. To whome al ſuch are
like which boaſt themſelues to bee reſourmed after the Goſpel, and
yet woulde haue the ſame aboliſhed. And foraſmuche as an aun-
ſwere or ſoft word doth put away wrath, & quieteth it, it foloweth
wel, that if we fear, as we ought, of prouoking of God, or our neigh-
bours vnto wrath and anger, that wee ought to bee giuen truely
vnto ſuch a kinde of anſwere, and to abſtaine from al rude, ſharpe,
arrogant, and greeuous wordes: As doeth Solomon teach vs, ſay-
ing, *But grieuous wordes ſtirre vp anger*. This ſame is ſo playne,
that it needeth no declaration, and is ſo often prooued, that it hath
no neede of probation, as touching betweene man and man: and
alſo it is a natural thing belonging to man, to bee prouoked to an-
ger when thinges are not ſpoken vnto his minde. Caine hath wel Gene.4.9
ſhewed it by the anſwere hee made vnto God. The Sodomites
tooke not the inſtructions of Lot in good parte, and therefore they &.19.9.
waxed angry with him. The ſonnes of Iacob doe not very wil- &.37.8.
lingly heare the dreames of Ioſeph: for this cauſe they became an-
grie, and conceiued hate againſt him. The anſwere of Nabal pro- 1.Sam.25.13
uoked Dauid vnto anger. Concerning God, let vs not doubte but 1.Cor.10.5.
that wee prouoke his anger, when our ſpeeche doeth not pleaſe 1.Kin.18.40
him: as doe all lyers, & as many as ſpeake wickedly. The children of
Iſrael haue wel tryed it after their murmuringes: as the holy hiſto-
ries doe ſet it foorth, and Saint Paule alſo doeth teſtifie it. The 1.Cor.6.9.10.
falſe Apoſtles haue felt it. Albeeit that God doeth not alwayes
declare his anger againſt the euil mouthed, yet ſhal they not auoide
it: for the ſlaunderers, backbiters, periurers and blaſphemers ſhall

not inherit the kingdome of heauen. Let vs then take heed to ſpeake wel, to pleaſe God chiefly, and alſo our neighbours which are eaſie and willing to be taught. For if the ſtubborne, tranſgreſſours, diſſolute and wicked, the hard harted and obſtinate do become angrie at vs, when we ſpeake not to their minde, let vs not care for it. If our ſpeech which is according to Gods worde, be greeuous vnto them, the ſame commeth not from vs, but from their malice. If their anger ariſe, let vs not be afraide thereof, but let vs folowe our charge, as we are admoniſhed in Eſai, the 58. Chapter: & Ier.1.7. & 2. Tim. 4.2. & Titus, 1.7.8.

2 *The tongue of the wiſe vſeth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fooles babbleth out fooliſhneſſe.*

Wee al naturally doe deſire knowledge, ~~and to~~ vnderſtande how wee ought to gouerne and rule, that wee may gaine therby, & auoid loſſe: and it greeueth vs to bee ignorant, except wee be children in wit, or blockiſhe and dul. Wee doe greatly praiſe them which are cunning to handle their matters wel, and which are careful and diligent to take heede that they haue no hinderance nor loſſe: and contrarily, wee blame them which haue no regarde to their buſineſſe, and wee eſteeme them negligent. Nowe if wee bee thus affectioned to worldly things and temporal gouernment, by a more ſtrong reaſon, muſt wee bee earneſt to learne to guide and gouerne our ſoules, for to preſerue them from danger, not temporal (as are the worldlings, which know no other life, but this temporal, very careful to do this:) but to auoide eternal deſtruction, and to be alwaies in felicitie and ioy. The knowledge which is neceſſary thereto, is not found in al: for it is not common to al, but only to them which
Pſa.25.8. are inſtructed & taught of God. Dauid doth ſo affirme it, The Lord
Pſa.32.8. is good & iuſt. And therefore hee praieth, Make mee to know thy
Eſay.2.3.& wayes, O Lorde. Alſo the promiſes that GOD maketh, doe
48.17.& 54. ſhewe that the true knowledge commeth from him. And yet
13. notwithſtanding, GOD who is our teacher, dwelleth in the
Iere.31.33. light that none can attaine vnto. For this cauſe hee ordereth the
34. Inſtrumentes and Organes, by the which hee will teache vs, and of whome wee muſt learne knowledge. Solomon doth ſignifie it, whē he ſaith, *The tongue of the wiſe vſeth knowledge aright, &c.*

Iſ

If thẽ we will learn knowledge, & learne how we muſt guide & gouerne our ſoules for to preſerue them from deſtruction, we muſt aſke of God that he woulde raiſe vp for vs wiſe men, not worldly & carnal, but ſuch as was Noe, Abraham, Moyſes, the Prophets & Apoſtles: and that he would frame and order their tongue, in ſuch wiſe that they may pronoũce, as they ought, the pure word, which is the ſound & healthful knowledge, without the which al other ſciences & knowledges are but darknes & ignorãce, & the way of deſtructiõ damnatiõ. And we muſt pray and him that he would draw vs neere vnto thẽ, & to heare them with al the deſire of our heart, & that by ſuch meanes he woulde accompliſh in vs his promiſe. If wee cleaue *Eze.36.27.* vnto other, ſeing they are vnlike, euen mere contrary, to wit, fooles, we ſhal learne nothing but follie. *For the mouth of fooles bableth out fooliſhneſſe.* Nowe when follie is ſet againſt knowledge, which is very profitable, as we haue heard: it followeth rightly that frõ the mouth of fooles, we cã receiue nothing but hurt, the which we cannot auoid, except we be very diſcrete for to preſerue our ſelues. For on what ſide ſoeuer wee turne vs, wee meete with fooles, who becauſe of the great multitude wherewith the world is ful, & becauſe alſo of their great gliſtering, and faire ſhew of holines & wiſedome, & of their credite & authoritie doe draw vs vnto them, & doe bewitch vs with their follie, & doe leade vs vnto deſtruction with thẽ, except we be very quicke to diſcerne betweene knowledge and fooliſhnes. We haue tried it beeing vnder the yoake of Antichriſt of Rome. Wherfore when the Lord giueth wiſdome, we muſt come to heare it, beſeeching him to make vs too vnderſtande the way of his *Pro.2.6.* commandementes. Againe, Lorde teach me the way of thy ſtatutes. *Pſa.119.27.33.* And albeit that Solomon here maketh no mentiõ but of the tongue and of the mouth: yet he excludeth not the other members. For as we haue hearde, a diſcrete man worketh by knowledge, but a foole openeth follie. There hee ſpeaketh rather of the tongue then of *Pro.13.16.* other members: for it is the ſame that expreſſeth beſt what is in the hearte of man, and is more eaſily and lightly imparted vntoo a great multitude then by the other members. The tonge is of ſo greate excellencie, that the Scripture calleth glory, and S. Iames *Pſal.16.9.* ſaieth, that the tongue woorketh greate thinges, though it be but *Ia.3.5.6.13.* a little member.

But if it be giuen to goodnes, it commeth not of it ſelfe: for the tongue is a fire, euen a worlde of wickednes. Therefore it requireth to be guided and ruled by ſome other thing then it ſelfe, that is to ſay, by wiſedome. S. Iames doeth ſignifie it, when he asketh, Whoſoeuer is wiſe and diſcreet amongſt you? let him ſhew by good conuerſation of his workes in meekeneſſe of wiſedome.

Solomon alſo ſaieth not ſimply, The tongue vſeth knowledge aright: but the tongue of the wiſe. In them is knowledge, and
Pro.10.13. with them it is founde. Therefore no man wil attribute knowledge,
14. nor the vſe thereof to him ſelfe, vnleſſe he be wiſe, not before men,
but before God, which giueth him witneſſe by his Spirite. Let vs
note further, that if knowledge be not ſo much vſed as it ought to
be, that it is for want of wiſedome. But fooliſhneſſe aboundeth, becauſe
that the number of fooles (as hath bene ſaide) is ſo great, and
can not ſuffer that the tongue of the wiſe ſhoulde vſe knowledge
rightly. In Turkie no man wil ſuffer Ieſus Chriſt to bee preached,
that hee might be knowne to be our Sauiour with God his Father:
Iohn.17.3. as it is neceſſarie thereby to obteine life. In Poperie, ſome mention
ſhal be made of Ieſus Chriſt, and yet no man wil heare Saint Paule
1.Cor.2.2, which hath rightly vſed knowledge, and hath ſaide, I eſteemed not
to knowe any thing among you, ſaue Ieſus Chriſt, and him crucified.
But they preferre an heape of trifles before Ieſus Chriſt, who
of God is made vnto vs wiſdome. As touching the countries where
2.Cor.1.30. the Goſpel is purely preached, yet are they not cleane purged of
fooles. For we ſhal finde many which cannot abide vs to reprehend,
to confute, to threaten them which liue ſlanderouſly and diſſolutely:
and yet we muſt not ſo doe, if we wil rightly preach the Goſpel,
wherein is conteined repentance, vnto the which, for to exhort and
bring the people, it is neceſſarie to crie out againſt vice and ſinne, and
to terrifie the conſciences of thoſe which are giuen to liue wickedly.
For to vſe knowledge rightly, we muſt preache one onely Ieſus
Luke.34.17. Chriſt, and repentance, and remiſſion of ſinnes in his name.

3 *The eyes of the Lord in euery place, beholde the euil and the good.*

If we haue in admiration, and giue reuerence to Kings and Princes of the earth, eſteeming them wiſe and prudent, when they are verie careful and watchful to take heed to their ſubiects, for to know how euery man doeth gouerne him ſelfe, that ſo much as they can, they may ſet al thinges in good order in their countries and dominions (ſeeing that al the Empires, Kingdomes, and Princedomes of the worlde are nothing, in compariſon of the ſoueraigne Lordſhip of our eternal God :) wee muſt needes bee rauiſhed into a great wonderment, and wonderful aſtoniſhment, for to confeſſe the ineſtimable and incomprehenſible wiſedome of God, the which ouerſeeth not one or two Kingdomes, nor by mediatours and interceſſours (as Emperours and earthly Kings, how litle ſoeuer the length of their Kingdome is, haue not the power to looke ouer all and euerie where, but haue neede to ordeine noble men heere and there to haue the ouerſight, the guiding and gouernment of townes and villages, and that in their name and authoritie, they may ſet order amongſt the people) but hee him ſelfe ouerſeeth al countries of the worlde, and euery particular perſon therin: and for to order things aright therin, he looketh not only vnto that which is done outwardly, as do the gouernorus of the earth: but hee perceth euen vnto the heart & thoughts, & cōſidereth & ſeeth al the cogitatiōs, thoughts, purpoſes, affectiōs & deſires how deepe ſoeuer they be. Solomō doth expreſſe this ſame vnto vs in fewe words, when he ſaith, *The eyes of the Lord, &c.* The holy ſcripture attributeth ſight & face vnto god. Now we cannot comprehende the ſight & the face of God without eyes: and therefore the ſcripture applying it ſelfe vnto our capacitie, doth attribute eyes vnto God. And yet he is a ſpirit, & hath no eyes. Doeſt thou ſee as man ſeeth? But the ſcripture yeelding to our dulnes, ſpeaketh of God by ſimilitudes, & doth attribute vnto him that which is corporal, that wee may the more eaſily comprehende that which he declareth vnto vs. Therfore when we ſee that the eyes of the Lord are in al places, let vs take heed to imagine any thing carnal in him, but let vs vnderſtand, that the prouidence of God is of ſuche length and breadth, that hee looketh not onely to one parte of the world, but hath care of al, and nothing is hid from him : There is no deepe ſo profounde, but hee pearceth it : for hee hath made al, and ruleth all, and nothing ſtandeth nor abideth but by his will and ordinance. And therefore Dauid by great admiration ſayeth, Whither ſhall I flye from thy Spirite?

Gene.1.10.
&.32.30.
Exo.3.4.7.
&.33.11.
Pſa.14.2.
Gene.6.8.
&.18.3.
Pſal.11.4.7
& 66.7.
Iob.10.4.
Pſal.139.7

But that which hee moſt regardeth in this worlde, is man, for

whom he hath created al things: & albeit he doth prouide for the
Math.6.25. beaſts,yet his chiefe care is for men. Alſo the Scripture maketh of-
1.Cor.9.9.10 ten mention of the ſight of God ouer men.Likewiſe Solomon doth
ſignifie here vnto vs after a ſort that the eyes of the Lord are chiefly
ouer mẽ.For albeit he ſaith that the eies of the Lord are in al places,
Pſal.11.4.7. & that he knew wel that the world was not void of beaſts, yet hee
ſaieth not that the eyes of the Lorde are ouer the beaſts, but behol-
ding the euil and the good. Albeit that of our vicious & corrupted
nature we are al euil,yet, becauſe that God of his grace hath elected
&.33.13.14. ſome before the foundation of the worlde was layde,that we ſhould
Gene.6.5.& be holy through loue: therefore Solomon letteth not to parte men
8.21. into twayne: that is to ſay, into euil and good.And it might ſeeme
Pſal.14.3. that he nameth the euil firſt, becauſe that al men by their nature are
Rom.3.9. ſuch, & thoſe which are left in that nature are a far greater number
Ephe.2.3.& thẽ are thoſe which are reformed by the grace of god, & that we are
1.4. firſt euil before we be good: & thus hee ſetteth our owne nature
firſt before our eyes, that what goodnes ſoeuer we haue, we ſhould
not yet boaſt, as though we had chãged our own ſelues, & not that
it came by the onely grace and meere mercy of our Lord God. I ſay
expreſſely it might ſeeme, & not that it is ſo: for wee muſt cõpel
no man to beleue that Solomon hath had this reſpect,in naming the
euil before the good: although that that which is ſayd, conteineth
true and profitable doctrine to leade vs vnto humility & lowlines,
as it is neceſſary for vs. But to come againe to that which Solomon
mindeth to teach vs, let vs note that he firſt ſaith, that God behol-
deth the euil: by the which we muſt vnderſtand them which de-
light to hurt and to doe euil vnto their neighboures, and doe hate
goodneſſe. Theſe are they which are largely ſpoken of here before,
Pro.1.7.10. and alſo in Ieremie. Such are the wicked, who are here ſpoken of.
24.2.11. Solomon doth ſhew it whẽ he deuideth them from the good, whoſe
Iere.4.22. goodnes is neuer ſo perfect but that ſtil ſome ſeed of euil remaineth,
& that we ſhould need continually to aſke forgeuenes of our ſinnes
but goodnes is imputed vnto them,becauſe they delight to do wel,
and that the euil which is in them,diſpleaſeth them. Contrarily,
the euil haue no delight but too doe euil. And therefore when it
is ſayde that God beholdeth the euill, let vs knowe that it is not
for delighte that hee hath in them nor in theyr wickedneſſe.

For Dauid ſaith, Thou art not a God which loueſt wickednes: neither ſhal any euil dwel with thee. The Lorde alloweth the righteous: but the vngodly and him that delighteth in wickednes doth his ſoule abhorre. The face of the Lorde is againſt them that doe euil: to roote out the remembrance of them from the earth. But contrarily, he beholdeth the good delighting in them, & preſeruing them from deſtruction. The eyes of the Lord are ouer them which feare him, &c. The eyes of the Lord are ouer the righteous: and his eares are open vnto their prayers. Againe, When the righteous crie, the Lorde heareth them. But the Lordes delight is in them that feare him, and put their truſt in his mercy. Moreouer let vs note, that the Lord doth not ſee as man ſeeth onely outwardly, but he ſeeth & knoweth euē the very bottome of him. Let not the wicked thē loke to auoid puniſhmēt: ſeeing they haue to do with him who is righteous, and almightie. And let the good, what euill ſoeuer they ſuffer, not feare to periſhe: ſeeing that the almightie, who is merciful, careth for them. Finally, let vs note that it is vnpoſſible to make any image or likeneſſe for to repreſent God, foraſmuche as his eyes are in al places.

Pſal.5.5.& 11.4.& 34.15.

Pſa.33.18. & 34.16.17 18.& 147.11.

4 *A wholeſome tongue is as a tree of life: but the frowardneſſe thereof is the breaking of the minde.*

Foraſmuche as wee al deſire life, and chiefly that which laſteth longeſt, and if wee bee gentle and merciful vnto our neighbours, we deſire their health, and are very glad to bee the cauſe of the ſauing of their life, & we delight therein. Foraſmuch as it is ſo, I ſay, we muſt not be negligent of that which is proper and meete therevnto, but diligent to ſeeke it, and hauing obteined it, to keepe it, and to practiſe it as it ſhal bee expedient. The worldlings thinke that there needeth nothing but abundance of temporal wealth for to liue, to bee at our eaſe, to haue our delightes and pleaſures of the fleſhe, to auoide ſorrowe and Melancholie, and to bee mery: and therefore with al their deſires and affections, they giue them ſelues vnto gathering and ſeeking al the paſtimes they can imagine: but the life conſiſteth not heerein, as hath been handeled. The children of God muſt not ſtay at theſe worldly things and carnal for to liue, but muſt ſeeke other meanes, amongeſt the which is an wholeſome tongue: as Solomon doeth teache vs, ſaying, *A wholeſome tongue is as the tree of life.* There is health in the tongue, when the hearte is not double, and is not infected with lying, & deceit, and other wickedneſſes: but is indewed with ſimplicitie and vprightneſſe, and is filled with trueth and other vertues: by the abundance whereof, the mouth ſpeaketh. Then the tongue which is wholeſome, is as a tree of life. For as the tree of life planted in the midſt of the garden of Eden, brought foorth fruite, of the which if man had eaten, hee *2.9.Gene.* had liued for euer: euen ſo a wholeſome tongue bringeth foorth *&.3.22.* the fruite of trueth, the which quickeneth thoſe which are partakers thereof. For to be partakers thereof, wee muſt drawe neere to the wiſe, not with our bodies, but by conſent & agrement. The tongue *Pro.12.18.* of the wiſe is health. The inſtruction of the wiſe is as the ſpring of *&.13.14.* life. Wee muſt thus drawe neere to them, and not to draw back: for by them doeth Ieſus communicate himſelfe vnto vs, whome wee muſt heare: in whome onely we muſt beleeue, and ſay to him with the Apoſtles, Lorde, to whome ſhal wee goe? Thou haſt the wordes of eternal life, of the which al they are partakers, which in faith and *Iohn.6.68.* obedience receiue the Goſpel by the mouth of thoſe which preache it purely. By them doth the tongue of the Lord ſound foorth, which hath ſaid, He that heareth you, heareth me. Behold the chief helth of the tongue: and alſo the doctrine which proceedeth thereof is called wholeſome doctrine: and they which receiue it are ſounde in faith, by the which wee obteine life. And therefore, wee muſt all learne of this tongue to frame ours, ſo doing wee ſhal bee by our *Mat.12.37.* tongues, health, & a tree of life both to ourſelues and to our neigh- *Pro.12.6.14* bours. Thou ſhalt bee iuſtified by thy wordes. Let vs then drawe *Pro.4.20.21* neere vnto an wholſome tongue, and let vs hearken diligently ther- *22.23.24.* vnto: as wee haue beene admoniſhed. If we worke after this ſort, it ſhal come to paſſe that as wee drawe neere truely vnto the wiſe, euen ſo ſhal wee bee endued with wiſdome, the which is the tree of life to them which lay holde vpon it. But if wee deſpiſe to haue *Pro.3.18.* an wholeſome tongue, there is no life in vs, neither for vs, nor for our neighbours, but deſtruction. Solomon doeth ſhewe it, ſaying.

But the frowardneſſe thereof is the breaking of the minde.

Therefore when we care not to ſpeak wel, and that we breake forth
into the wicked and diſſolute wordes, wee looſe our ſoules : Thou
ſhalt be condemned by thy wordes. The fooliſhe in talke ſhal bee Mat.12.37.
beaten. The mouth of the foole is a preſent deſtruction. The tongue Pro.10.8.
of the froward ſhalbe cut out. The euil mã is ſnared by the wickedneſſe & 12.13. &
of his lippes. A wicked meſſenger falleth into euil. Alſo we 13.17.
deſtroy as many as doe heare vs, ſo much as in vs lieth : Euil wordes,
corrupt good manners. Faire wordes and ſweete ſayings, deceiue 1.Cor.15.33
the heartes of the ſimple. Wee are heere then taught to bee attentiue Rom.16.18.
to heare thoſe which ſpeake wel and honeſtly : and alſo to accuſtome
our ſelues to vſe our tongues as wee ought. And becauſe
that the tongue ſhould be guided after the diſpoſition of the hearte,
wee haue neede to aſke a cleane heart, &c. According to Gods pro- Pſa.15.12.
miſe, I will powre vpon you cleane water, and waſh you cleane, &c. Eze.36.25.
In this ſort the Lorde wil open our lippes, and our mouthes ſhal Pſa.51.17.
ſhewe foorth his praiſe.

5 *A foole deſpiſeth his fathers inſtruction : but he that regardeth correction, is prudent.*

We al naturally doe iudge that a childe ought to receiue the commandements
of his father, and to ſubmit himſelfe vnto his correction
and chaſtening : otherwiſe hee is counted a foole, and without
diſcretion. And ſith that our iudgement is ſuch, and that wee
woulde not bee counted fooles and without diſcretion, let vs heare
our father who doeth teache vs & exhort vs to receiue his correcti-
ons. If wee wil doe this ſame as we ought, we muſt neither behold
the earth, nor the worlde : but foraſmuch as we haue one onely father
in heauen, wee ought for to lift vp our inwarde eyes thither : Mat.23.9
that is to ſay, our heartes and mindes, and to bee diligent too heare
what it pleaſeth him to commande vs, for to obey him, and patiently
to beare the corrections that hee ſhal ſende vs. Yet neuertheleſſe
we ſhold not ceaſſe to ſubmit our ſelues vnto mẽ which haue ſuperioritie,
& authoritie ouer vs, which haue taken the charge to teach
vs, to guide and rule vs, and haue power to chaſten and correct vs:
otherwiſe we ſhould be fooles, as Solomon declareth, ſaying, *A
foole deſpiſeth his fathers inſtruction*. For al ſuch worthie men

are our fathers, and for ſuch ought we to eſteeme them: as alſo the
Scripture doeth attribute this name of father vnto them, becauſe it
hath pleaſed God to impart his honour and his power, and autho-
ritie vnto them. If then we wil not be diſobedient vnto our fa-
ther, and be counted fooles, let vs not refuſe the inſtruction of thoſe
fathers that God hath appointed for vs in this world: but let vs ho-
nour them, and yeelde vnto them obedience after the degree where-
in God hath placed them. Let children honour father and mother
Exo.20.12. then. Let euery man be ſubiect vnto the higher powers: Giue vnto
Ephe.6.1. Cæſar that which belongeth vnto Cæſar. Let ſeruants obey their
Rom.13.1. Maiſters. Al theſe are fathers for the body, to whome we muſt obey
1.Pet.2.13. and ſuffer chaſtiſements, if wee wil auoide to be counted fooles, and
Mat.22.21. to beare the name of diſcrete, prudent, and wiſe: as Solomon ſaith
Ephe.6.5. heere.

Collo.3.22. *But hee that regardeth correction, is prudent.* Now if God
1.Pet.2.18. wil haue men to knowe our diſcretion and wiſedome knowne by
the obedience wee giue them, and by the pacience that wee haue
Heb.12.9. to beare, and to ſuffer the corrections of ſuche fathers: by a more
ſtrong reaſon wee ought to ſubmit vs vnto our heauenly father. For
to obey him rightly, wee muſt heare and receiue his worde with al
humbleneſſe, feare and reuerence, the which is declared vnto vs by
the Miniſters and Paſtours of the Churche, who doe beget vs ther-
by ſo much as in them lyeth, when they doe preache the ſame vnto
vs faithfully. But becauſe the world is ful almoſt of an infinit nūber
of thoſe which name themſelues fathers, but they are cruel, tyrants,
murderers, and mankillers, not onely of their bodies, but alſo of
their ſoules: as are the Pope and his mainteiners, Biſhops, Prieſts,
and Monkes: as are al Kings and Princes, which would haue their
ſubiectes to doe homage vnto that Antichriſt of Rome, by the ob-
ſeruation of their traditions and doctrines of men, the which leade
men to perdition: we ought not to bee ready to receiue their inſtru-
ctions, nor obey their corrections, for then ſhould wee be fooles,
and vndiſcrete: wee ſhoulde not haue the diſcretion and wiſdome
that our heauenly father demandeth of vs, when hee doeth admo-
Math.7.15. niſh vs by his ſonne Ieſus Chriſt our Lord, Take heed and beware
Rom.16:17. of falſe Prophetes. &c. And by Saint Paule: but as fooles and vn-
Gala.3.1. diſcrete, wee ſhould deſerue to bee reproued as were the the foliſhe

Galathians. And albeit that wee muſt giue honour and obedience vnto Princes,though they were not faithful vnto God: yet if they command any thing which cannot be obſerued without the diſhonour of God,we muſt in no wiſe obey them,but rather tel them, It is better to obey God,than men.

Act.4.19.& 5.29.

6 *The houſe of the righteous hath muche treaſure: but in the reuenewes of the wicked there is trouble.*

There is no man that deſireth to bee poore,neither would that his family ſhoulde want any thing: and they which are needie are very glad when they finde an houſe furniſhed,and that they hope to receiue ſome helpe of that which they neede. Euen ſo there is none but deſireth to haue enough for to mainteine himſelf in this worldly and temporall life. But al men knowe not how to gouerne themſelues to come by it. The worldlings and carnal men ſay, That for to get great riches,and come to wealth,wee neede but turne our backe vnto God. And though they did not ſpeake thus,yet wil they not ceaſſe to haue this opinion: as wee may knowe it,by the manner and cuſtome they vſe to heape riches together. Although they labour to make themſelues beleeue,and alſo woulde haue other to beleeue, that they are honeſt men,and that they would doe wrong to no man: And in deede for a certaine time,after the outward apparance they wil floriſh and proſper,doing their thinges at pleaſure. And for this cauſe the children of God are tempted to follow them, that they alſo may liue at eaſe. And therefore, that ſuche wayes are wicked and deteſtable before God,and alſo condemned in the conſciences of the wicked(for they knowe wel that they woulde take it in euil part,& would not willingly beare it,if any mã laboured to doe them wrong that they doe vnto their neighbors) for this cauſe wee are admoniſhed not to enuie thoſe which commit wickednes. *Pſal.73.2.3. Pſa.37.1.* By the courſe of the Pſalme,wee may vnderſtande that the meanes to attaine vnto abundance of riches, is to followe righteouſneſſe, that is,that in aſſuring our ſelues of the goodneſſe of God towards vs,wee might faithfully followe our vocation, in doing no wrong vnto our neighbours, but yeelding that which wee owe them, according as the worde of God doeth teache vs. So doing, we ſhall

Leui.26.
Deut.28.
Pro.3.9.10.
33.&.11.24.
25.&.13.21.
22.&.14.11.

haue our houſes filled with plentie of goodes and ſhal quietly enioye them, as God doeth promiſe in his lawe. Solomon in folowing of the lawe, hath promiſed ſuch aboundance. But for to aſſure vs further, and to leade vs vnto righteouſnes, he doeth now againe ſet the ſelfe ſame promiſe before vs, when he ſayth. *The houſe of the righteous hath much treaſure.* This ſentence ought well to leade vs to follow righteouſnes, without doubting whither Solomō ſayth trueth or no. For albeit we ſee the righteous very often in outward ſight & after mans iudgement, to ſuffer much pouertie, & to be very miſerable, neuertheles according to the iudgement of the ſpirit their houſes haue much treaſure, becauſe they haue ynough and are contented, which is more woorth, and are of greater profit then all the riches of worldlinges and carnall men. Let vs then vnderſtand that the greatnes of their ſubſtance doeth not ſtand in outward abundance, but in that that they haue wherewith too ſuſtaine them, and that they are readie to help their neighbours with that which they haue. And thus the needy ought to be glad to come to the houſes of the righteous: for after as they haue neede, they will helpe their neceſſitie. Albeit then that we haue the rich men of the worlde in admiration, and that we proclaime them honeſt men, yet (as we may know by their kinde of doings) they are not righteous, and what abundance of welth ſoeuer they haue, yet haue they not in their houſes any great welth, ſeeing that for the greateſt part of them they haue neuer ynough and doe feare leſt the world ſhould fayl them. If then we would haue ynough, contentation, and peace in our houſes let vs ſtudie vpon righteouſnes and delight therein. For without it there is nothing but ſorrowe and trouble, doubtfulnes and vnquietnes, albeit that we labour to be merry and ioyfull when we think we haue yeerely rentes ynough and aboundant: Solomon doth ſignifie it ſaying, *but in the reuenewes of the wicked there is trouble.* The wicked doth not poſſeſſe that which he hath with a ſound conſcience, for eyther he vſeth deceit or rauening, or he hath neuer ynough, or he is vexed if his land doeth not profite and growe as hee would haue it, or if he ſpende more largely then hee woulde: and therefore he ſtampeth and fretteth eyther in body or mynde, or with both togeather, and hath no quieneſſe, but tormenteth himſelfe

ſelfe, and chideth and brauleth often with his houſholde, or with his neighbours.

7 *The lippes of the wiſe do ſpread abroade knowledge: but the hart of the fooliſh doeth not ſo.*

We are ſo couetous of honour and glorie, that it grieueth vs at the heart to be counted fooles, though we bee naturally ſuch, and cannot of our ſelues become other. Contrarily, we are very glad when wee thinke that wee are counted wiſe, or that wee can make our ſelues beleeue that we are ſo. And to mainteine vs in ſuch reputation wee apply our ſelues to doe goodlie things outwardly, and which ſeeme to bee of great profit before the people, either for our ſelues, or for our neighbours. For ſeeing that men knowe not the thoughtes of man, but as by the effectes which are ſhewed outwardly, therefore we cannot bee counted wiſe of our neighbours, except that we ſet our ſelues to do or ſpeake ſome things, the which they may eſteeme to proceede of wiſedom after the ſight of man & iudgement of the fleſh. But commonly both we and they are deceiued in our eſtimation and iudgement: as we may now know, if we throughly conſider what we were in thoughtes, words, and works, when we were in that horrible darkeneſſe of ignorance vnder the tyranny of the Pope. We thought then there was no wiſedome in the world but there. The holie Ghoſt doth teach vs by Solomon to iudge otherwiſe: to witte, that they which imparte knowledge ſo largely as they can, and delight to make their neighbours partakers with them thereof, that it may fructifie, are wiſe, when hee ſayth, *The lips of the wiſe, &c.* We cannot therefore boaſt our ſelues to be wiſe, becauſe we are not ſo, except wee bee liberal of our knowledge, and doe gladly imparte it according to the ſtate whereunto God hath called vs, and are not enuious nor ſory to ſee our neighbours to profit with vs of our induſtrie, paine and labour, and that they get by our meanes ſome knowledge or any arte for to knowe howe to ſpende their tyme in the ſeruice of God and of their neighbours, that they may not bee vnprofitable. But GOD muſt allowe our arte and occupation: for there is no knowledge, but that which God teacheth vs by his worde, and that he alloweth therby.

Except

A n d d l e f g h i l l ll n n o ſ y u h z

A n d g l e f g h i l l ll n n o ſ y u h z

Except he become our teacher,and that he him ſelfe open the lippes of the wiſe for to ſpread abroade knowledge , the worlde muſt Pro.2.6. needs bee filled with ignorance : For the Lorde giueth wiſedome, out of his mouth commeth knowledge and vnderſtanding.Euen ſo although Solomon doth attribute the ſeede or ſpreading abroade of knowledge vnto the lippes,yet is it not to ſay that knowledge cannot be imparted by no other meanes but by the lippes. True it is that the worde of God,out of which we learne al knowledge , is taught by the lippes,and that there is no knowledge but onely that which God teacheth,and that the chiefe and moſt neceſſarie parte of knowledge is communicated by the lippes of the Paſtours and miniſters of the Churche:but as they alone are not wiſe , euen ſo alſo they teache not themſelues alone al knowledge. They which leade an holie and honeſt life occupying themſelues faythfully in their eſtate & vocation for to helpe their neighbours at their need, do ſowe knowledge,though they ſhould ſpeake neuer a word with their mouthes.Their manners and faſhion of dooing, their ſtudies and exerciſes do ſpeake and teache : and ſo they ſhead and ſpread abroade knowledge according to the meaſure of the wiſedome that God giueth them by his worde, after the which wee muſt order all, and muſt thereby guyde al things. And to do the ſame,the wiſe muſt ſpeake: and it is for this cauſe why Solomon ſayth that the lippes of the wiſe ſhal ſpread abrode knowledge. Heeretofore hee hath well ſhewed vs that knowledge may be opened & communicated otherwiſe then by the lippes: Pro.13.16. Euery wiſe man wil worke by knowledge: but the mouth,the tongue and the lippes are the principal organes and inſtrumentes for to ſet it foorth, when they are moued of the hart therunto,which is the ſeale of knowledge,wiſedom,& vnderſtanding.Solomon doth ſignifie it,whẽ he doth not ſimply ſay, The lippes ſhal ſpread abroade: but he ſaith, *The lippes of the wiſe ſhall ſpread abrode*.He doth ſignifie it againe,when againſt the lippes of the wiſe,he ſetteth the hart of fooles,ſaying, *But the hart of the fooliſh doth not ſo* . And it is aſmuch as if he did ſay,foraſmuch as the wiſe haue receiued,and doe receiue knowledge into their harts & minds,they do ſpread the ſame abrode by their lippes.But fooles do deſpiſe knowledge and inſtruction: and therfore their hart which is voide of knowledge,cannot leade the lips to ſpread abrode that knowledge which they haue not: but they muſt declare and babble out follie whereof they be ful. For to teache the which follie, we need to ſpende much labour there about: wee do but to much learne it: for it is natural vnto al men. It is not ſo with knowledge: for the wiſe muſt labour much to teache it, as Solomon doeth ſignifie heere, when hee compareth it vnto ſeede. For as the ploweman doth not ſowe his good ſeede without paine and care, and yet after his trauell it doeth not al proſper: euen ſo although the wiſe be very careful to ſpread abrode knowledge, yet doeth it not proſper as it ought to do: experience teacheth it, and our Lord doth giue it wel to vnderſtande. Let vs then vnderſtande that Solomon comparing knowledge vnto ſeede, doeth after a ſorte accuſe men of ingratitude, becauſe they deſpiſe the liberalitie of the Lorde, which doth not ſpare to hide knowledge from them. The fooliſh doe not nowe take heede thereof, but heereafter they ſhal feele that they are not accuſed in vaine. *Matt.13.3.*

8 *The Sacrifice of the wicked is abhomination to the Lorde: but the praier of the righteous is acceptable vnto him.*

Men haue at al times holden a certaine manner whereby they haue made profeſſion that they had ſome kinde of religion, and that they woulde ſerue and honour God. And this hath not onely beene obſerued of the good, but alſo of the wicked. But God neuer accepted the ſeruice of the wicked: as hee ſhewed vnto Caine, and as wee may gather of the Scripture, when from the death of righteous Abel, it ſpeaketh not that any did ſerue God, vntil that it ſaith, That Seth had a ſonne, &c. This is not to ſay that men tyl then did offer no ſacrifices nor oblations, as a ſeruice vnto GOD: but that they were ſo corrupted, that God did not accept their ſeruice, and the multitude of the wicked cauſed that no man coulde eaſily diſcerne whether there were any Churche of God or no, tyl Enoch was borne. Euen ſo then wee may wel knowe that God allowed not the ſacrifices of the wicked: as alſo hee hath ſhewed in the time of Moſes, and hath likewiſe declared by his Prophetes. Wee haue nowe Solomon which doeth pronounce it plainely, when hee ſaith, *Gen.4.3.5.* *Gen.4.26.* *Exo.32.7.* *Num.16.21* *Pſal.40.7.*

The Sacrifice of the wicked is abhomination vnto the Lorde. By
&.50.8. Sacrifice, Solomon vnderſtandeth whatſoeuer is doone outwardly
&.51.18. for to ſerue God withal, which hath apparance of holineſſe and religion,
Eſay.66.3. and which is ordeined of God for his honor, and for to make
Mich.6.6.7. profeſſion when one wil proteſt to bee of his people. Hee pronounceth that al ſuche kinde of ſeruice is nothing worth, but to vexe and deſpite GOD, and to prouoke him to anger and wrath, when it is doone by the wicked which haue no feare nor reuerence of his word, nor beare any loue vnto their neighbors, though they labour to make themſelues beleeue it, and woulde haue men beleeue that they are deuout and good Catholikes. Let the wicked therefore which haue no minde to amend their liues, but waxe obſtinate and hardened in their malice, reſorte vnto the Sermons, let them receiue the Supper of the Lorde, and let them doe outwardly al the workes of a Chriſtian, yet doe they nothing but all abhomination before the Lorde. True it is that they ſhal bee greatly praiſed of thoſe which know not their wickedneſſe, & ſhalbe eſteemed more holy and deuout, than honeſt and good men: as alſo they labour to bee preferred before them. Solomon doth ſignifie it after a ſorte, when hee doeth attribute to the wicked that they doe offer ſacrifice: the which is a thing of greater apparance then is the praier which Solomon doeth attribute vnto the righteous, *But the praier of the righteous is aceptable vnto him.* Wherein the faithful and children of God are warned to walke in righteouſneſſe, without declining from it, and that in al their neceſſities they ſhoulde direct their praiers vnto God, not ſeeking to bee ſeene of men, and ſhoulde not bee troubled, though the ſeruice they doe vnto God, is not of ſuch gret price before the world, as the goodly viſour
Mat.6.5. of the wicked. Yet notwithſtanding let them bee greeued that the worlde iudgeth ſo wickedly: but as touching them, let them bee contented to bee aſſured that God doeth willingly heare them, for to grant vnto their petitions. Solomon doth giue vs this to vnderſtãd, when he ſaith, *That their praier is acceptable vnto the Lord.* When hee ſpeaketh thus, hee ſheweth vnto vs that they which are righteous in hearte, are neuer refuſed, but that God doth delight to helpe them in their neceſsities. Diuers Saints haue proued

it true : and amongeſt others,Dauid: I beſought the Lorde, and he hearde mee. The Lorde ſaith,To him wil I looke, euen to him that is poore,and of a contrite ſpirite,and trembleth at my wordes.Likewiſe we may heere learne,that for to be aſſured that our praiers are acceptable vnto the Lorde, wee muſt haue teſtimonie in our heartes that wee truely hate wickedneſſe, and that righteouſneſſe doeth pleaſe vs : Welbeloued brethren, if our heart condemne vs not, then haue wee boldneſſe towardes God,And whatſoeuer we aske, we receiue of him. But what righteouſnes ſoeuer is in vs, yet doeth it not deſerue to be heard. When God heareth vs in our righteouſneſſe,it is of his only pleaſure,and goodwil that he beareth towards vs : as Solomon doeth ſignifie by the worde which is interpreted *acceptable vnto him.* Wherein the faithful ought greatly to bee comforted,when they vnderſtande that they are in fauour with the Lorde,which oweth them naught, nor yet ſtandeth bounde vnto them for any thing. For the good wil hee beareth them,is not to do them good onely in this worlde,but to ſaue them eternally : as the righteous by their praiers tend chiefly therevnto, knowing that the worlde paſſeth away. And foraſmuch as the Papiſtes doe cal their Maſſe a Sacrifice,they may ſee heere that when it is celebrated by the wicked,that it is nothing els but abhomination to the Lorde : and ſo it is then of no profite: the which is againſt their fooliſh opinion : to wit,that their maſſe celebrated by a wicked Prieſte, is of as great efficacie as if it were ſaide by a good. But foraſmuch as the good doe not allowe ſtincking and abhominable idolatrie,therefore it followeth that all they which celebrate the Maſſe, are nothing worth : for it is the moſt wicked idolatrie that euer was inuented in the worlde.

Pſa.34.5.
Eſay.66.2.

1.Ioh.3.21. 22.

9 *The way of the wicked is abhomination vnto the Lorde : but hee loueth him that followeth righteouſneſſe.*

Foraſmuch as we doe al naturally conſent and agree that God which is true muſt bee honoured, therefore wee muſt take heede from allowing that hee ſhoulde bee falſified and proued a lyar : as it ſemeth reaſonable to al men,except they bee out of their wittes, paſt ſhame,and altogether poſſeſſed of the Deuil. But albeit that we cõfeſſe that it is very reaſonable & that it ſhould be too great wickednes for to belie god,yet diuers of thoſe which wil ſpeak ſo for to ſhewe themſelues wiſe and very zelous of the honour of God, will wel allowe the manners, faſhions, and trades of the wicked, their counſels, enterpriſes and threatenings: as they ſhew when they pronounce them to be honeſt men: the which is to make God a lyar, who declareth vnto vs that hee reiecteth and forſaketh, & counteth whatſoeuer the wicked doe take in hande for wickedneſſe, though it haue a goodly ſhew of righteouſneſſe, vprightneſſe and reaſon. He doth ſo pronoũce it by Solomon, ſaying, *The way of the wicked is abhomination vnto the Lorde*. When hee attributeth way vnto the wicked, hee doeth yeeld vnto our rudeneſſe, & ſpeaketh after an humane and carnal ſenſe: for truely the wicked doe holde no way, but the ſame of perdition. And it is not without cauſe that hee ſpeaketh thus: for albeit that the threateninges and doinges of the wicked haue ſome kinde of reaſon, and that it ſeemeth they are zealous of righteouſneſſe & equitie, neuertheleſſe as they are wicked, euen ſo doe they walke in wickedneſſe, the which is their way. Solomon doeth ſhew it wel, when againſt way, hee ſetteth righteouſneſſe, ſaying, *But he loueth him that followeth righteouſneſſe*. We wil heare take iuſtice, for the manners and trade of life of the righteous, which deſire nothing but to yeelde to euery one his dutie, as they are bounde by the worde of God. But becauſe that ſuch righteouſneſſe proceedeth from an heart purified by faith, the Lorde loueth him that followeth him, and which laboureth to conforme himſelfe vnto his God: for the worde of the Lorde is true, and al his workes are faithful. Hee loueth righteouſneſſe & iudgement, &c. For the righteous Lorde loueth righteouſneſſe: his countenance wil behold the thing that is iuſt. Let vs therefore followe righteouſneſſe, the which is not to frame our ſelues after this worlde. For the wil of God is the onely rule of perfect righteouſnes. And let vs diligently thinke with our ſelues, that it is no ſmal grace to bee beloued of the Lord: and contrarily, that it is a thing greatly to be feared, for to bee abhorred of him. For God loueth not the righteous for one time onely: but hee continueth to loue them: as Solomon doeth ſomewhat ſignifie by the Verbe of the Future tence which he vſeth. And the Lord ſhal ſhew them this immutable loue, when he ſhal giue them the eternal poſſeſſion of the heauenly kingdome. He hath loued thẽ before the foũdation of the worlde

Pſal. 33. 4. 5. & 11. 8.

Rom. 12. 4.

worlde was laide, wherevpon it followeth that hee wil alwaies loue them, for hee is vnchangeable. The giftes and calling of God are without repentance. And foraſmuch as he hath loued vs before the foundation, therefore it followeth wel that it is not for our righteouſneſſe, but of his onely grace and goodneſſe, and for the loue of Chriſte, in whome hee loueth vs. Wee are not more worthie then the children of Iſrael, to whome Moſes ſaith, Becauſe he hath loued thy fathers, and hath choſen their ſeede after them, he hath brought thee out of Egypt. The Lorde thy God hath choſen thee to bee a people for him ſelfe: doe not thinke in thine hearte, &c. The Lorde for my righteouſneſſe hath brought mee into this lande. Alſo our following of righteouſneſſe is neuer ſuche, that it can deſerue the loue of God. For albeit that in folowing righteouſneſſe we doe giue a certaine witneſſe that wee loue God, yet is it not to ſay, that thereby wee can binde God to loue vs: but of his grace and goodnes he preuenteth vs. And thus, foraſmuch as God for the loue that hee beareth vs, doeth make vs to folowe righteouſneſſe, to loue him, and to loue his worke in vs, and doeth accept it, and giue vnto it a rewarde of his grace and liberalitie, and not that hee oweth, neither that hee can owe any thing to him that followeth righteouſneſſe: but the loue which hee beareth to them that followe righteouſneſſe, is but a continuation of the ſame, which was before the foundation of the worlde. This perſeuerance and continuation of loue ought to bee a ſpurre to make vs not to walke, but to runne in the path of righteouſneſſe. And alſo the life and conuerſation of a Chriſtian is compared vnto a courſe or raſe in running.

Rom.11.28.
Deut.4.37. & 7.6. & 9.4.
1.John.4.10.
1.Cor.9.
Gala.5.
2.Tim.4.
Acts.13. & 20.24.

10 *Inſtruction is euill to him that forſaketh the way: and he that hateth correction, ſhall die.*

Solomon hath often ſpoken of inſtruction, in exhorting vs to receiue it, by prayſing them which receiue and keepe it, in complaining alſo of them which reiect it, blaming and threatening them. And then and there wee haue declared that inſtruction conſiſteth in doctrine, in exhortations, reprehenſions, admonitions, corrections, threateninges, puniſhments and chaſtiſements: which are thinges very profitable and neceſſary for men, after the conuerſation they leade, and as they are diſpoſed: and therefore they ought to counted good, when they are applied vnto vs by the wiſe which can tel how to vſe them, not after our fantaſie, but as they ſee is needeful for vs. Neuertheleſſe there is almoſt no man but is greeued, as experience doth teach vs by the great number of rebels, whereof the worlde is ful. Solomon alſo doeth ſhewe it, when he ſaith, *Instruction is euill to him that forſaketh the way*. Foraſmuch as hee which forſaketh the way, doeth finde inſtruction euil, and doth not like of it, it followeth therefore that it doeth naturally diſpleaſe all: for there is none but leueth and forſaketh the way when hee is guided after the corruption of his nature, the which bringeth and leadeth vs to thinke and conſider of our ſelues great thinges, and to make vs beleeue that wee are wiſe enough, to rule and gouerne our ſelues, without hauing need of inſtruction, & we think that we are wronged if any man medle to ſhewe, or correct, and reproue vs: and doe hate thoſe which labour to bring vs the right way by exhortations, and inſtructions, by corrections and threatenings. Thus doing wee ſtande in a poore ſtate, and in great peril: and if God by his grace and goodneſſe did not withdrawe vs, and ſet vs againe in the way that hee ſheweth vs by his worde, wee goe vnto death. For he that hateth correction, ſhal die, euen eternal death. Wherefore we muſt change our nature, or rather that God woulde change it in vs: for of our ſelues wee cannot: and ſhoulde take ſuche heede to our ſelues that we ſhould not forſake his way wherein the Lord hath ſet vs and dayly doth ſet vs by his word. Otherwiſe we ſhould be afflicted as were the people of Iſrael, and ſhoulde finde inſtruction euil, and hate correction, and therefore wee ſhould die: as Solomon doth threaten vs therewith.

11 *Hell and deſtruction are before the Lorde: howe muche more the heartes of the ſonnes of men?*

When the wicked doe ſollow any cauſe which is not good, they labour by al meanes that poſſibly they can to abuſe the iudges, and to cauſe them to finde theirs to be good, either by ſubtil inuentiōs, and great heapes of rowling wordes, either by giftes or preſents, or by importunate praiers that they cauſe their friendes & kinsmen to ſpeake for them: & if they can by any meanes, they wil work that the iudges ſhal not know their wrong matter, and ſhal not ſee the iniquitie that they labour to doe vnto their neighbor. And if they behaue thēſelues vnfaithfully towardes the earthly iudges, they thinke and ſay much more euil of God. For foraſmuch as they ſee not God before thē, and that he doth not puniſh them incontinently for their wronges, iniuries, and violences, they thinke that God maketh no account of thoſe whom they doe wrong vnto, and that he hath forſaken them, or that he ſeeth not what they doe, or els that there is no God. The Scripture doth giue vs witneſſe that ſuch are the affections and thoughts of the wicked: But I am a worme, and no man. &c. They, which ſee me, laugh me to ſcorne. He truſted in God that he would deliuer him. Againe, For mine enimies ſpeak againſt me, & they that lay waite for my ſoule, take their counſel together, ſaying: God hath forſaken him, perſecute him, & take him, for there is none to deliuer him. He hath ſaide in his heart, tuſh, God hath forgotten, &c. And yet they ſay, tuſh, the Lorde ſhal not ſee: neither ſhall the God of Iacob regarde it. The foole hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God. Likewiſe when the good and innocent bee afflicted and perſecuted, either in their goods, or in their perſons, without deſert at their enimies handes, and that the euil which is wrought againſt them is great and of long continuance in their iudgement, and that they ſee not how they ſhal eſcape out of it, they thinke that God is departed frō thē, & hath forſaken thē, or that he knoweth not their innocencie, & maketh no count to defend thē, & to mainteine their good cauſe. We may ſee this ſame by the cōplaintes that the Saints do make in the ſcripture, Why ſtādeſt thou ſo far off, O Lord, & hideſt thy face in the needful time of trouble? How long wilt thou forget me (O Lorde) for euer: How long wilt thou hide thy face from mee? Vp Lorde, why ſleepeſt thou? awake and bee not abſent from vs for euer. Loe theſe are vngodly, theſe proſper in the worlde, and theſe haue riches in poſſeſſion: and I haue ſaide, then haue I cleanſed my heart in vaine, and waſhed my handes in innocencie. Behold the blaſphemies which the wicked doe maliciouſly & againſt their conſciences, vſe againſt the Lorde: and alſo the complaints that the Saints make by the infirmitie of their fleſhe. Nowe for to repell and put bake the blaſphemies of the wicked, & to withſtande the complaints of the righteous and innocent: for to ſhewe the wicked that

Pſ.22.7.8.9. &.71.9.&. 10.12.&.94 7.&.14.1

Pſa.10.1. &.13.2.& 44.24.&.78 12.13.

they can neither ſpeake nor thinke ſo ſecretely but that God ſeeth and knoweth wholy for to yeeld vnto them as their malice hath deſerued: and for to make the righteous to vnderſtand that God is not ignorant of their innocencie and integritie of their heartes, and that according thereto hee wil recompence them: Solomon ſaith, *Hell and deſtruction are before the Lorde, &c.* Or, the gulfe and bottomeleſſe pit. Hee doeth teache vs heere that there is nothing hid ſo deepely, that God ſeeth not clearely and plainely: as al-
Pſal.139.1. ſo Dauid doeth ſhewe vs. We muſt not wonder at this for to doubt thereof, ſeeing that it is he who hath created al things, and diſpoſed al, who hath placed euery thing as it pleaſed him: hee ruleth al, and al thinges are guided by his prouidence, and there is nothing that can remoue from his place, except he commande it. I am the Lord,
Eſay.45.5. and there is no God beſides mee. And therefore, the wicked are rightly reproued. Take heede yee vnwiſe among the people: O yee
Pſal.94.8.9. fooles, when wil yee vnderſtande? Hee that planted the eare, ſhal hee not heare? or hee that made the eie, ſhal he not ſee? And therefore, let this preſent ſentence ſerue to leade vs to thinke carefully that wee are continually before the Lorde: and ſo conſequently to make vs walke in feare and obedience, as good children ought to doe, in the preſence of their fathers. And in this feare let vs aſſure our ſelues that wee ſhal neuer want, ſeeing that the eies of our father are alwaies vpon vs.

12 *A ſcorner loueth not him that rebuketh him, neither wil he goe vnto the wiſe.*

Solomon heere ſhortly deſcribeth what the ſcorners are: to wit, that they take not in good part, to bee either diſprooued, or rebuked: but doe refuſe al correction, and doe hate them which reproue thẽ. For ſith that betwene hatred & loue, there is no meane, it muſt needes followe that they hate thoſe whome they loue not. For further to expreſſe this hatred, and for to ſhewe that they doe wrongfully hate thoſe which reproue them, hee ſaith, *That the ſcorner wil not goe vnto the wiſe*. In this worde *will not goe*, hee
Pro.1.24.25 29.30. ſheweth that the ſcorners doe withdrawe them ſelues ſo farre as they can, and wil not hearken diligently vnto the counſelles of thoſe which reproоue them: as hee hath declared more at large.

In this worde *goeth not*, or, *wil not goe*, wee may ſee the hatred to be expreſſed : for if they did not hate them which reprooue them, they would goe vnto them not with their corporal feete onley, but chiefly would runne vnto them, with their minde and affectiō, and would yeeld their heartes and mindes attentiue vnto their wiſdom for to be partakers thereof, and would not ſo diligently and ſo earneſtly perſecute the rebukers whome Solomon calleth wiſe. And thus they goe but too much with their bodies vnto the wiſe. Neither is it of this kinde of going that Solomon ſpeaketh, albeit, wee muſt ſeeke the companie & acquaintance of the wiſe, for to receiue inſtruction of them. And foraſmuch as the ſcorners doe hate thoſe which doe reprooue them, it foloweth, they are murtherers. *Math.5.22.* *1.Iohn.3.15* Herevpon we may knowe, that ſcorning and mockerie is a great wickedneſſe, and that the ſcorners are moſt wicked, and that the gallowes of hel is prepared for ſuche, as for wicked murtherers : though they bragge to be honeſt men. Nowe that they doe wrongfully & without cauſe hate thoſe which rebuke them, Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when hee calleth the rebukers, *wiſe*: for ſith they are wiſe, they take diligent heede from hurting of any man : but they labour to ſpeake by wiſedome, that they may profite their neighbours. But we might demaund howe Solomon doth here attribute wiſdome vnto thoſe which rebuke ſcorners : *Pro.10.11. 20.21.31.& 13.20.* ſeeing that he, hauing declared what trouble happeneth to him which correcteth the ſcorner, doeth forbid to rebuke the ſcorner. *Pro.9.7.8.* For if it were wiſely done to rebuke, he would not forbid it. For to abſolue this, wee muſt runne vnto the expoſition of theſe two ſentences. Wee may alſo ſay, that Solomon doeth not here declare how the wiſe ought to behaue themſelues towards the ſcorners : but he ſheweth what affections and deſires the ſcorners haue againſt the wiſe, and whereby we might know a man to be a ſcorner : to wit, when he ſheweth him ſelfe euil affectioned towardes them which labour to amend him, and that hee doeth deſpiſe and not vſe their companie to be inſtructed by them. Wherein we ſee that wee may rebuke the Nicodemites of ſcorning : for they loue not thoſe which rebuke them, for their diſſembling againſt their conſciences : and alſo reſort not to the companie of the faithful, where God is purely and freely ſerued : they beleeue they are wiſe enough, and regard not to goe vnto the wiſe whom God hath ordeined Paſtours & Doctors of his Church, for to vtter faithfully true wiſdome, and to teach it vnto his people, by admoniſhing, diſproouing, rebuking, and threatening. And if the Nicodemites ought to be rebuked of ſcorning, by a more ſtrong reaſon ought they to be rebuked, which by the grace of God haue had wiſemen ſent vnto them for to inſtruct them, & yet, to the great contempt of the Goſpel; and of thoſe which preach it, do wallow in al diſſolution: ſo that the more they are rebuked, the more they doe them. Theſe mockers here, if they heare that we do cal our ſelues wiſe, wil mocke & laugh therat, ſaying, That we preſume much of our ſelues, & in ſcorningwiſe, wil ſay, Behold our wiſe men. But we wil anſwere therto, that it is God which calleth vs wiſe. *Mat.23.33.* Likewiſe S. Paule forbeareth not to cal him ſelfe wiſe: *1.Cor.3.10. &.2.6.* and ſaith, that he ſpeaketh wiſedome: hee ſaieth alſo that he teacheth euerie man in al wiſedome. *Collo.1.28.* Now we haue the ſelfe ſame office which Saint Paule had, and wee can not teach wiſedome except we be wiſe, not of our ſelues, but by the ſpirit of God. Notwithſtanding, wee doe not ſo attribute wiſedome to our ſelues, that nothing more may bee added: but wee confeſſe that wee haue neede of daily encreaſe in the ſame.

13 *A ioyful heart maketh a chearful countenance: but by the ſorow of the heart the minde is heauie.*

We are very glad whē our neighbors do beare vs a louing countenance: and if we loue them truely, we deſire to ſhewe them a merie looke, becauſe we would not grieue them. Now foraſmuch as a *ioyful heart* (as Solomon ſaieth) *maketh a chearful countenance:* it foloweth therefore firſt of al, that wee ought to labour to cheare vp our neighbours, not after a worldly and carnal maner, which wil vſe pleaſant tales, fooliſh toyes, and vaine flatterings, lyes, and ſlanderinges for to paſſe away the time with as naughtie people as them ſelues. But we wil endeuoure to make them glad, in not doing them wrong, and procuring their wealth towardes God, ſo muche as we can to the vttermoſt of our power: and chiefly their ſpiritual wealth: for there is no true ioye in the heart, without this ſpiritual wealth. The ambitious, auaritious, whoremongers, theeues, gluttons, and al diſſolute perſons will reioyce when they haue all that they can wiſhe and deſire: but they can not haue a ioyful heart, as they well ſhewe by their grutching and murmuring, and diſpightfulnes that they make: albeit that oftentimes they force them ſelues to laugh with open throte, and to take al the pleaſures that poſſibly they can: neuertheleſſe by other actes and words, & by other geſtures, which partly come from the face, they ſhewe that they haue no inwarde ioye, when their countenance ſheweth it not. For the face of man is al that is ſhewed outwardly: for the word which Solomon vſeth, ſtandeth alwayes plural, and commeth of a verbe which ſignifieth to beholde, and ſo ſignifieth whatſoeuer is ſeene in man. Nowe in the worldly & carnal men, a man may ſee many things which are neyther faire, good, nor pleaſant, though they be laughed at: wherevpō it foloweth, that they haue no merie hearts. And alſo their laughing lyeth not but only in diſſolutions, intiſements, filthines & vncleannes: and in theſe things conſiſteth the ioy of the world. But the true ioy ſtandeth in the holy Ghoſt: as Ieſus Chriſt doth wel ſhew, whē he calleth him the Comforter. And not without cauſe: for there is none that truly can touch our harts but he, & we cānot but by him reioyce in God: as the ſcripture doth teach vs, & admoniſheth vs ſo to do. Secondly it foloweth, of this ſentence, that if for the loue that wee beare to our neighbors, wee deſire to ſhew thē a chearful countenance, we muſt haue a chearful heart, not with worldly and carnal ioy, but ſpiritual & diuine, as belongeth vnto the children of God. The which we ſhal enioy, if whatſoeuer happen vnto vs, we be cōtented & take it in good part as cōming from the hand of God, being aſſured that he loueth vs, & that hee ſendeth vs nothing but is expedient for vs: & that knowing it, we yeeld him thanks therfore, and ſing him praiſes, and run vnto him in al our neceſſities. Such ioy ſhal garniſhe our faces, and make vs acceptable vnto God, and our neighbors, which know and loue the trueth, wil thinke vs faire and pleaſant. Thoſe men & women therfore which would haue ſhining faces, let them not ſeeke to paint, nor to deck thēſelues after the faſhion and trade of the worlde, but let them labour to reioyce theyr heartes in the Lorde. The which they ſhal doe, if they ſet all theyr delight in his word: ſo that they may ſay, with Dauid, I reioyce at thy word, as one that findeth great ſpoiles. This is the ioy & beautie whereof Solomon ſpeaketh, when he ſaieth, *A ioyful heart.*

Iohn.14.16.

Pſa.5.12. & 32.11. & 33. & 91.13

Phil.3.1. & 4.4.

1.Theſ.1,16

1.Pet.4.13.

Pſ.119.162.

For

Pſa.119. 162. For let vs not thinke that hee woulde teache either men or women howe they ſhould trimme vp their faces: there is none but is naturally too cunning a workman therein. Let vs folowe this ioye, and ſhunne the worldly, the which bringeth nothing but ſorow & troble: as they that deſire it them ſelues, doe feele it and confeſſe it: for they ſay, For one pleaſure, a thouſande diſpleaſures or ſorows. *A prouerb of worldly men.* Now if we be greeued, we can not haue a merie and ioyful face: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, ſaying, *But by the ſorrowe of the hearte the minde is heauie.* For ſith that by the heart and minde, the bodie is guided and ruled, and that there is no outwarde diſpoſition in the bodie, but commeth from within, it foloweth verie wel, that man can not ſhewe a louing face, when he is inwardly troubled and grieued, vnleſſe he counterfaite and diſguiſe him ſelfe. But yet finally, it can not be but that he muſt needs ſhew what he hath in his hart, and that his ſainedneſſe wil not declare: for the hypocrite and diſſembling man is ſo inconſtant, that he cannot alwayes hold one ſtate and one purpoſe. But albeit that Solomon againſt a good and holie ioye, doeth ſet ſorowe and heauineſſe, yet it is not to ſay, that al ſorowe is euil, nor that it maketh man to haue an euil countenance, nor that wee muſt flye al ſorow. Saint Paule doeth teach vs ſo. *Rom.12.15. 2.Cor.6.10. & 7.10. Eſay.22.12.*

14 *The hart of him that hath vnderſtanding, ſeeketh knowledge: but the mouth of the foole is fed with fooliſhneſſe.*

Wee doe not gladly ſuffer our ſelues to be called fooles, neither do we deſire to be counted ſuch, but we are glad whē we are counted wiſe, learned, and diſcreete: and this is alſo a great delight vnto vs when wee can knowe that our wiſedome anſwereth vnto the eſtimation, and that we are truely ſuch as wee deſire to be eſteemed, and that wee can giue token and proofe thereof to our neighbours. Now for to come by ſuch knowledge, and to giue ſuch a ſignification, we muſt not folowe the worldly and carnal people, the ſuperſtitious and idolaters, the ambitious and proude: whereof ſome doe thinke them ſelues to bee verie wiſe and diſcreete, when they haue wit, and cunning to guide wel their particular affaires, and to make their temporal gaine, though it be to the hurt & detriment of their neighbours. Some wil attribute wiſedome and diſcretion to them ſelues, when they ſhal folow their owne fantaſies and good intents, and that they ſhal labour to ſhewe them ſelues verie zealous of the honour of God, though they doe cleane contrarie vnto his worde. Other ſome will thinke them ſelues wel learned, when they can ſo worke that the world may wonder at them, and honour them, and can finde the meanes to haue credite, and to bee in authoritie and to beare rule. But wee ſhall then haue certaine knowledge to be wiſe, and ſhal giue true ſignes therof, when we ſhal haue al our affection ſet to driue al ignoraunce from vs, and to giue our ſelues vnto the pure worde of God, that we may learne perfectly to gouerne our ſelues thereafter. Solomon doeth thus pronounce it, when he ſaith, *The heart of him that hath vnderſtanding, &c.* For this only word is our wiſdome & our knowledge. Without it there is nothing but fooliſhnes, ignorance, darknes & blindneſſe: albeit that in ſight & outward maner of doings, there ſeemeth to be great wiſdome without this word. But as alreadie hath bin handeled not long agone, there is neither wiſdom, nor knowledge, but that which the Lord giueth from his mouth, the which he giueth and imparteth by the wiſe, which are his inſtruments. It is the word of God which *Ioh.6.35.* is the true foode of our ſoules, ſeeing that by it, & in it, Ieſus Chriſt doeth giue him ſelf vnto vs with al his goodnes, euen hee which is the bread of life. And although that man is not wiſe, except his hart be armed with this knowledge, & that it ſeemeth we haue no need to ſeeke for that which wee alreadie poſſeſſe: neuertheles becauſe *1.Cor.13.9.* we neuer haue ſuch perfect knowledge as were neceſſarie, and that *Ephe.4.12.* wee haue neede of increaſe, therefore the heart of the wiſe ſeeketh *13.* knowledge, vntil that he come vnto the meaſure of the full age of Chriſt: whoſe diſciples & ſchollers we muſt be, and to learne of him ſo long as we liue. If in this wiſe wee ſeeke knowledge, wee ſhall finde it. Let vs not then be like vnto thoſe which are full of ſer- *Pro.2.3.* mons before they haue throughly taſted them. For if they had wel taſted thē, they would deſire them more: ſeeing that it is ſo delicate and daintie meate, and doeth neuer grieue nor wearie the children of God, but doe ſo long as they liue earneſtly deſire it: though they haue the ſame abundantly, but doe neuer ceaſe to adde knowledge vpon knowledge; and as they abound in knowledge, and that they haue their hearts wel fenced, euen ſo do they gladly talke therof, for to make their neighbours partakers of the ſame. For they which are truely wiſe and learned, haue no ſtraight and cloſe hearts, for to reteine knowledge with them ſelues, but large and open for to ſpread and diſtribute the ſame with their mouthes. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame after a ſort, when againſt the heart of the wiſe, hee ſetteth the mouth of fooles: and againſt ſeeking of knowledge, hee ſetteth to be ſatisfied or fed with fooliſhnes. It is as much as if he did ſay, Euen as the wiſe with al the deſire of his heart doeth giue him ſelfe vnto knowledge, doeth delight and feedeth him ſelfe with the ſame in communicating and opening of it: euen ſo the fooles giue their heartes vnto fooliſhneſſe: as it is manifeſt, when they haue theyr mouthes filled therwith, that they neuer ceaſe for to babble out the ſame. Nowe wee are al of ſuch nature, and can be no better of our ſelues. Wherfore we haue need to pray vnto God, that it may pleaſe him to change euerie one of vs according to the ſtate wherin we are placed, and that he would giue vs an heart to ſeeke knowledge, that our mouthes or our faces be not fed with follie: that is to ſay, that we take al our pleaſure and paſtime in things contrarie vnto knowledge. For after the common maner of ſpeaking, To feede him ſelfe with any thing, is to be giuen thereunto, and to haue therin his delight, and to ſpende therein his time. And it is not without cauſe, that ſome doe ſo ſpeake: for there is nothing in this worlde that ſome had rather do, then to eate and to drinke: as experience teaceth when they will forſake al kinde of work for to goe to it. Wherin the children of God ought to learne to be ſhameſaſt if they bee not deſirous to be fed with knowledge.

15 *All the dayes of the afflicted are euill: but a good conſcience is a continuall feaſt.*

Proſperitie is a ſtate that al deſire: and contrarily, there is none but wil auoide him ſelfe from miſerie, ſo much as hee poſſibly can: but it is not giuen vnto al to enioy their deſires, and ſome forſake that which they deſire: and ſome yl handeled & perſecuted of their neighbours, either in their good name, or in their bodies, or in their friendes. If they bee infidels and vnpatient, not knowing that God (who is iuſt & merciful) doth ſend them theſe torments & paines, they feele not this euil only without, but alſo they tormēt thēſelues within : and ſo they haue no proſperitie,neither in their owne opinion,nor iudgement of the world. And in this ſort is fulfilled in them that which Solomon pronounceth , that *All the dayes of the afflicted are euill* : that is to ſay, haue no good time,but lyueth,or rather pineth away with miſerie and calamitie. But if they which are perſecuted and tormented,or to whome there happeneth any euill without the helpe of men , are faythfull men , and knowing that it is God which ſendeth the affliction,from whom ſo euer it commeth , doe beare it patiently,and aſke of the Lorde , that it may pleaſe him to mayntei ne,ſtrengthen,and comfort them : albeit that ſuch men(in the eſtimation of the worlde , and after the ſenſe of the fleſh) haue nothing but euill dayes. For what ſtrength, conſtancie and boldnes ſoeuer the faythfull haue in their miſerie and calamitie,yet they are not inſenſible : otherwiſe they ſhoulde haue no neede of patience,ſeeing they could ſuffer none : Euen ſo is patience begotten of tribulation : and the ſcripture exhorteth none vnto patiēce,but ſuch as ſuffer. Albeit(I ſay) that after the outward appearance and feeling of the fleſhe their dayes are euill, and haue no proſperitie,yet are they happy before God,both in their conſciences and minds they haue more quietnes and reſt,then haue they which count themſelues moſt happie of the worlde,and ſo their dayes are not euill,though they be afflicted and ſuffer much. Notwithſtanding wee doe not falſifie Solomon , for he ſpeaketh chiefely of the afflicted,which neither can nor will beare affliction patiently,and ſpeaketh after the iudgement of the world which ſometimes faileth,and after the ſenſe of the fleſh which the faythfull reſiſt, and by the help and grace of God doe ouercome it. And foraſmuch as they be of good courage , they ceaſe not euen in the middeſt of affliction, how hard and ſharpe ſoeuer they be, to be merry,as if they remained ſtil at a feaſt and banquet alwayes to make good cheere. Solomon doth ſignifie it, ſaying,*But a good conſcience is a continuall feaſt*. God doeth exhort vs in diuers places , to be of good courage, and doeth alſo ſet foorth himſelfe as an example,and doeth pronounce vs bleſſed,if we endure patiently. The Apoſtles likewiſe thought thembleſſed , and went ioyfully before the Conſiſtorie , becauſe they were counted woorthie of this honour,too ſuffer reproche for the name of Ieſus Chriſte . Their dayes then were not all

Tribulation is the mother of patience.

Ioh.15.18. 19.20.& 16 33.

Mat.5.10. 11.

Iam.1.12.

1.Pet.4.12.
Gene.47.9.
Ephe.5.16.
2.Tim.3.1.

al euil,but only in the iudgement of the world, which thought them to be curſed,and in the feeling of the fleſh, which is alwayes weake and euil. Therfore if we wil auoide & ſhun euil dayes,and to be merie,and to be in a continual feaſt,let vs not vex our ſelues, what aduerſitie ſoeuer happen vnto vs: but let vs take a good ſtomake, reioyſing in the Lord: as we are admoniſhed, Dearely beloued brethren, thinke it not ſtraunge,concerning the fierie trial, which is among you to prooue you, as though ſome ſtrange thing were come vnto you. Let vs note further, that al dayes are the good creatures of God, and there is none euil in them, but they are called good or euil,according to that which happeneth in them, & after that which is either done or ſuffred in them. Iacob calleth the dayes of his life euil, becauſe he had ſuffered much euil. And they are called euil becauſe of the ſlanders and corruptions,which are done in them. And the times are called dangerous. The euil then is not in the dayes, but in the perſons which are in them. And ſo,it is by accident that they are euil, and not by nature. As touching the reſt,as carnall men doe thinke themſelues to haue a merie time,when they ſee the table alwayes couered and beſet with good meat,and that they haue a good ſtomake to eate and drinke, and haue their deſire: euen ſo when we haue a good heart,what thing ſoeuer happen vs, we haue the continual feaſt of Gods grace, whereby we are mainteined, and doe neuer want,and alſo ſhal neuer want. This grace is wel compared vnto a feaſt, when we are al called to drinke and to eate.

Eſay.55.1.
Math.22.2.

16 *Better is a little with the feare of the Lord, then great treaſure,and trouble therewith.*

Wee deſire al that good ſhould happen vnto vs, and do labour to bring our good into better: but for to haue either good,or to attaine vnto betternes, al doe not knowe the right way therevnto. Foraſmuche as ſometimes alreadie it hath bene alledged, it ſeemeth vnto many,for to get riches,and to liue at pleaſure, we neede but to turne our backes vnto God, not to reuerence his word, nor to ſet by our neighbours, nor to care whither any doe them wrong or no, prouided that wee gaine ſomething, and gather riches together, that we may haue enough to make good cheare withal, and to bee at our eaſe and to reioyce. But albeeit it happeneth that ſuch men haue ynough, and that they ſeeme to liue proſperouſly and without hardneſſe: and alſo that they labour to put away from them al heauineſſe, ſtriuing to make themſelues beleeue that they are without danger, and that no hurt can happen vnto them, yet haue they neuer ſtedfaſt aſſurance, but doe tremble and are troubled: for their conſcience doeth reprooue them, although they bee without true repentance and healthful ſorowe. They feare theeues alſo, chances and yll fortunes: as through infidelitie and ignorance they attribute whatſoeuer doeth happen vnto them, vnto fortune, when they come vnlooked for. It ſeemeth vnto the worlde that ſuch men doe holde the waye to get riches, and to attaine the better: and contrarily, that they are vnhappie and faintharted, which fearing to offende GOD, doe not giue themſelues to gather by the hurte of their neighbours, but are contented with that litle which they poſſeſſe iuſtly. Beholde the iudgement of the world and of the fleſh: but the holy Ghoſt iudgeth cleane otherwiſe, ſaying,

Better is a little with the feare of the Lorde, then great treaſure,&c. Now as it is the iudgement of the holy Ghoſt, euen ſo muſt hee make vs to vnderſtande it, and to conſent thereunto. For naturally it doeth grieue vs to haue but a litle, and wee make but ſmal account of the feare of the Lorde, becauſe wee ſee him not, and knowe not what his feare is. I ſay that wee are naturally thus diſpoſed: but if by the reading of the ſcriptures and reſorting vnto ſermons wee bee diligent to learne wiſedome, wee ſhal vnderſtande the feare of the Lorde. And once hauing this feare, which is a reuerence that leadeth vs to giue a willing obedience vnto the woorde of our God, and to aſſure vs of his goodneſſe towards vs, the which wee ſhal poſſeſſe howe litle ſoeuer it bee, and ſhal bee more profitable vnto vs, then are the great riches vnto the wicked. A ſmal thing that the righteous hath, is better then greate riches of the vngodly. Nowe that in the feare of the Lorde there is aſſurance, Solomon doeth plainly pronounce it. And he doth here ſomwhat ſignifie it, when againſt the feare of the Lorde, hee ſetteth trouble: for where trouble and vexation is, and where there is no

Pro. 2. 1.

Pſal. 37. 16.
Pro. 10. 2. 3. & 13. 25.

Pro. 14. 26. 27.

reſt, there can bee no ſafetie, reſt, nor peace. Wherevpon it doeth rightly folowe, that they which haue the feare of the Lorde are happie, though they haue but a little: & the wicked are curſed, though they winne al the worlde. And as they which feare God are happie and bleſſed, not only preſently, but alſo in the worlde to come (for they are the houſholde folkes and children of God: whereupon it foloweth that they ſhal inherite the kingdome euerlaſting:) the wicked likewiſe who are not without feare, not of God, but of preſent aduerſitie, and of tormentes in time to come (as is ſignified by the trouble) are curſed euen nowe, though they poſſeſſe great riches, ſith that it is with trouble. And ſhalbee curſed alſo in tyme to come. *Mat.16.26.* For what profiteth it a man to gaine al the worlde, and to looſe his owne ſoule? And alſo ſith that trouble is ſet againſt the feare of the Lorde, it foloweth that where it is, there they are in danger of their ſoules, ſeeing that the promiſes of God doe belong only vnto them that feare him, and not to them which are troubled and grieued for that which happeneth in this worlde, without looking to amende. And foraſmuch as the promiſes of God, which are vnfallible, belong vnto them which feare him, it foloweth againe that there is ſafetie in the feare of the Lorde: and contrarily, that they cannot be but in dout & diſtruſt where it is not. For to make our profite then of this ſentence, let the feare of the Lorde bee our treaſure, contenting our ſelues with a little, auoyding couetouſnes, after the admonitions of our Lorde, and of the Apoſtle. *Luke.12.15. & 16.9. Heb.13.5.*

17 *Better is a dinner of greene herbes where loue is, then a ſtalled oxe, and hatred therewith.*

Euery man commonly deſireth to make good cheere, and to liue merily: and to doe the ſame, it ſeemeth to them which are giuen to their mouthes and ſubiect to their bellies, that they neede no more but to haue the table throughly furniſhed with a number of diſhes, and good wyne, and to eate and to drinke til they burſt, without caring howe they with whome they eate and drinke are affectionate towardes them, nor what loue they beare to them which lay the table, or for whom they ſpread the table. It is ynough for them to ſatiſfie their bellie, and to deuour and ſwil at their pleaſure, ſo beaſtly are they. But Solomon doeth ſhewe vs that the greate cheere conſiſteth not in the abundance of dainty meates, nor of ſtrong and ſweete wines, and that anſwereth and pleaſeth the pallate of the mouth: for hee ſaith,

Better is a dinner of greene herbes, &c. By the dinner of herbes, hee meaneth a meale that is eaſily and ſoone made readie, & which ſtandeth not of many diſhes, nor of greate coſt: but that is ſimple, light, and ſhewing ſobrietie and temperancie. Solomon maketh a great account of ſuch a meale, if they which eate it are friends together. Friendſhip then is the ſauce which maketh the meate good: and not only this, but alſo it is the rule after the which al our works ought to be wrought, otherwiſe they are nothing worth. Solomon (I ſay) doth highly praiſe ſuch a dinner or meale, that he doeth preferre it before great, ſumptuouſe and delicate bankettes, which are holden amongſt men which loue not togither, but doe hate one an other. Theſe great bankets are ſignified by the *fat oxe*. Nowe albeit hee ſpeaketh this, preferring a ſmal thing with loue vnto very great things which are vſed with hatred: let vs not thinke that he would make vs Charterhouſe monkes, and to forbid vs the vſe of meates, the which are al good: but he ſheweth vs the excellencie and power of friendſhip, which maketh that which is ſmally accounted of, and which ſeemeth to be vile and contemptible in reſpect of other nouriſhments, to be highly eſteemed. Contrarily, hee ſheweth vs what filthineſſe and wickednes there is in hatred, when for that the good meates & ſanctified vnto our vſe, are leſſe praiſed then they that are almoſt of no price, if we make compariſon betwene them, and that wee looke vnto the common eſtimation and ſale that is made of them: and likewiſe of what nouriſhment and ſubſtance the one is in reſpect of the other. And alſo (as the Phiſitions doe ſay) herbes doe not nouriſhe a man. Wee are therefore exhorted to abhorre and fly hatred: and are admoniſhed to keepe vs from them which hate vs: for before that we be wel reconciled, their company and conuerſation is very dangerous. Righteous Abel hath wel felt it. So did Ioſeph who was hated of his brethren. Likewiſe, Amnon. We are alſo exhorted greatly to eſteeme friendſhip, and to ſeeke it with al men: as our Lorde teacheth vs ſo to doe, and Saint Paule.

Loue ought to be the ſauce to meate.

1.Cor.13.1.

Gene.4.8.
& 37.24.
2.Sam.13.29
Mat.5.44.
Rom.12.17.

And are admoniſhed to liue ſoberly with thoſe which loue vs, ſo that our friendſhip ought not to cauſe vs to exceede in coſt, as doe the worldly and carnal men: nor yet ſo to paſſe meaſure that wee ſhoulde take leaue and licence to giue our ſelues vnto al intemperancie & ſuperfluitie. Let vs vnderſtand therfore that we are taught to folowe ſobrietie and temperancie, and to abſtaine from making or vſing of greate and ſuperfluous bankets, for to mainteine the which, ſome diſpende outragiouſly, in forgetting of the poore, and *Luke.16.19.* deſpiſing them: as we haue an example thereof in S. Luke: and we ſee it dayly through the worlde, that they which either make or haunt great bankets, make ſmal account of the poore.

18 *An angrie man ſtirreth vp ſtrife: but he that is ſlowe to wrath, appeaſeth ſtriefe.*

Experience maketh this ſentence ſo plaine, that it needeth none expoſition, but wee haue great neede to meditate it wel and to take heede that wee bee not ſodenly ouercome with anger, nor bee prouoked to bee eaſily angred and moued to wrath. Otherwiſe, wee ſhoulde ſhewe our ſelues to bee out of our wittes: for we ſeeke for that which we ſhould feare, if we haue neuer ſo litle ſparke of light and natural knowledge: for being ſo kindled with anger and wrath, we ſtirre vp debate ſo much as in vs lyeth: for our furie doeth ſtirre vs vp to ſtriue & contende with our neighbours for nothing, or for *Gen.4.8.* a trifle: or elſe we prouoke our neighbours which cannot beare our *& 37.23.* choler to ſtriue againſt vs. Caine was the captaine of ſuch as are fu- *1 Sam.25.* rious, as we may ſee it. And alſo the brethrẽ of Ioſeph haue folowed him. Saule againſt Dauid, Iudas and the Iewes againſt our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Nabal moued Dauid vnto anger. Beholde howe the furious doe ſtirre vp ſtrife and do ſhewe themſelues to be out of their wits, and to doe contrary vnto that which it deſireth naturally. We woulde not bee eſteemed ſuch: wherefore wee muſt abſtaine from wrath, anger, and furie: and chiefly to keepe vs from dooing of e- *Pſal.37.8.* uil. Leaue of from wrath and let goe diſpleaſure: freate not thy ſelfe, elſe ſhalt thou bee moued to doe euil. I ſay expreſly to doe euil and to hurte our neighbours: for it is very needeful to bee angry and to ſhewe our diſpleaſure, for to labour to terrifie the conſciences of transgreſſors and wicked people, for to bring them vnto repentance, or to make them more vnexcuſable. Moyſes and the Prophetes did ſo handle the Iewes. So did our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt deale with the Scribes and Phariſees. And his Apoſtles and diſciples haue folowed him. If we folowe them as wee ought, and as is neceſſary, and vpon our anger there ariſeth ſome ſtriſe, wee muſt not therefore be aſtoniſhed nor diſcouraged, as though ſome ſtrange or newe thing did happen vnto vs: for it happened ſo vnto Moyſes and to the other aboue named. Likewiſe ſtriſe ſhoulde not bee imputed vnto vs, but vnto the rage and furie, to the malice and wickedneſſe, vnto the pride and arrogancie, to the obſtinacie and hardehartedneſſe of thoſe which offende, and runne into al diſſoluteneſſe and inſolencie. Neuertheleſſe the malicious and peruerſe wil ſay, that if any ſtriue againſt vs, that it is becauſe wee doe them wrong, when we boldly ſay vnto them the truth, with ſuch ſeueritie and ſharpeneſſe as they deſerue. The like hath hapned vnto our Lorde and Maiſter Ieſus Chriſt: and therefore let vs not ceaſe carefully to do our office, what thing ſoeuer they lay to our charge. Let it ſuffice vs that the holy Ghoſt doeth giue a certaine and true witneſſe in our hartes, that we deſire not to bee angry, but ſo much as poſſibly we can, and as our office requireth it, to be ſlowe to anger, and to quiet ſtrife: for it lyeth not in vs to haue peace with all men, when we beare the worde of peace and the meſſage of reconciliation, and that our ſermons tende to leade vs to be of one minde and conſent. Nowe as this is the office and the duetie of Paſtours of the Church, euen ſo they which are taught by them, ought of them to take example, and to folowe them: and not they them, but Ieſus Chriſt who ſpeaketh and woorketh in them by his holy ſpirite.

Rom.15.5.6.
1.*Cor.*1.10.& 12.13.
*Ephe.*4.4.
1.*Pet.*3.8.
*Mat.*11.29.
*Iohn.*13.19.
1.*Cor.*4.16. & 10.31.
*Ephe.*5.1.
*Phil.*3.17.
*Heb.*13.17.

19 *The way of a ſlouthful man is as an hedge of thornes: but the way of the righteous is plaine.*

When we haue any vocation in hand, and that we earneſtly ſet our ſelues to do what our duetie requireth, we are glad if wee finde therein no hardeneſſe, and when we find nothing to hinder vs from going forward as God hath ordeined and commanded by his word:

yea if we haue any feare or reuerence theretoo. Whatſoeuer God teacheth vs by his woorde, is our eſtate, our duetie and vocation which the ſcripture calleth, *way*, If therein wee woulde finde no let nor hardneſſe which may ſtoppe vs from running our courſe, let vs not be negligẽt, ſluggiſh nor ſlouthful. For they that are ſuch, are voyde of good courage and willing minde: and therefore doe finde nothing of that which God ordeineth and commandeth eaſie to bee done, but are ſo full (as it is ſaide) of let mee reſt, that they forbeare and ceaſe from al good woorke, leaſt they ſhould be pricked, and get a thorne in their finger. Solomon doth ſignifie it, ſaying,

Pro.6.6. *The way of a ſlouthfull man is as an hedge*, When as a wayfaring man meeteth with a very thicke hedge of thornes which doth ſtop him to go any further, and to make haſt in his way he is troubled and grieued: euen ſo the ſlouthful man which is giuen to take his eaſe, and to liue in ydlenes, without caring, but for to ſleepe and to reſt, doeth finde that God which ordeineth to do after the eſtate and vocation whereto he is called, troubleſome and grieuous. Solomon calleth the ſame the way of the ſlouthful: not becauſe hee walketh therein, but for that in folowing the ordinance of God, he ſhould walke therin. He compareth it vnto an hedge of thornes, not for to gainſay that which is written in the lawe of the Lord, nor alſo againſt that which our Lord ſaith: but he ſpeaketh after the opinion of the ſlouthful: who is here called *ſlouthful*, not for that that he abſtaineth from al kind of worke, but becauſe he delighteth not to walke in righteouſneſſe, according to the worde of the Lord: but doeth turne his backe againſt him, and ſtryueth to doe the contrary. Solomon doeth giue it vs ſo to vnderſtande, when againſt the ſlouthful man, he ſetteth the righteous, ſaying, *But the path of the righteous, &c.* It is then yll ſpoken, to attribute goodneſſe to him which careth not to do wel: & therfore, let vs not conſent vnto thẽ which ſhal ſay of a man, hee is a very good man, but he is negligent & ſlouthful: hee careth not greatly for any woorke: for it foloweth wel that if a man be righteous, he is alſo readie to do wel: and contrarily, if he be ſlouthful, that he maketh no count of goodnes nor of righteouſnes: & conſequently that it is euil ſpoken, to ſay that the ſlouthful is an honeſt man: but if hee be called a wicked man, it

Pſa.19.8.
& 119.14.
Mat.11.29.

Is the trueth, as Solomon doth teache it, when againſt the ſlouthful man, he ſetteth the righteous. Speaking thus, hee ſheweth that the ſlouthful, is a wicked man, and that he is voide of al righteouſneſſe: and therewith that there is neither care nor diligence whereof wee muſt make account, except ſo farre as wee proceede in righteouſneſſe and that wee bee not grieued to doe wel, but that we delight therein, and that we reioyce in it as in a thing that wee finde very eaſie to be done. Solomõ doth ſignifie this ſame by the plaine pathe. For as the paſſenger which findeth his way cleane frõ al hinderãces doth delight in his way: euen ſo is righteouſneſſe the cauſe that man taketh pleaſure to doe diligently his duetie, and to do carefully his office. Let the theeues, couetous, vſurers, deceiuers, and corrupters of Marchandizes euen kil themſelues ſo long as they will with labouring, let them be dayly at woorke, and let them not ceaſe neither day nor night, yet do they not deſerue therefore to bee called diligent: for ſith they are without righteouſneſſe, there is nothing in them but ſlouthfulneſſe. And alſo when they ſhalbee well conſidered of, wee ſhal neuer finde them contented, but complayning that they cannot attaine their purpoſe: and ſo their way is as an hedge of thornes.

Furthermore, if ſuch men might obteine their deſires without any trauaile, they had rather a great deale to do nothing at all, then to worke. For alſo it is not with any good deſire they haue to ſpend the time well, that they labour, but onely they tende to keepe them ſelues from begging. Moreouer, foraſmuch as that man which ceaſeth to doe his dutie, for to buſie himſelfe about nothing, or wickednes, doeth well deſerue to be called and eſteemed ſlouthfull: therfore it followeth that theeues and all they which follow not righteouſnes, are woorthy to be counted ſlouthful: and contrarily, that all righteous men are diligent. For by righteouſnes they are led to watch and to labour, and not onely to walke, but alſo to runne by their path, with great deſire and earneſt affection they haue to doe their duetie. Wherein we may ſee that the number of the ſlouthfull is great, and that the number of the righteous is verie ſmal.

20 *A wiſe ſonne reioyceth the father: but a fooliſh man deſpiſeth his mother.*

After the wonted cuſtome of the worlde, the fathers and mothers are very glad,and ioyful when their children are aduanced to honour dignitie,credit,preheminence and authoritie,and that they be politike and ſubtil to gather riches and temporal goods for themſelues,and ſet al their care and diligence to bee riche. The Kinges, Princes and rulers of the earth do reioyce,when they haue a great multitude of ſubiectes giuen to flatter them,and put themſelues in danger for to mainteine their quarels, and to ſerue their deſires, though they be againſt God.They which deſpiſe God for to ſhewe themſelues to be altogether at the commandement of their Prince, are moſt commonly counted for the beſt ſubiectes, and are moſt acceptable and beſt welcome.For the kings and rulers of the earth doe ſet more ſtore by themſelues then they doe by God, and woulde haue God forgotten, that they might bee obeyed without contradiction. The Maiſters and Dames delight greatly to ſee their ſeruantes and maydes to be ſo buſie and diligent to do their worke & to profit the houſe, that they forget to ſerue God, and care not though they do wrong vnto their neighbours, ſo that they pleaſe them whome they ſerue. We ſee then that al goeth to naught in the worlde,when we reioyce at the trades and kindes of doing which leade ſoules vnto damnation,in ſteade that we ought to weepe for it,and rebuke and threaten thoſe which occupie themſelues in any affaires without the feare of God,and without loue to their neighbours. They which ſo reioyce,ſhal at laſt weepe. And therfore, leaſt we be of their number, let vs doe nothing without the feare of the Lord,nor without charitie,nor let vs not delight in ſuch workes: & albeit that we are in the worlde,yet let vs not be of the world: but let euery one of vs,according to the degree wherein wee are placed of God, reioyce to ſee his inferiours to rule and guide themſelues wiſely in their buſineſſe. Solomon doeth ſhew vs that we ſhould ſo do, when he ſaith, *A wiſe ſonne reioyceth,&c.* Al ſuperiours & al ſuch as haue any authoritie are heere cloſely admoniſhed to bee wiſe, otherwiſe they coulde not reioyce at the wiſedome of thoſe which are vnder their charge and gouernement,but rather woulde be delighted with their follie: for fooles do exalt fooliſhnes, & loue their like. They are alſo admoniſhed to teache wiſedome aſwell by wordes as by workes,euery man after the degree wherein he is placed: for the leſſer muſt learne of the greater for to become wiſe, for to reioyce afterwardes by their wiſedome their ſuperiours and gouernours. This ſame (as hath beene ſaide) is here cloſely taught vs: but it is openly ſhewed vnto children, and conſequently vnto al inferiours, that they muſt needs be wiſe, and that they ſhoulde ſo wel gouerne themſelues by wiſedom, that their fathers and mothers, their ſuperiours and rulers may delight in their conuerſation and liuing. For to doe it wel, the worde of the Lord muſt be their only wiſedome, and that thereby they may bee brought to feare, reuerence and humilitie, that they may willingly giue ſuch obedience as they ought vnto their fathers and mothers, to their ſuperiours and rulers, and may be wholy at their commandemēt, ſo that they may reioyce at wiſedome, and not at follie. This ſame is taught vs by the holy ſcriptures. Nowe that the wiſedome which is heere ſpoken of, ſtandeth in this, Solomon doth ſhew vs, when againſt a wiſe ſonne, hee ſetteth a foole with his ſtubborneſſe: ſaying, *But a fooliſh man deſpiſeth his mother*. It is not without cauſe that Solomon maketh mention of the mother, and that he condemneth that man of follie which by his rebellion and diſobedience, or other wickedneſſes, grieueth and vexeth his mother, and maketh her ſorowful: for it is not only commanded vs to honour our father, but our mother alſo. But it ſeemeth to many children that their mothers are but their ſeruantes and maydes of the houſe, and that we need to make none account of them. Solomon doeth attribute fooliſhneſſe vnto ſuch men, and that very rightly: for they haue not the wit to conſider, that they were made men in the wombe of their mothers, otherwiſe they had not bin men. For man is not without the womā: but the man is by the woman, and that not without greate paynes and ſorowes. It is very like that Solomon not beeing contented to ſay, The foole deſpiſeth his mother: but calling him a man, woulde put him in remembrance of theſe former things: and alſo that it was not without care of the mother, that he is growne ſince his byrth, and come to mans ſtate: for that that he is man, hee commeth from his mother.

Exod. 20. 12.
Deut. 6. 20.
Ephe. 6. 1.
Rom. 13. 1.
1. Pet. 2. 13.

1. Cor. 11. 8.
Gen. 3. 16.

Moreouer calling him a man which deſpiſeth his mother, and rebuking him of fooliſhneſſe, he teacheth vs, that our great age doth not exempt vs from the honour that God commandeth vs to beare to our mothers,otherwiſe wee ſhoulde ſhewe our ſelues to bee fooles.

21 *Fooliſhnes is ioy to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding : but a man of vnderſtanding walketh vprightly.*

Wee commonly call a man fainteharted, lacking courage, and voyde witte, when hee cannot, nor will not giue himſelfe to followe that which belongeth to his vocation, or that he wil not, and cannot tell what kinde of life to chooſe, for to ſpende his time about good woorkes, the which God hath prepared that we ſhoulde walke in them, and that if wee doe rightly imploy our ſelues therein, wee reioyce in the Lord. Neuertheles, there is no man which hath his hart ſo faint, nor his courage ſo bace, but doeth apply himſelfe to ſome thing, for the minde of man, is neuer vnoccupied, but is filled with thoughtes, purpoſes, enterpriſes, willes, deſires, affections of ſorrow or of ioy: For man muſt needes paſſe away his time, the which hee cannot doe without the former thinges, the which are ſuch, as is the diſpoſition of the heart. If the heart be good and right, the thoughts ſhalbe good and right: contrarily if it be euil, ſo ſhal they alſo be euill.

*Mat.*12.33. & 15.17.18

This is iudged naturally, but yet our Lord doth ſhew it vs by the ſimilitude of the tree, and by the things which proceed from the hearte. Solomon alſo doeth giue it vs to vnderſtand, ſaying, *Fooliſhnes is ioy to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding.* When he ſpeaketh thus, he declareth vnto vs, that all his affections, delectations counſelles and thoughtes, which may and will not chooſe, and folow ſome good and right kinde of liuing, doe tende to make him goe aſtray, or elſe to make other to goe aſtray and to ſcatter them: as is ſignified by fooliſhnes which is his reioycing. For fooliſhnes heere is not taken only for any light vanitie which is committed for want of heede: but is heere chiefly taken for all wickednes contrarie vnto righteouſnes. And ſo the deſtitute of vnderſtanding is counted amongeſt the number of them which forſake the right path, for too walke by the wayes of darkenes. And Solomon doeth heere giue

*Pro.*2.13.

it vs to vnderſtand well, when againſt fooliſhnes he ſetteth, walketh vprightly, ſaying, *But a man of vnderſtanding walketh vprightly:* that is to ſay, that that man which giueth his heart and minde vnto the woorde of the Lorde, and reioyceth therein, doeth not wander, neither doeth delight to ſee or to make other to goe aſtray, but doeth ſtudie and apply himſelfe to take and remoue al ſtoppes and lets out of the way, which might hinder him from doing rightly his eſtate, and which might alſo hinder his neighbours, that is to ſay, that his affection is right, and is continually occupied in meditating the lawe of the Lorde, that hee may learne thereby to correct and amend his life, and be an example to other, for to leade them to walke rightly: and if it bee needful, to vſe exhortations, admonitions, corrections, and threatenings. Loe what to walke vprightly meaneth. For wee muſt not only haue care of our ſelues, but alſo that wee haue an eye vnto the edification and ſaluation of our neighbours. Wee cannot doe this of our ſelues, as Dauid did very wel knowe it: and therefore, hee prayeth, Create in mee, O God a newe heart, &c. It pertaineth chiefly vnto the Paſtours of the Churche to walke thus vprightly: for Saint Iohn the Baptiſt was the voyce of a cryer in the wilderneſſe: euen ſuch alſo ought the miniſters of the woorde to bee: for they are the ſalte of the earth: and the light of the worlde: they are watchmen that muſt giue account for our ſoules. Nowe euery one of vs muſt followe them, according to the degree wherein wee are ſet. Wee haue al heere a very profitable leſſon, but chiefly they which haue any authoritie. And wee ought to vnderſtande that by how much as wee are in higher authoritie, by ſo much the more muſt wee bee the wiſer. As touching the reſt, the wiſe and they which ſhal folowe their vpright walking, haue a promiſe that they ſhal not fall into the pit of hel, but ſhal goe into life: for they cannot walke vprightly but in the ſtraight way which leadeth vnto life. Contrarily, the deſtitute of vnderſtanding are caried by death: for reioycing in fooliſhneſſe, they yeelde and obey vnto him that hath the Lordſhip of death, that is to ſay the Deuil, for whome and his Angels, is prepared the fire that neuer ſhal bee quenched.

Pſal. 1. 2.

Pſal. 51. 12.
& 119. 17. 133
Mat. 3. 1.
& 5. 13. 14.

Heb. 13. 17.

22 *Without counſel thoughtes come to nought: but in the multitude of counſellers there is ſtedfaſtneſſe.*

According to the affaires that wee haue in hande, ſo muſt wee chooſe our counſellers, for to come to the ende of our purpoſe, enterpriſes, or deſire: otherwiſe wee ſhal bee voide of our intent: euen as wee do dayly prooue it, and as they deſerue which wil gouerne themſelues after their owne fantaſie, and deſpiſe al counſel: & ſo doing, do deſpiſe God: for of him commeth al counſel. With him
Iob.12.12. is wiſedome, and power: and he hath counſel and vnderſtanding.
Eſay.40.12.13. Who hath meaſured the water with his fiſt? Who hath inſtructed the ſpirite of the Lorde? or was his counſellour, or taught him?
Pro.8.14.15 16. And heere before. And as in gouerning our ſelues after our owne fantaſies, wee deſpiſe God, and doe ſhewe our ſelues very proude and arrogant: euen ſo God, knoweth howe to deſpiſe and to beate downe them which ſo vſe themſelues, in auoyding their purpoſes and enterpriſes. Solomon doeth ſhewe it vs, when hee ſaith, *Without counſel thoughts come to naught.* This hath beene prooued true from the beginning of the world in Adam and Eue: afterwards
Gene.11.5. in the world by the deſtruction of the flood: afterwardes in them which builded the tower of Babylon, and ſo ſucceſſiuely in diuers others. As in Pharao, Saule, Roboam, &c. And of our time we ſee it in the greate ſtates of the world, which thinke to deſtroy the church of God. According to theſe experiences, and alſo as the holy Ghoſt hath giuen knowledge to the holy fathers, they did pronounce the bringing of thoughtes and enterpriſes of men to naught. God doth
Iob.5.12.13 ſcatter the deuiſes of the craftie, &c. Againe, He taketh the wiſe in
Pſa.44.11. their craftineſſe. The Lorde knoweth the thoughtes of man, that
Pſa.146.3.4 they are vanitie. Put not your truſt in princes, nor in the ſonne of man, for there is no helpe in him. His breath departeth, and hee returneth to the earth: then his thoughtes periſh. It is very neceſſarie that God ſhoulde ſo deale with the wicked and proude, and therefore,
Pſa.9.11 & 140.8. Dauid douteth not to pray againſt them, deſtroy them O God, &c. Let not the wicked haue his deſire, O Lorde: performe not his wicked thought, leaſt they be proude. Therefore if we woulde not haue our thoughtes brought to nothing, nor made vaine, but would

come to the ende of that wee thinke and purpoſe, we muſt come to aſke counſel at God, from whome onely commeth al counſel. But becauſe he dwelleth in the vnacceſſible light, and that hee is of an incomprehenſile maieſtie and highneſſe, that wee may be partakers of his counſel, for to make our thoughtes to ſtande and bee ſtedfaſt and to bring foorth their effect, hee abaſeth himſelfe vnto vs by his worde, the which he communicateth vnto vs by his wiſe men and diſcreete, to whome he giueth knowledge, & openeth their mouths for to make them to diſtribute counſel as we haue neede thereof. Wee muſt then liſten diligently to them which are committed for to teache vs, gouerne and leade vs: and as our affayres doe require, and that wee ſhoulde ſeeke counſel of them which are learned and haue experience: for al the counſel that we haue neede of, lyeth not in one mans braine: but euery man hath his meaſure which it pleaſeth God to giue him. Wee haue neede therefore, for to come to the end of our affaires, that God ſhoulde raiſe vp for vs many wiſe men and diſcreete: Solomon doth wel ſignifie it, ſaying, *But in the multitude of counſellers there is ſtedfaſtneſſe*. That is to ſay, That if it pleaſe God for to raiſe vp for vs a multitude of wiſe, diſcreete, and men of experience, and that learning of them, wee ſolow their doctrine, counſel and aduiſe, wee ſhal come to the end of our enterpriſes, wee ſhal not bee voide of our deſires, but ſhal obteine our wiſhe. For, becauſe wee folowe the counſel that God giueth by his wiſe and diſcreete men, and doe not folowe our fantaſie, wee muſt be aſſured that the Lord wil giue a good iſſue vnto our thoughts & deliberations. Wee haue had almoſt the like ſentence before. Nowe *Pro.11.14.* in them both, wee are admoniſhed not to bee like vnto Abſolom, which came not to his wiſhed ende, but wanting men of good coũſel, dyed miſerably: nor to Dauid, when he numbred the people: *2.Sam.18.9 10.* nor to Solomon, which folowed after many women: nor to Roboam. *2.Sam.24.1.* Neither let vs bee like vnto the Papiſtes, which wil bee ſaued by ſeruing of God (or rather the Deuil) by mens doctrine: otherwiſe GOD wil depriue vs of men of counſel. *1.King.11.2. & 12.8.* Therefore, this people draweth neere to mee with their mouthes, but their heartes are farre from mee, the wiſedome of the wiſe ſhal periſh. *Eſa.29.13.14*

23 *A ioy commeth to a man by the anſwere of his mouth: and how good is a word in due ſeaſon?*

Solomon doth not here ſpeake generally, when hee ſaith, *A ioy
commeth to a man by the anſwere of his mouth:* Otherwiſe there
ſhould be repugnancy in the ſcriptures: the which ought to be nei-
Mat.12.36. ther thought nor ſaid. For our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſaieth, Truly I ſay
vnto you that for euery ydle word that men ſhal haue ſpoken, they
ſhal giue an account. Wherupon it foloweth wel that man hath
not ioy for euery anſwere of his mouth, except it be ſome tempo-
ral & tranſitory ioy, which contineweth not. But let vs not thinke
that Solomon buſieth himſelf to put forth a ſentence of any light or
ſlender matter, and to ioyne theretoo a promiſe, but let vs vnder-
ſtande that he promiſeth heere, a ſtedfaſt ioy and one of long conti-
nuance. For theſe ſentences are the wordes of God, whereby we are
rather withdrawne from vaine ioyes, then inuited & exhorted to
ſet any hope or truſt in it. The Deuil, the world & our owne fleſhe,
do draw but to much to take ioy & pleaſure in our words, though
they be nothing worth, and that they be hurtful vnto vs, as the end
doeth ſhewe it. Let vs vnderſtand therfore that Solomon doth not
ſpeake generally of al words which proceed out of our mouths, but
only of thoſe which are vttered, as wee are commanded. Solomon
doeth expound it ſo himſelf, when he aſketh now, ſaying, *And how
good is a word in due ſeaſon?* The which is as if he ſaide, If wee wil
haue ioy of the anſwere of our mouth, our word muſt be good thẽ,
& for to be good, it muſt be ſpoken in due time, for a fooliſhe and
wicked woorde hath neuer no due time, ſeeing it ought ne-
uer to be vttered. Now we cannot wel folow theſe admonitions, ex-
cept wee obey vnto that which is ſaide, If any man ſpeake, let him
Ephe.4.29. ſpeake as the words of God. Wherupon foloweth that a word ſpo-
& 5.3. ken in due time, being good, is the woorde of God, & that it is the
Collo.4.6. ſame anſwere of the mouth, wherein there is ioy comming to the
1.Pet.4.11. man that hath an vpright hart, & he may ſay with Dauid: With my
Pſ.119.13.23 lips haue I declared al the iudgementes of thy mouth. Princes alſo
46.54.97. did ſit & ſpake againſt mee: but thy ſeruant did meditate in thy ſta-
tutes. I wil ſpeake alſo of thy teſtimonies before kings, and wil not

be aſhamed. Thy ſtatutes haue beene my ſongues in the houſe of my pilgrimage. Oh howe I loue thy Lawe! it is my meditation continually. And foraſmuch as ther is no ſeaſon wherein wee ought not to preache the woorde of GOD, therefore it foloweth that it is good at al times, and that they which pronounce it with good heartes, haue ioy thereof. And ſith that the Scripture doeth attribute ioy vnto this woorde, it foloweth that it taketh away ioye from the woorde of men. For albeit that men doe laugh in their worldly communications and talke, and delight therein, and ſauour it, yet therein is no true ioye: as wee may knowe in many men, and as the ende doeth ſhewe it in all. Contrarily although wee ſpeake the woordes of God as we ought, and are therfore perſecuted and afflicted, yet neuertheles we ceaſe not to reioyce, yea with an euerlaſting ioy: As our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt doeth ſignifie it ſaying, no man ſhal take away your ioy. Albeit that the Apoſtles, for ſpeaking in the name of Ieſus Chriſt, were beaten, yet were they not without their ioy, And ſo departed ioyfully, becauſe they were counted woorthy to ſuffer for the name of Ieſus. Some doe vnderſtand this ſentence, as if he woulde ſay that a man doeth reioyce and is well pleaſed, when he obteineth what hee demaundeth Now albeit there is a diuerſitie in theſe two ſenſes, yet there is no contrarietie.

Iohn. 12. 22.
Acts. 5. 41.

24 *The way of life is on high to the prudent, to auoyde from hell beneath.*

He doeth ſhewe vs the trade and way that we muſt holde for to liue when he ſayth, *The way of life is on high to the prudent.* And he doeth ſhewe howe we ſhoulde be affectionate, and what knowledge we muſt haue for to holde and folow this path: when he ſayth, that it is to the prudent: & that he addeth, *to auoid from hel beneth*: if then we wil liue, we muſt not hang downe our heade, except it be for ſhame and ſorow for our ſinnes, as was the poore publican: but we muſt be righteous, not after the maner of the Phariſee, which bragged of his worokes, which hee thought worthy of great reward & cõmendation: but for to lift vp wel both our eies & our head, let vs deſpiſe the world & renounce our ſelues, & let vs

Luke. 18. 13.

liue an heauenly lyſe : as the Scriptures doe admoniſh vs in diuers
Mat.4.17. places : Amend your lyues.&c. Seeke firſt for the kingdome of God
& 6.33. &c. If any man will follow me let him renounce himſelfe. &c. Take
& 16. 24. heede to your ſelues, &c. Watch therfore and pray continually, &c.
Luk.21.34.36 I beſech you therfore bretherẽ, by the mercies of god, that you giue
Rom.12.1.2 vp your bodies a liuing ſacrifice, holy, acceptable vnto God, which
is your reaſonable ſeruing of God. And faſhion not your ſelues
& 13.11.12 like vnto this worlde, &c. And that conſidering the ſeaſon, that it is
now time that we ſhould ariſe from ſleep. &c. The night is paſt, the
day is at hand, let vs therefore caſt away the woorkes of darkenes.
Collo.3.1. and let vs put on the armour of light. If then yee bee riſen with
Chriſt, ſeeke thoſe thinges that are aboue, where Chriſt ſitteth at
the right hande of God. If we ſhoote not at this marke, we cannot
brag to be Chriſtians : for our conuerſation is not ſuch as it ought
to be, as S. Paule ſpeaking in the name of al the ſaythful, doeth ſhew
Phil.3.20. vs, ſaying: Our conuerſation is in heauen, &c. This conuerſation
Eſay.2.1. is deſcribed vnto vs in Eſay and in Micheas the fourth Chapter.
Miche. 4.1. Thus much for the path of life which is aboue. As touching nowe
the affection and knowledge that is required for to holde this path,
Pſalm.32.9. let vs marke howe we are admoniſhed. Be you not like an horſe,
or like a mule which vnderſtand not : But we muſt ſuffer our ſelues
to be handled and guyded by him which ſayth vnto vs. I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the way, that thou ſhalt goe, and I will
guyde thee with mine eye. Suffering our ſelues thus to be guided
by the woord, which is our prudence and vnderſtanding we ſhalbe
wiſe, and as we deſire we ſhal liue, folowing the way of life, and ſhal
auoyde from hel beneath, where there is nothing but eternall death,
nor can be none other. For ſith that the Goſpel doeth attribute lyſe
vnto high, which is contrary vnto beneath : it foloweth wel that he
which hath not wiſedome to goe vp, and to auoyde from beneath,
goeth to deſtruction. We muſt then mount vp to God, for to learne
wiſdome of him : and for to doe this, let vs heare him ſpeake by the
mouth of his miniſters : ſith he will thus teache vs. Hee can well
ynough teach vs without meanes, but ſo long as it pleaſeth him
to vſe theſe his organes, let vs not deſpiſe them.

25 *The Lord wil deſtroy the houſe of the proude men: but he wil ſtabliſh the borders of the widow.*

The wicked proud, preſume ſo much of their credit and power, and of their proſperitie, that they make them ſelues beleeue that no euil ſhal happen either to them or to their houſe, and that they ſhal want nothing, and as they falſly beleeue the ſame, euen ſo, before the eyes and in outwarde appearance, they flouriſhe in this worlde for a time, which doeth not ſeeme of ſmal continuance to the feeling of the fleſhe: ſo that the poore faythful, which are afflicted, are grieued therewith, and tempted to folowe thoſe wicked men, for to haue their eaſe, and to be in proſperitie, as they ſee the wicked are. All this ſame hath beene ſhewed alreadie by the holie Scriptures. Nowe albeit that in the former ſentences, Solomon hath ſufficiently pronounced deſtruction and damnation to the wicked, and ſtedfaſtneſſe vnto the righteous, yet hee is not ſatisfied therewith: and therefore, to aſſure and to comfort chiefly the faithful, hee ſheweth nowe that which wee haue heard before, when hee ſayeth, *The Lorde wil deſtroy the houſe of the proude men.* Heretofore hee hath pronounced the deſtruction of the wicked, not naming who hath done it: but nowe hee declareth expreſly, that it is the Lorde. Nowe the word which hee vſeth, the which we expounde *Lorde*, ſignifieth him that hath his being of him ſelfe, and by whome al things are, and without whom nothing is. And foraſmuch as it is ſuche a Lorde, as doeth take in hande to deſtroy and beate downe the houſe of the proude, it foloweth, it can not ſtand. It is neceſſarie therefore that they and their houſhold which doeth folow them, and al their goods, muſt go vnto deſtruction: for there is no power that can withſtand ſuche a Lorde, albeit that the wicked be ſo proude, that they ſtriue to withſtande him. And alſo, hee is an enemie vnto the proude, as he hath alwayes ſhewed, euen from the beginning of the worlde. Wee doe thus expounde the deſtruction of the *Houſe*, and not onely of the buildings and material houſes: for albeit that the pride of the wicked is ſhewed in ſumptuouſnes and coſtlines of buildings, in the which they are pleaſed, and take their delight: yet neuertheleſſe in this place we ought

Pro. 2. 2. 22. & 3. 31. & 12. 7. & 14. 11.

to

to take *the houſe*, for al that ſeemeth to be in the poſſeſſion of the proude. I ſay expreſly, which ſeemeth to be: for truely, the proude haue no poſſeſſion, ſith the Lorde God deſtroyeth their houſe, and taketh it from them. And as by naming the Lorde to be the deſtroier, hee ſheweth, that the proude can not withſtande him, and that in deede and trueth they haue nothing: he teacheth vs alſo that no euil ſhal happen to the wicked, but from the hande of the Lorde, though it ſeemeth often contrarie, becauſe that God ſendeth viſible meanes, to the which the deſtruction is attributed: and if he worketh ſecretly, then they doe impute it vnto fortune. But howſoeuer it be, that deſtruction commeth to the wicked, wee muſt vnderſtande, that it is the Lorde which deſtroyeth their houſe, the which they builde with iniuries and wrongs, with rakings and extortions, with blood and with murther: as the Prophets doe rebuke them for it: Heare, I pray you, O heades of Iacob, and yee Princes of the *Mich.3.1,2.* houſe of Iſrael: ſhoulde not ye know iudgement? But they hate the good, and loue the euil: they plucke of their ſkinnes from them, and alſo the fleſhe from the bones, &c. Woe vnto him that *Aba.2.12.* buildeth a towne with blood, and erecteth a Citie by iniquitie. The *Eſa.3.14.* Lorde ſhal enter into iudgement with the antientes of his people and the Princes thereof: for ye haue eaten vp the Vineyarde: the *Iere.5.27.* ſpoile of the poore is in your houſes. As a Cage is ful of birdes, ſo are their houſes ful of deceite: thereby they are become great and waxen riche. Wee ſee therefore that the Lorde hath good cauſe to deſtroye the houſe of the proude. Contrarily, hee taketh care to builde and to mainteine the houſe of the humble, euen with theirs which maketh no count of them, and alſo are deſpiſed in the world, yea, afflicted and outraged. Of ſuche kinde of people, I ſay, God taketh pittie: and therefore hee helpeth their miſerie and pouertie. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying, *But hee wil ſtabliſhe the borders of the Widowe*. By the *Widowe*, hee meaneth al ſuche as ſuffer, poore and miſerable: whome the worlde careth nothing at all for, but doeth reiect them, and labour to deſtroy them. But the Lord mainteineth them as he ſeeth to be expedient for them, and prouideth for al their neceſſities: as is heere ſignified by to ſtabliſhe the borders. The miſerable ought heere to comfort them ſelues, when they ſee how God doeth offer him ſelfe vnto them, and becommeth the Carpenter of their houſes, and they which doe them wrongs are admoniſhed that they haue to doe with a ſtrong enemy. Foraſmuche as Widowes, fatherleſſe children, and ſtrangers are not commonly ſupported by men, therefore no man feareth to doe them wrong, to oppreſſe, to polle & to doe thē violence: but notwithſtanding they take in hand and ioyne with a ſtrong match: for the Lord doeth greatly fauour them, as it is here briefly ſhewed vs, but more largely in other places. Thou ſhalte not oppreſſe a ſtranger. *Exod.22.1.* *Eſa.1.23.* *Za.7.9.10.*

26 *The thoughtes of the wicked are abhomination to the Lorde: but the pure haue pleaſant wordes.*

Although that by the corruption of our nature we are al euil, and that wee are as it were yoked to ſin, yet the holy ſcripture doth make diſtinction betweene the good & the euil: the which is an argument that God doeth not impute wickednes vnto al men, & that there be ſome whom he alloweth for good and righteous, and that of his only grace & goodneſſe. If then we haue our harts & mindes hardened in euil, making no account to repent, but delighting in filthines & vncleannes, in malice and wickedneſſes, the ſcripture calleth vs wicked, as we are ſo in deed. And whatſoeuer we think, conſult of, deliberate, would, deſire & take in hand, is in vaine: euen ſo is that which we either do or ſay. Solomon doth ſhew it vs, ſaying, *The thoughts of the wicked are abhomination to the Lord.* For ſith the Lord is righteous, & loueth righteouſnes, and that he abhorreth the thoughtes of the wicked: therefore it foloweth wel there is no goodnes in thē: for, inaſmuch as the hart is filled with abhominable thoughts, therfore it can bring foorth none other but wicked words and workes. This ſame is taught vs by the ſimilitude of the tree. Let the ſayings and doings of the wicked, haue neuer ſo goodly ſhewe, yet are they not acceptable: as wee haue ſeene, in the 8 verſe. The ſacrifice of the wicked is abhomination vnto the Lorde. *Pſa.11.7.* *Mat.12.33.*

And ſith alſo that the thoughtes of the wicked are abhominable vnto the Lorde, it foloweth, that the wicked are abuſed, when they labour to ſay or to doe any thing ſo ſecretly that GOD ſhoulde not knowe it: for ſith that he pearceth vnto the thoughts,

hee muſt needes haue knowledge of the deſire, the which is not ſo
muche hid: ſeeing that men which are pourblinde, may know and
iudge it. And not onely they are deceiued, but which worſt is, they
doe iniurie vnto God, eſteeming him leſſe then they doe a woorkeman
towardes his woorke: for they wil confeſſe plainely, that hee
which hath wrought any thing, knoweth what is in it: but that
which the wicked thinke of God, when they wil hide them ſelues
from him, it is as muche as if the worke ſhould ſay to him that hath
made it, Thou haſt not made me, or, Thou vnderſtandeſt it not. And
therefore, it is not without cauſe why he complaineth of them. Yet
Pſal.94.7. wil they ſay, The Lorde ſeeth them not. Woe vnto them that ſeeke
Eſai. 29.15. 16. deepe to hide their counſel from the Lord: for their workes are in
darkneſſe, and they ſay, Who ſeeth vs? And who knoweth vs? Let
vs take heede from doing ſuch iniurie vnto our God, but rather let
Pſal.139.1.2 vs giue him thanks, ſaying, O Lord, thou haſt tried me and knowne
me. &c. Thou knoweſt my ſitting and my riſing: thou vnderſtandeſt
my thought a farre of. If we do truely confeſſe this ſame, we wil abhorre
and deteſt our euil thoughtes, and conſequently, we wil greatly
feare to ſpeake euil and to do euil, knowing that wee are alwayes
before our God, who loueth no wickednes. Now for to execute the
Pſal.5.5. ſame wel, wee muſt change our nature. Solomon doth giue it vs to
vnderſtande, when he ſaieth, *But the pure haue pleaſant wordes.* If
wee be cleane from our filthineſſe and wickedneſſe, by the grace and
working of the holie Ghoſt, our thoughtes ſhal not be abhominable
to the Lorde: for our wordes ſhal be pleaſant and acceptable vnto
him. The which could not be, except they proceeded from pure and
Mat. 23.25. cleane thoughtes: for the inwarde parte muſt firſt of al be pure and
cleane, and then that which is without, ſhalbe pure and cleane. And
as in this ſort wee ſhal be acceptable vnto the Maiſter and Lorde of
life and ſaluation, euen ſo ſhal we be aſſured not to periſhe, but to
Mat.5.8. inioye the preſence of our God. Finally, let vs note, That whoſoeuer
hath not pleaſaunt wordes before God, hath filthie thoughts.

27 *He that is greedie of gaine, troubleth his owne houſe: but he that hateth giftes ſhal liue.*

He that is prodigiall, ſpending exceſſiuely, or that maketh no account to gain his bread, by giuing himſelf vnto ſome good works, which may helpe to nouriſhe him and his familie, they ſay that hee holdeth a fit and right way and trade to bring al to naught and to be bankerout, and that hee falleth in decaye, and that hee is neare vnto deſtruction. Wee can not deny this ſame, ſeeing there are ſo many proofes of experiences. But if a man be ſtraight and holdeth faſt, and ſpareth, and keepeth his goods carefully, labouring alwaies to adde to them and increaſe the ſtocke, hee wil thinke him ſelfe to be a good and diligent houſholder, and it wil ſeeme vnto him, that he holdeth a meetely good trade, to become riche. His worldly and carnal neighbours, wil be alſo of the ſame opinion, & wil thinke, that there can be no better meanes to gaine his liuing, then to bee actiue, and to be readie to drawe vnto him ſelfe. This is the common opinion, but yet it ceaſeth not to be falſe and wrong. Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when hee ſayeth,

Hee that is greedie of gaine, &c. Hee reprooueth here al couetous, which neuer haue enough, and the more they haue, the more they deſire to haue, and ſtil labour to gather, & care not whether they doe wrong or hurt vnto their neighbours, but giue themſelues to peele them, & chiefly whé they think that their neighbors are ſimple, & that they haue not the power to be reuenged & to defend themſelues. They which thus couet gaine, do labour to make a ſure and continual recompence, and to fil their houſes with ſuch abundance, as neuer they nor their poſteritie may haue want: but let them floriſh, proſper, & be at their eaſe for euer. Solomon, I ſay, reprehendeth al ſuch couetous men, when he ſaieth, that they trouble their owne houſes. Now that they trouble their houſes, Saint Paule doeth ſhewe it, They that wil be riche, doe fal into temptation and ſnares, and into many fooliſh & noiſome luſtes, which drowne men in perdition and deſtruction. But he reprooueth thoſe chiefly which are in authoritie, which haue power and are aloft aboue other, and which haue the charge and office, & haue the ruling of their neighbours: and in rebuking them, he alſo threateneth them with death and deſtruction. We ought thus to vnderſtand it, foraſmuch as the lawe expreſly doeth forbid them couetouſnes, and that God by his Prophetes is angrie with them, doeth reproche them for their

1.Tim.6.9.

Exo.23.8. couetouſnes,and doeth threaten them aboue al other, Thou ſhalt
Deut.16.18 take no rewarde,&c. Thou ſhalt ordeine thee Iudges, that they
19.& 17.17 may iudge the people with right iudgement.Neither ſhalt thou take
any rewarde, &c. And it is ſaide of the King alſo, that hee ſhall not heape vp golde and ſiluer vnto him ſelfe. As touching the rebukes and threatenings, wee haue alledged ſome places, as the 25.verſe. Solomon alſo giueth to vnderſtande, that hee chiefly reprooueth great men, when againſt greedineſſe of gaine, hee ſetteth, to hate giftes, the which is verie fit and proper vnto them which are in authoritie or office: euen as hath bin ſhewed by the law, for he ſaith, *But he that hateth giftes ſhal liue.*

Moreouer let vs note in this Antitheſis,that when he ſetteth,to
liue, againſt troubling of the houſe,he doeth ſhewe vs that he doth
Luke.16.26. not ſpeake of a temporal trouble, and that ſoone taketh ende,but of
an eternal deſtruction, as the ſame of the riche. For ſith that hee promiſeth life: and they which hate auarice, and giftes, doe often liue in penurie, pouertie and afflictions,the which is not properly to liue: let vs not thinke that hee ſpeaketh onely of this life: otherwiſe the ſtate of honeſt men ſhoulde bee more miſerable then the ſtate of the wicked. But let vs vnderſtande that hee promiſeth lyfe
2.Cor.8.7. eternal vnto thoſe which hate and abhorre couetouſneſſe. If wee
& 9.6. wil be partakers of this promiſe, let vs folowe the admonition of
Ephe.4.28. Saint Paule and of the Apoſtle, and let vs in no wiſe folowe the o-
1.Tim.6.17. pinion of the carnal and worldly, which ſay, there is no better get-
Hebr.13.5. ting then giftes.

28 *The heart of the righteous ſtudieth to anſwere: but the wicked mans mouth babbleth euil things.*

Solomon doeth not ſimply ſay,The heart ſtudieth to anſwere: for it were then a general and vniuerſal ſentence, the which for the corruption of our nature,and the malice thereof, can not bee true: for there are blockiſhe mindes, and light wittes, which ſtudie not, but doe onely raſhly thinke what they wil ſay, ſo that it ſeemeth, they ſpeake at a venture without ſtudie: as they them ſelues doe wel confeſſe, either for to excuſe them ſelues, or for to ſhewe that they care not what they ſay. For ſith it is ſo (as the trueth vttereth)

ſeth) that from the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh: it Mat.12.34.
ſoloweth that man doeth not anſwere without ſtudie, albeeit that
it is without meditation: for ſtudie, is done with thought, deliberation,
counſel and aduiſe. Solomon knowing this, woulde not abſolutely
ſay, the heart ſtudieth: but hee ſaieth, *The heart of the
iuſt doeth ſtudie*. And ſo he doeth not attribute ſtudie to the hart,
but to righteouſneſſe. If then wee woulde rightly ſtudie to anſwere
and ſpeake as wee ought, let vs change our nature, and that of wicked
and vnrighteous wee may bee made good and righteous. Then
God wil accept vs for righteous, giue vs grace to ſtudie for to anſwere,
not vaine nor wicked thinges, but ſhal ſet our affection and
deſire in his lawe, and therein ſhal ſtudie continually: in ſuch wiſe
as our mouthes ſhal talke of wiſedome: and that wee may truely
ſay, that the lawe of the Lorde is our continual ſtudie: as alſo it is Pſal.1.2.
commanded. And theſe woordes which I commande thee this day, & 37.30.
ſhalbee in thy heart: lay vp then theſe woordes in your heart and & 119.97.
in your minde, and binde them, &c. If wee bee thus giuen to Deut.6.6.
ſtudie, wee ſhal haue an argument of probation that wee are righteous & 11.18.
and wee ſhal delight to anſwere and pronounce righteous
and holy things. Wee wil not alſo take the name of the Lord
GOD in vaine, neither wil wee beare falſe witneſſe againſt our
neighbours. To bee ſhorte, there ſhal not come foorth of our
mouthes, any thing but pure, holy and cleane, according too
Saint Paules counſel. And in thus dooing wee ſhal put away from
vs a wicked mouth, &c. Contrarily, if wee make no account of
ſtudie, wee ſhal haue an argument and proofe that we are nothing Ephe.4.29.
woorth: and as wee ſhal bee wicked, euen ſo ſhal wee bee light & 5.3.
and raſhe to pronounce, euil things: as ſaieth Solomon, *But the* Pro.4.24.
wicked mans mouth babbleth euil things: to wit, againſt God and
againſt their neighbours: for they make no conſcience of blaſphemie
againſt God, nor to belye and to ſlaunder their neighbours,
or elſe to infect them with euil woordes: the which is againſt
the opinion of thoſe which ſay, that words do not ſtinke, againſt
whome Saint Paule ſtandeth, ſaying, Bee not deceiued. Euil 1.Cor.15.33.
woordes corrupt good manners. Now albeit that he doth attribute
euil thinges vnto the mouth, yet it is not to ſay, that they doe not

proceede from the heart, from the abundance whereof the mouth ſpeaketh: but wicked things are attributed vnto the mouth, as vnto the inſtrument, which the heart vſeth for to blowe or vtter out. Euen ſo the wicked may bee wel called, people without heart, after the common phraſe of ſpeeche, which is to ſay, that a man hath no heart, when he foloweth not his duetie.

Furthermore the wicked ſorte doe not thinke how they ſhoulde diſpoſe and order their hartes, neither doe they thinke they haue any, as wee may knowe it, when they boaſt that they haue ſpoken ſomething without ſtudie, and that they reioyce in their ſayings & outward doings Let them then which ſpeake at aduenture, & vtter ſomething nothing worth, not bragge to bee honeſt men, ſith that Solomon doth attribute the ſpewing out of euil thinges vnto the wicked. But let euery one of vs reforme his tongue, in not vttering any thing abrode which ſhal not be firſt of al wel meditated by the woorde of God: otherwiſe wee cannot ſay that there is any religion in vs. *Ia.1.26.* If any man thinke to bee religious or deuout amongeſt you, and refraineth not his tongue, his religion is in vaine. If wee ſtudie wel for to anſwere according to the meaning as we haue ſaide, before whome ſoeuer it bee, wee proceed as we ought, and obſerue that which our Lorde commaunded his Apoſtles to keepe. *Mat.10.19. Luke.12.11 & 21.15.* For hee forbiddeth not ſtudie: but hee woulde not haue vs careful and to take thought, fearing to want an anſwere before the great men of the world.

29 *The Lord is farre of from the wicked: but hee heareth the prayer of the righteous.*

1.Kin.8.27. Pſa.139.7.8 Eſay.66.1. Iere.23.24. The ſcripture witneſſeth that God filleth heauen and earth. Wherin we muſt vnderſtande that GOD is preſent euery where and ouer all. And yet Solomon ſaieth nowe, that *the Lorde is farre of from the wicked*: but it is not by diſtance of place, but by conſent and helpe. For the Lorde agreeth not with the wicked, but abhorreth both them, their thoughts, and their woorkes, as wee haue ſeene heere before. Hee doeth not helpe them, but forſaketh and caſteth them of. *Eſay.59.1.2.* And alſo when the faythful are in affliction, and feele not the helpe of the Lorde preſent, they complaine that the Lorde is farre from them, and hath forgotten them, Therefore let vs vnderſtande that the Lorde is farre from the wicked, becauſe hee giueth them not helpe : and it is becauſe they nothing regarde his worde. Health is farre from the vngodly, becauſe they ſeeke not thy ſtatutes. Wee may ſay alſo that the Lord is farre from the wicked : becauſe that they them ſelues runne farre from him, and wil neither knowe him, nor vnderſtande his workes, but ſay there is no God, and that fortune ruleth all. Wee may chooſe theſe three ſenſes of the Antitheſis that Solomon maketh heere, when hee ſaith,

Pſa.10.1. &.13.2.& 22.2.
Pro.1.25.
Pſa.119.155.

But hee heareth the praier of the righteous. For ſith that againſt to bee farre of from, hee ſetteth in this verſe, to *heare the praier:* and the Lorde in hearing, conſenteth vnto the righteous, & is their helpe, and the righteous by their praier doe draw neere vnto God, ſo much as they can, crauing his preſence and his helpe, and wiſhing to knowe him more and more, and to vnderſtande his doings and workes, it followeth wel that Solomon doeth ſhewe that we muſt vnderſtand that the Lord is farre from the wicked, after the former ſenſe. And thus in fewe wordes, Solomon doeth deſcribe vnto vs the miſery and deſtruction of the wicked, and alſo their malice, blindneſſe, and obſtinacie: & contrarily, the felicitie, & ſtabilitie of the righteous, and alſo their eaſineſſe of learning and obedience. The righteous in this worlde ſeeme to bee curſed, and as it were forſaken of God : for the worlde doeth afflict them, and labour to deſtroy them : and for this cauſe it ſeemeth that God doeth not care for them, that hee hateth them, and hath reiected them : but ſith that God heareth their praier, it followeth that they are and ſhal be bleſſed, and ſhalbe firme and ſtable : for by their praiers, they aske deliuerance from al euils, & that God would preſerue thē and giue vnto them euerlaſting bliſſe. The which hee graunteth them, as we heere doe heare, when it is ſaide that the Lorde heareth their praier: and alſo in other places. And foraſmuch as the righteous do pray, the which God heareth, it followeth that they become willing to learne and obedient, vſing prayer, whereby they obey God, who ſaith, Cal vpon me in the day of thy trouble, and I will heare thee : and alſo that they aske nothing but according to his wil, otherwiſe they ſhould not be hearde. And thus they become willing to learne,

Pſal.22.2. &.71.11
Pſal.23.18.19 &.34.18 &.145.19. &.50.15.

and obedient,and the Lorde doeth not impute their ſinne vnto
them,for the which cauſe hee is farre from them, as from the wicked,
Heb.11.6. we might adde (as the trueth is) that God accepteth their fayth
Mat.21.22. without the which none is acceptable to God,but with fayth he auoweth
Iohn.15.7. all : as our Lorde promiſeth. Wee doe then vnderſtande
howe wee ſhoulde make acceptable prayer vnto God, and ſhal
haue a true argument that we are righteous,to wit, if wee bee certayne
of the goodnes of GOD towardes vs, and that in this certaintie
we deſire and labour to order our ſelues vnto the wil GOD.
For true fayth is not ydle,as our Lorde doeth teache vs, when hee
Mark.1.15. aſketh repentance with fayth. Whoſoeuer woorketh righteouſnes,
Gala.5.6. is righteous. Nowe foraſmuch as there is none,except hee bee
Iea.2.14. out of his witte,which would haue God farre from him, but al de-
1.Ioh.3.7 ſire his helpe and ſuccour, wee muſt needes abhorre al kinde of wickednes,
and that we aſke of God to be iuſtified: that by our prayers
wee may drawe him vnto vs for to helpe vs in all our neceſſities.
Mat.1.8. Albeit then that GOD our father knoweth wel what wee haue
neede of before wee aſke : neuertheles ſith that he woulde haue vs
to pray vnto him, and that he delighteth when we ſpeake vnto him
priuily, let vs humble our ſelues before him,ſubmitting our ſelues
wholy to his holy wil, and confeſſing that all goodnes commeth
from him, and that of our ſelues we haue not,neither can haue any
thing.

50 The light of the eyes reioyceth the hearte ; and a good name maketh the bones fatte.

As the man which hath loſt his ſight cannot reioyce in his hart,
but is troubled and greeued : euen ſo he which feeleth himſelfe to
diminiſhe in wit,and looſeth his vnderſtanding, cannot haue true
ioy.Contrarily,as he that hath been blinde(if he recouer his ſight,)
doth delight and reioyce in himſelfe: euen ſo hee which hath walked
Ephe.6.14. in the vanitie of his thought & imagination,if he come to be awaked
and raiſed out of his ſleepe,and riſeth from the dead,and that
Chriſt doth lighten him,he wil reioyce in the Lorde, he wil caſt far
from him the workes of darkeneſſe,hee will be no more darkenes,
Rom.13.12. as ſometimes he was, but being light in the Lorde, wil walke as a
Ephe.5.8. childe of light,receiuing that which is acceptable to the Lorde. Solomon

lomon doeth declare vs this ſame in fewe wordes, ſaying: *The light of the eies reioyceth heart, &c.* We muſt thus vnderſtand this ſentence: for it ſhoulde not be notable, if Solomon ſpake of the corporal eies onely, except it were by compariſon, admoniſhing vs, that if we haue a ioyful heart and are glad, when the darkenes of the night, or of any darke priſou, or deepe pit, are paſſed, & that wee doe ſee the brightneſſe of the Sunne, and are at large in corporall and temporal libertie: by a much ſtronger reaſon ought wee to reioyce when the night is paſt, and that the day is come: wherein the Lorde giueth vs that wee may walke honeſtly. Likewiſe the eies in the holy Scripture are taken for the ſpirite and minde of man in many places. But our eyes are towardes thee. Mine eyes are euer towardes the *Lorde*. Now when the Spirite and minde of man is lightened by the worde, ſo that thereby it is lead in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe, hee reioyceth and delighteth. Suche is the nature of the worde receiued and diſgeſted. Neuertheleſſe, when it is ſaide, *That the light of the eyes reioyceth the heart*, wee may take theſe wordes as if hee ſaide, That man reioyceth in his heart, when hee ſeeth him ſelfe at reſt and peace, and in proſperitie: ſo that he is not vexed, nor moleſted. For as the night, the darkeneſſe and obſcuritie is taken for vexation, ſorowe, aduerſitie and miſerie: euen ſo the light is taken for the contrarie. Wee haue looked for light, and beholde darkeneſſe, &c. This laſt ſenſe is verie fit for that which Solomon addeth, when hee ſaith, *And a good name maketh the bones fat*. For he ſheweth by what meanes a man ſhal obteine proſperitie, peace & reſt. He would haue man ſo gouerned, that he ſhoulde giue none occaſion to bee blamed & rebuked, nor that any man ſhoulde thinke euil of him: but that hee ſhoulde get not abundance of temporal goods,, power, credit, and authoritie: but ſhoulde labour to liue ſo wel, as he ſhoulde obteine a good name. He expreſſeth howe neceſſary it is for man to haue a good name, when hee ſaith, that it maketh the bones fat. For as when the bones are filled with marowe & compaſſed with fleſh and ſkinne, a man feeleth himſelfe whole & ſoũd: euen ſo he which getteth a good name, & is in good reputatiõ with his neighbors, feeleth his eaſe: for his neighbors do not trouble him, & he knoweth that he proceedeth in a good conſciẽce towards thẽ, the which is a great proſperitie, which Solomon

Rom.13.12.
2.Chr.20.12.
Pſa.25.15. & 123.1.2 & .141.8.
Mat.6.22.
Pſal.19.9. & 119.14.16.162.
Eſai.56.9.

ſignifieth by fatting of the bones. The bones heere, which are members
Deut.31.20 of the body, are taken for the whole man: but chiefly for the
Iob.36.16. inwarde man, whome Solomon laboureth by theſe ſentences to
Pſa.23.5. frame: otherwiſe they ſhoulde not bee notable. Nowe that to
&.63.6.& make fat, is taken for eaſe and proſperitie it is manifeſt enough in
65.12. the holy ſcripture, For I wil bring them into the land (which I ſware
Eſay.55.2. vnto their fathers) that floweth with milke and hony, and they ſhall
Iere.31.14. eate, and fil themſelues, and waxe fat.
Pro.11.25.
&.13.4.

31 *The eare that hearkeneth to the correction of Life, ſhall lodge among the wiſe.*

We wil not take the eare here, for the corporal member which
is ſo named, nor *harkeneth*, for the outward hearing only, though
it be verie profitable and neceſſarie: for wee may ſee many of thoſe
which heare correction of life, and yet doe not lodge amongſt the
wiſe, but doe deſpiſe and flye them, and ſome doe feare to meete
them, and other ſome doe hate them and perſecute them, diuers are
ſowne by the high wayes ſide. But we wil take the eare for the vnderſtanding,
and for the inward man, and to heare, for to receiue, to
get & to obey. In this ſort, there is no doubt but this ſentence is generally
Mat.13.4. true, *The eare that heareth, or hearkeneth to the correction, &c.* If we wil then be wiſe & companions of the wiſe, & to be
counted truely wiſe, we muſt not chaſe, murmure, deſpight, nor ſtand
againſt thoſe which admoniſh, reprooue and correct vs in the name
of God and by his woorde, but we muſt diligently heare the word
of thoſe which labour to amende and direct vs, that they may draw
vs away from death, and leade vs vnto life. They which chide, correct
and threaten vs, are the organes and inſtruments of GOD
for to quicken vs: contrarily, they which prayſe, flatter, and
diſſemble to ſee our fautes, are the organes & inſtruments of the
Deuil for to kil and ſlay vs. And therefore Solomon doeth attribute
life vnto correction. In this he doth ſhew vs that he which taketh
vpon him to correct, ought to doe it by the word of God, the
which only quickneth. For this cauſe God willing to admoniſh & rebuke
Eze.3.17.18 his people by his Prophet Ezechiel, doeth ſay vnto him. Thou
19.& 33.11 ſhalt heare the wordes of my mouth. And afterwards he ſheweth
him

him that if hee doe diſſemble, that death followeth after: contrarily, if hee did exhort them, then life ſhould followe both vpon him and vpon them which ſhoulde conuert. As truely as I liue, ſaith the Lorde God, I deſire not the death of a ſinner. We muſt beware of the Popiſh corrections: for they come not from the mouth of the Lorde, but by the doctrine of the Diuel. But if wee caſt of ſuche filthines and corruptions, and ſubmit our ſelues vnto the correction of life which is made vnto vs by the pure word of the eternal God, wee ſhal dwel and lodge with the wiſe, nor for a day or twaine, or certaine yeeres, but for euer: for if we lodge in this world amongſt the wiſe, walking with them as wee ought, wee ſhal followe them vnto the heauenly habitations and lodgings, where is and ſhal bee their abiding: for the very wiſe indeede haue no continuing Citie *Heb. 13. 14.* heere, but they ſeeke for one to come. They thinke thẽſelues gueſts, *& . 11. 13.* ſtrangers, & pilgrimes in this world. Therefore when Solomon doth promiſe vs a lodging among the wiſe, hee doth cloſely exhort vs to forſake the worlde.

32 *Hee that refuſeth instruction, deſpiſeth his owne ſoule: but hee that obeieth correction, getteth vnderſtanding.*

It is very neceſſary that wee ſhoulde bee careful for our ſoules, becauſe that through the corruption and malice of our nature they bee weake and giuen to euil: wherevpon they eaſily goe to deſtruction and damnation. But there are but a fewe which thinke vppon this neceſſitie, and they thinke that they prouide wel enough for *Luke. 12. 16* their ſoules, if they gather treaſure enough. So doing, they turne *& . 16. 19.* their backs vnto God, who is the father & ſhepheard of our ſoules: they caſt away his worde, which is the ſpiritual foode, fit, meete, and neceſſary for our ſoules, the which is communicated by the holy Scripture inſpired of God. *2. Tim. 3. 16.* It ſeemeth vnto them that in reiecting the yoke of the Lord they ſhal haue a mery time, and ſhalbe at their eaſe, making good chere after the fleſhe. In this ſort they are deceiued if they thinke to haue care of their ſoules: for they doe rather looſe them, as witneſſeth the general flood and the ouerthrowing *Luke. 12. 20* of Sodome and Gomorhe, and of the two rich gluttons. *& . 16. 23.* Solomon alſo doth ſignifie it, ſaying *He that refuſeth inſtruction*, or which careth not for, or forſaketh inſtruction, or diſcipline, &c. When by theſe words he ſignifieth the deſtruction of thoſe which cannot endure diſcipline, and inſtruction, and correction by the word of God, hee ſheweth alſo that they deſerue to periſhe, ſeeing that in deſpiſing their ſoules, they doe againſt nature. For no man euer yet hated his owne fleſhe. If the ſoule bee not gouerned as it ought, then *Eph.5.29.* muſt the whole man faile, which beareth the life of the ſoule, the which is mainteined by diſcipline, inſtruction, and correction. Albeit then that no correction for the preſent ſeemeth to be ioyous, but greeuous, yet let vs not refuſe the ſame, ſeeing it bringeth foorth fruite afterwardes. True it is that the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of the cha- *Heb.12.11.* ſtenings that God ſendeth vnto his children, the which ought not to bee eſteemed after the feeling of the fleſhe, who abhorreth the croſſe, and ſhunneth it, as children doe the rod, not knowing howe profitable it is for them to bee corrected. But wee muſt haue reſpect vnto the ende: to wit, that the chaſtiſments bring foorth righteouſneſſe: for the croſſe leadeth vs vnto the feare of the Lorde, vnto a religious and holy life. Moreouer, the inſtruction or diſcipline which is ſpoken of, doeth not ſtande onely in woordes; but alſo in temptations, afflictions, and aduerſities which it pleaſeth God to ſende vs. When the Lorde doeth lay them vpon vs, wee muſt not refuſe them through impaciencie, murmurings, and diſpitefulneſſe: He woulde haue vs to poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience: otherwiſe wee deſpiſe him, the which is very vnwiſely doone of vs: as wee ought *Luke.21.19* wel to vnderſtande it: for it is great fooliſhneſſe for a man to ſuffer him to periſh. The which they do, that refuſe inſtructiō: for in deſpiſing their ſoules, they forſake them, and ſo they muſt periſhe. Solomon therefore by the deſpiſing of the ſoule, ſheweth the fooliſhnes and deſtructiō of them which care nothing at al for diſcipline. Contrarily, hee ſheweth vs the preſeruation and wiſedome of thoſe which willingly and gladly receiue al good inſtructions, admonitions and corrections that are made to them, and doe patiently ſuffer the corrections which God ſendeth them, whē he ſaith, *But he that heareth or obeieth. &c.* Foraſmuch as againſt deſpiſing of the ſoule, he ſetteth, getteth vnderſtanding: let vs vnderſtand that they which are not rebellious againſt the corrections, but doth receiue them patiently;

tiently, are wiſe, and by their wiſdome are kept from deſtruction: for as the ſoundneſſe of the inward parts of the body is the preſeruing of the whole man: euen ſo wiſdome which is the ſpirituall health, keepeth the inward life of man. We ſpeak thus, becauſe that life and wiſdome lyeth in the heart, as the Scripture ſaith. And the Lord hath not giuen you an heart to know, & eies to ſee, &c. I haue bin powred out as water, and my heart hath been melted like waxe, &c. A number of euils haue compaſſed mee about, and therfore my heart hath failed mee, &c. And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, &c. And albeit that getting is heere ſpoken of, yet let vs not vnderſtande that it is any other thing then a pure and liberal gift of the Lorde.

Pro.1.33. & .2.10. & .3. 13.
Deut.29.4.
Pſal.22.15. & .40.13. & 104.15.
Pro.10.8.13 & .11.12.14 30.33.

33 *The feare of the Lord is the inſtruction of wiſdome: and before honour goeth humilitie.*

As we may ſee, Solomõ is neuer wery to ſpeake of the feare of the Lord and of wiſdome: for he hath already oftentimes talked therof, and now againe he ſpeaketh thereof, ſaying, *The feare of the Lorde is the inſtruction of wiſdome*. Wherin he ſheweth to his auditorie, that they ought not to bee greeued though he often repeate and reheatſe one ſelfe doctrine, & that it is very neceſſary for vs too haue the feare of the Lord ſet before vs, whereby we learne not to flie frõ the preſence of God, and to hide our ſelues from him, as if hee were a ſharp & vnmerciful iudge, or a feareful and cruel tyrant: but wherout we learne wiſdome. This feare doth not ſet before vs the paines & torments, for to bee aſtoniſhed and terrified by them, as are the wicked which haue no minde to amend nor to doe wel. Albeit that we muſt feare the iudgements of God, wherewith we deſerue to be beaten downe for the ſinnes that we commit without ceaſſing and continually, deſiring God to haue mercy vpon vs, and that being aſſured therof, we ſhould abhorre our ſinnes, and turne vs to do wel, as he teacheth vs by his holy word, the which we ſhuld haue in ſuch reuerẽce as it ſhould greatly diſpleaſe vs to doe any thing againſt the ſame, and that our delight ſhould be to ſubmit & humble our ſelues thervnto, for to yeeld true obedience vnto our God. The holy fathers had this feare: as the ſcripture witneſſeth of Noe, & of Abraham. Again in Exod, The people feared the Lord. My fleſhe trembleth for feare of thee, and I am afraide of thy iudgementes.

Heb.11.7.
Gene.22.12
Exo.14.31.
Pſ.119.120.

Deut.6.10 This is the feare that God requireth of vs. This feare is the inſtruction
& 6.2.13. of wiſdome, as Solomon ſaith: And the cauſe of our fooliſhneſſe
& 10.12 is, that wee want this feare, whereby we might be truely wiſe:
Pſal.22.24. for it holdeth vs vnder the obedience of the word of God, which is
& 33.18 the wiſedome of the children of God. Without feare (as hath beene
& 34.10 ſaid) we are but fooles, and wee muſt begin thereby to forſake fooliſhneſſe,
and to come vnto wiſdome, which is the moſt honourable degree that we can obteine in this worlde: and yet there is nothing more vile and contemptible then is this feare, which hath been ſpoken of, and from whence proceedeth this wiſdome ſo honourable, euen as the worldlings themſelues doe ſay, though they vnderſtand it not. But ſince that Adam ſinned, and that he hath made him ſelfe vile and contemptible, we muſt by humilitie and lowlineſſe, contẽpt and ſhame, come vnto honour: for as Solomon ſaith, *Humilitie goeth before honour*. If wee wil be honoured, let vs not bee like vnto our firſt parentes, who from the beginning woulde bee like vnto God: and minding to exalt themſelues, haue ſuppreſſed and ouerthrowne themſelues with al their poſteritie, yea, euen vnto hel, from whence none coulde haue raiſed himſelfe, except God of his grace and mercy, had not taken pitie vpon mankind. In thinking to exalt himſelf, he hath caſt downe himſelfe into great ſhame and reproche. Therefore let vs not ſeeke to raiſe our eſtate but let vs truely confeſſe our ſelues to be ſuch as wee are in deede, to wit, vile, and of a baſe condition: let vs abace and humble our ſelues, not praiſing our ſelues before men to deface others. For to doe the ſame, let vs
Rom.12.10. giue honour one vnto another, and let nothing bee doone by contention,
Phi.2.3. or by vaine glory, but by humbleneſſe of heart. And let vs chiefly humble our ſelues before God, not eſteming our ſelues worthie
Luke.18.10 to appeare before him, & he ſhal exalt vs. Two men went vp into the Temple to pray: the one a Phariſee, & the other a Publicane,
1.Pet.5.6 &c. And S. Peter ſaith, Humble your ſelues therefore vnder the
Luke.24.46 mightie hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, &c. Wee
Phi.2.5. muſt not diſdaine for to followe Ieſus Chriſt.

The

The xvi. Chapter.

1 T*HE preparation of the heart is in man: but the anſwere of the tongue is of the Lorde.*

Foraſmuche as from the abundance of the hearte the mouth ſpeaketh, it followeth therof, that hee which giueth man leaue to ſpeake, is gouernour of the heart, and doth order it for to make it to vtter by the tongue ſuch ſpeache as hee pleaſeth. Notwithſtanding, Solomon ſaith, that the preparation of *the hearte is in man.* Wherein it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight, that there are three abſurdities or inconueniences. For firſt of al it ſeemeth by his ſaying, that man hath power to prepare or diſpoſe his hearte as he wil: wherevpon it followeth that wee haue no neede of the promiſes that God maketh vnto vs touching the refourming of our heartes and mindes, and alſo that wee haue no neede to pray vnto God for the ordering of our heartes, and that in vaine the holy fathers haue praied for it: as Dauid praied. Secondly, it ſeemeth that hee doeth attribute that vnto the creature which belongeth vnto the Creator onely: For ſith that *the anſwere of the tongue is of the Lorde*, it followeth alſo that it is he which prepareth the hearte for to cauſe the tongue to ſpeake. If hee muſt needes meddle with gouerning of the tongue, it is very neceſſary that hee haue in his power the ruling of the hearte, and to diſpoſe it at his pleaſure.

Deut.30.6.
Ier.24.7.& 30.33.
Eze.11.19. & 36.26.
Pſal.51.12.

Dauid did ſo wel vnderſtande it: and therefore he asketh firſt the creation and renewing of the minde, and afterwardes hee aſketh that God woulde open his lippes: Againe, Lorde, thou doeſt heare the deſire of the humble: thou prepareſt their hearte, and thine eare hearkeneth therevnto, &c. Thirdly, it ſeemeth that hee preferreth

Pſal.51.12. 17.& 10.19.

the

Iam.3.6. the creature vnto the Creator, attributing more vnto him then vnto the Lorde. For though the tongue is a member very hardly too bee gouerned: yet is it nothing in compariſon of the hearte, from whome verily proceedeth the hardneſſe of the tongue. We might alledge the fourth inconuenience: that is, that it ſhould ſeeme that Solomon doeth attribute freewil vnto man, as touching the inward operations, and ſhoulde denie it him concerning the outwarde:
1.Sam.16.7. which are not of ſo great excellencie: as our God doeth well ſhew
Pſa.7.10. it vs, when hee challengeth the knowledge of the inwarde thinges.
Iere.17.10. Wherefore let vs not thinke that Solomon hath pronounced the firſt part of this ſentence affirmatiuely, as though hee gaue power vnto man for to prepare his hearte, as hee wil: but let vs vnderſtande that he ſpeaketh after a humane and carnal ſenſe, in deriding the fooliſh truſt of men, which doe boldly thinke, to conſult, to purpoſe and to take in hand euery worke of themſelues without calling vpon God: ſeeing that without him they cannot pronounce the leaſt worde that might bee ſpoken: the which is farre much leſſe then to purpoſe, conſult, and take in hande any thing to do. And is aſmuch, as if he did ſay, man is ſo proude and arrogant, that hee dare of himſelfe take in hande al thinges, euen the higheſt and the hardeſt, and yet there is not a little worke that is in his power to doe. We muſt then vnderſtand howe Solomon vſeth heere an ironical kind of ſpeach againſt the arrogancie of men, which dare take ſo much in hand. And for aſmuch as the holy Ghoſt doth deride thē,
Pſa.2.4.5. it is an argument and proofe that they are neere vnto deſtruction. Nowe to the ende that wee may not be mocked, nor deſtroyed with the arrogant, wee muſt humble our ſelues, truely confeſſing that we haue neither ſpirite nor vnderſtanding which can of it ſelfe conſult vpon any good work. Solomō did wel vnderſtand it, as he doth here cloſely ſhewe it: but it is more plainely expreſſed in the anſwere and demaunde that Solomon maketh vnto God, and alſo in the anſwere that God made vnto him. Let vs alſo confeſſe that wee haue
1.King.3.6. neither mouths nor tongues which can pronounce any good thing,
Gene.11.7. except God giue it. The confuſion of tongues doeth ſhewe it,
Pſa.51.17. and in other places alſo. I haue expreſly ſaide nothing that good is: for euil anſweres come of our ſelues, and of the Deuill, to whome

God giueth the reprobate ouer.

2 *All the wayes of a man are cleane in his owne eyes: but the Lord pondereth the ſpirits.*

Neither Dauid, Iob, Eſay, nor Daniel did euer thinke their wayes to bee cleane. And if with an vnfayned heart wee dayly aſke pardon of God for our ſinnes, our wayes wil not ſeeme vnto vs to bee cleane. For this cauſe when Solomon ſaieth, *All the wayes of a man are cleane,&c*: let vs vnderſtande that hee ſpeaketh of men which haue no knowledge of the trueth, nor doe folowe it, but are guided and ruled by their fantaſies, and make themſelues beleeue ſo much as they vtterly can, that whatſoeuer they thinke, ſay and doe, is good and iuſt, and that there is nothing in them that may bee reprooued, but praiſed and commended. With ſuch kinde of people poperie is much repleniſhed, and chiefly the celles and dennes of thoſe ſpiritual theeues, Monkes and Nunnes. They alſo which cannot ſuffer to bee tolde their faultes, but what wickednes ſoeuer they commit, haue their mouthes ready open to lye, in reporting themſelues to be honeſt men, doe labour ſo much as they can to make al their wayes cleane in their owne eyes and before their neighbours. But of al theſe ſame their iniquities are ſo ſtinking, that we may know that there is no cleanneſſe at al in them. If they wil not confeſſe it, yet God is not blinde: he hath ſo ſharpe and pearcing a ſight, that nothing can be hidde from him: as already ſometimes hath beene ſhewed by the ſcriptures, and Solomon doth nowe ſhewe it vs, when he ſaith, *Pſa.19.15. 14.& 51.3. Iob.14.4. & 15.15.& 25.4.*

But the Lorde pondereth the ſpirites. Solomon compareth GOD heere vnto a merchant, who for to diſcerne wel and truely betweene one marchandiſe & another, vſeth ballances and waites. Now the ballãces of God are his wiſedom, knowledge & vnderſtãding. By ſuch ballances he trieth the goodnes and the frowardnes of mens harts, and thereby iudgeth with al equitie and vprightneſſe, and truely. The Lorde is in his holie temple, The Lordes ſeate is in heauen. His eyes conſider the poore: and his eye liddes trieth the children of men. The Lord looked downe from heauen, and beheld *Pſa.11.4. &.33.13. & 94.9. &.44.21.*

al the children of men. Hee which hath planted the eare, ſhal hee not heare? If wee had forgotten the name of our GOD, and helde vp our handes to any ſtrange God, woulde not God haue ſought it out? for hee knoweth the ſecretes of the hart. Albeeit then that men doe flatter and praiſe themſelues, making themſelues beleeue that there is nothing but al goodneſſe in their waies, yet they winne nothing thereby, but doe rather looſe and hurte themſelues: for they haue to doe with a iudge which wil not iuſti-
Pſal.5.5. fie the vngodly which delighteth in his wickedneſſe, Thou art not a God which loueſt iniquitie.

Therfore, what faire ſhewe of holineſſe and righteouſneſſe ſoeuer that is ſhewed foorth in our life and conuerſation, yet let vs not eſteeme al our wayes cleane: but let vs confeſſe that we haue marks and blottes, vncleanneſſes and filthineſſes which haue neede to bee clenſed and purged. Let vs beleue, That if we ſay, we haue no ſinne,
1.Iohn.1.8. we deceiue our ſelues and there is no truth in vs. When wee ſhal truely confeſſe our filthineſſe, though wee haue a iudge that loo-
Heb.4.13. keth narrowly vppon vs, yet will hee haue compaſſion vppon vs.

3 *Commit thy woorkes vnto the Lorde, and thy thoughtes ſhalbe directed.*

Albeeit that wee finde howe harde it is, yea almoſt vnpoſſible to bring many things to paſſe which we thinke of, and to finiſhe them as wee woulde (for moſt often our thoughtes and enterpriſes are made voyd:) yet are wee ſo wiſe in our opinion, that we thinke our ſelues ſufficient to gouerne our affaires of our ſelues, and to order our thoughtes. And heerein wee ſhewe a pride that Solomon laboureth to ſuppreſſe, when he ſayth,

Commit thy workes vnto the Lord, and thy thoughtes, &c. He laboureth alſo to deliuer vs from ſuch weakeneſſe as hindereth vs to woorke, the which doeth ſeeme for to ſurmount our power and capacitie. Hee laboureth to turne vs away from diſtruſt, which doeth torment vs, although with great boldnes we imploy and occupie our ſelues about our duetie: but wee thinke that the labor that wee take, ſhal not bring foorth ſuch fruite as wee deſire, or that it

ſhal come to nothing, and that wee ſhal looſe our paines, and our thoughts ſhal vaniſhe into ſmoke. Therefore for to remedie theſe three vices, pride, weakeneſſe, and diſtruſt, hee woulde haue vs to referre our ſelues to the prouidence of God. They which haue committed themſelues thereto, haue come to the ende of their affaires, whereas other haue beene made voide of their hope. Adam and Gen.3.&.6.
Eue did not commit their affaires vnto the Lord, but to the Diuel: and therefore they did not obteine their deſire. Noe, contrarily referred himſelfe vnto the prouidence of God, building an Arke at his commandement, for the ſauegarde of his houſholde, and his thoughts were directed: for as hee hoped, ſo came it to paſſe. Let them then which feele theſelues weake & voide of al mens help, not bee diſcouraged nor diſpaire, as though it were vnpoſſible that they coulde obteine their wiſhe and deſire: but in working as God giueth them, let them reſt vpon the prouidence of God, and hee wil giue vnto them proſperite, as ſhalbe neceſſary for them. Solomon is not onely a witneſſe hereof, but his father Dauid before him, ſeeing the worldly proſperitie of the wicked, the which was a greate temptation vnto the faithful and innocent which were in aduerſitie doeth admoniſh them alſo, ſaying, Truſt thou in the Lorde, and be Pſal.37.3
doing good. Caſt thy care vpon the Lord, and hee ſhall relieue thee. & 55.23.
And after them, Saint Peter. And heerein we muſt not ſcatter with 1.Pet.5.7.
the wolues, nor feare if wee become ſheepe that the wolues should eate vs: but knowing the prouidence of God, and the care that hee hath ouer vs, let vs bee patient and gentle, and let not the wickedneſſe of men prouoke vs to be like vnto wilde beaſtes which reuenge themſelues with their teeth, feete, nailes, and hornes, for to keepe that which they haue, or to ſpoyle other of theirs. Let vs then bee at peace and quietneſſe in our conſciences, and mindes, and towardes our neighbours let vs bee ſoft, modeſt, gentle, and lowly.

Concerning the reſt, though wee muſt commit our affaires, and caſt our burden vpon the Lorde, yet is it not to ſay, that God woulde haue vs to bee like vnto ſtones, and that wee ſhoulde bee voide of al iudgement. Solomon doth ſignifie it, when he ſaith, *Commit thy workes:* and Dauid, when he ſaith, And giue thy ſelfe to doe well.

They doe not preache vnto vs that God careth for vs for too leade vs vntoo idleneſſe, ſlouthfulneſſe, and careleſneſſe: but leaſt that wee ſhoulde bee ouercome with feare, and that ouermuche thought ſhoulde driue vs vnto impaciencie: for the knowledge of the prouidence of god doth not deliuer vs frō al care, ſo that it is lawful for men to be without care, and to liue after the pleaſure of their ſenſualitie and luſt. Wee muſt not for the prouidence of God ſuffer our fleſhe to haue his eaſe: but that our faith ſhould make vs quiet and peaceable, and that wee ſhoulde prouoke our ſelues neither inwardly nor outwardly againſt our neighbours. When euery one of vs ſhalbe careful to folow his vocation in a good conſcience, beholding that God doth commande vs ſo to doe, and hoping that God wil bleſſe our labour, as he ſhal ſee expedient, committing our workes vnto the Lorde, then ſhal *our thoughts bee directed*: for wee ſhal not be made voide of our hope, but ſhal obteine our deſires: as the ſcripture doth ſhew in diuers places. Therfore let vs vnderſtande that Solomon woulde haue vs to bee careful, and that we ſhoulde diligently imploy our ſelues vnto work, and that we ſhould doe our workes not thinking that of our ſelues, wee can finiſhe to make our enterpriſe proſperous, or that in our worke wee muſt truſt vpon ſome body, and that one of vs ſhoulde ſtay himſelſe vpon an other, ſcattering our workes heere and there, and committing them to many: as doe the poore miſerable Papiſtes which haue their recourſe and truſt in many Patrones and Aduocates: but contenting our ſelues with one onely Aduocate, wee muſt make as it were a ſcroule of our workes, binde them vp together, and commit all the charge to him, without diſtruſting him. Thus doing, our thoughtes ſhal bee directed and eſtabliſhed, that wee ſhall obteine as wee deſire. Solomon hath ſo vnderſtoode it, when hee ſaide, Commit thy workes. &c.

4 *The Lorde hath made al things for his owne ſake: yea, euen the wicked for the day of euill.*

The names and titles which are attributed vnto God in the ſcripture doe ſhewe that he is of ſuche vertue, maieſtie, and might, that hee hath no neede of any creature for to borrowe that, which hee wanteth, or to make him more perfect in himſelfe. The ſcripture doeth name him the Almightie, The Lorde, The Almightie, the higheſt, the holy one: not after the maner of men, which for to flatter the great men, and to bee welcome towardes them, wil giue the titles which might wel agree vnto their eſtate, but they withſtād their manners and kinde of doings, as ſome wil cal the Pope, their holy father: and yet there is neither holineſſe nor fatherlineſſe in him, except hee beget baſtardes, or children to the Diuel, by doctrines and mens traditions. Other ſhalbe called Catholike and moſt Chriſtian, and yet notwithſtanding they ſhal haue neither faith nor Chriſtianitie, but ſhal labour for to aboliſhe the faith and religion: as the *interim* doeth giue witneſſe, and the priſons, baniſhmentes, confiſcations and burninges doe ſhewe it in Poperie. But our God is of ſuch nature, that no man can giue vnto him titles and names too excellent, yea it is altogether vnpoſſible that wee ſhould expreſſe by words what he is: for hee ſurmounteth infinitely al things both heauenly and earthly, both corporal and ſpiritual, ſo that wee cannot worthily enough either thinke or ſpeake of him. Wherefore, let vs with al humbleneſſe, feare and reuerence, thinke and ſpeake of our God, knowing that of our ſelues we are not fit nor meete thervnto.

Now for to thinke or ſpeake wel thereof, let vs beleeue & cōfeſſe that which was ſaide at the beginning, That hee is of ſuche vertue, and power, that hee hath no neede of any creature, to borrowe and take of him what he needeth. He hath wel ſhewed this ſame, when of nothing hee created al things by his onely worde. Eſay alſo doth wel ſhew it, who is he that hath meaſured the waters with his fiſt? & counted heauen with the ſpan, & comprehended the duſt of the earth in a meaſure? and waighed the mountaines in a waight, and the hilles in a ballance? Who hath inſtructed the ſpirite of the Lord? or was his counſellour, or taught him? Neuertheleſſe forasmuch as God hath nothing more precious, nor more that hee eſteemeth then his name, his glory, and his honour, and that he wil bee knowne, ſerued, and honoured, for this cauſe hee hath had regarde to himſelfe when hee created al thingss and woulde and wil ſtil bee glorified in them. Solomon doth declare it vs now, when he ſaith, *The Lorde hath made all things for his owne ſake.* Hee ſpeaketh rightly ſo: for when hee purpoſed to create the heauens, the earth

Gen. 1.
Pſal. 33. 6.
Eſay. 40. 12.

earth and that which is conteined in them, there is nothing which can moue him thervnto, but himſelfe. The goodneſſe and excellencie of things which hee purpoſed to doe, coulde not ſtirre him vpp to doe it: for there neither is, nor can be in any creature, any goodneſſe or worthineſſe, that God of his onely grace and pure liberalitie hath not put in them, & for the which he ought not but to be praiſed, glorified, and thanked. To the end then that we may not haue ſuch witneſſes againſt vs, let vs loke to what end God hath created vs, and let vs followe it, and willingly glorifiyng our Creator, truſting vpon his goodneſſe, and giuing our ſelues to followe his will: and that wee bee not like vnto the wicked, which doe tende to nothing but to diſhonour God, and wil not ſerue him, and yet hee hath created them for himſelfe: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, when hee ſaith, *All things*. They muſt therefore ſerue him againſt their willes, and to their hurte and deſtruction. Solomon doeth ſhewe it when hee doeth more openly expreſſe that GOD hath created the wicked euen for himſelfe. For hee is not contented to ſay that God hath made the wicked, but hee ſaith, euen the wicked for the day *of euill*. This is a very ſtrange thing at the firſt ſight, to ſay that God hath made the wicked to be glorified in their deſtruction. But the matter well conſidered, wee ſhal ſee the goodnes and iuſtice of God ſhine therein. When hee ſtopped the purpoſes of the wicked, and doeth bereaue them of their enterpriſes they take in hande againſt his people, any man that hath ſounde iudgemēt wil not ſay but that it is good: & when for their obſtinacie and hardneſſe hee ſhal deſtroy them, men ſhal knowe that hee is *Gen. 19. 24.* iuſt, as hee hath doone vnto the people of Sodom, and to Pharao and to the people of Egypt, vnto Saule, and vnto diuers other wicked men. And if they dare ſpue out this blaſphemie againſt God, & ſay, that the faulte ought to bee imputed vnto him, ſeeing hee maketh the wicked to this end, & that it is not poſſible to reſiſt his ordinance & will: to this wee may anſwere, firſt of al that Saint Iames *Iam. 1. 3.* ſaith, Whē any man is tempted, let him not ſay, I am tēpted of God, for God tēpteth no man. Secōdly, that which Paul ſaith, But what *Rom. 9. 20.* art thou, O man, which diſputeſt with God? We muſt not be ſo preſūptuous, as to iudge of gods works which ſurmoūt our capacitty, but in humbling our ſelues vnder iuſtice, which is incomprehenſible vnto vs, let vs crie, O the depth of the riches both of the wiſedome and knowledge of God! how incomprehenſible are his iudgements, and his waies paſt finding out! In this our crie, let vs feare the iudgements of God, as did Noe: and let vs haue compaſſion vppon the wicked, as had Abraham. Behold, howe we muſt behaue our ſelues towardes the iudgementes of God, and not to examine them from point to pointe, for to iudge of them after our ſenſe and reaſon: for they are vnſearchable. And if we can not rightly behold the Sunne, which is but a creature, by a more ſtrong reaſon wee muſt vnderſtande, that it is vnpoſſible to ſee God in his Maieſtie: whereunto neuertheles wee labour when we enquire of his iudgements more then that he doth open vnto vs by his worde. *Rom. 11.33.* *Hebr. 11.7* *Gene. 18.24.*

5 *All that are proude of heart, are in abhomination to the Lorde: though hand ioyne in hande, hee ſhal not be vnpuniſhed.*

It is not without cauſe that Dauid proteſteth, Lord, my heart is not hautie, neither are mine eyes loftie, neither haue I walked in great matters and hid from mee. For hee deſired to liue after the wil of the Lorde: as hee doeth ſhewe by his deſires and prayers that hee maketh: let the wordes of my mouth, and the meditation of mine heart be acceptable in thy ſight, O Lorde, my ſtrength and my Redeemer. O Lorde, I beſeeche thee, accept the free offeringes of my mouth, and teach mee thy iudgements. Teache mee to doe thy wil, for thou art my God, &c. Nowe hee knewe that hee could not pleaſe God, but in ſubmitting him ſelfe vnto him in al reuerence, feare and humilitie: for as hee wel vnderſtoode, the proude doeth diſpleaſe him, and are abhominable vnto him. The Lorde hath wel ſhewed it in the ouerthrowe of Sodome, Beholde the ſinne of Sodome thy ſiſter was pride, fulneſſe of bread, and idlenes, &c. He hath done the like in the deſtruction of the enemies of his people: and the Scripture doeth witneſſe it in diuers places. Amongſt other places we haue Solomon, who ſaieth nowe, *Al that are proud of heart, are in abhomination to the Lord.* And ſith there is none of vs, how ignorant ſoeuer he be, that would be abhorred of the Lord, but do *Pſal. 131.1* *Pſal. 19.14* *Pſal. 119.108. & 143.10.* *Eze. 16.49.*

all from the higheſt to the loweſt deſire to pleaſe him, wee muſt renounce pride, which chiefly conſiſteth in the contempt of the word, and in the boldneſſe or rather ouerboldneſſe that we haue to giue our ſelues vnto wickednes with a ſet purpoſe, euen when we know well that wee doe euil, and that therein wee be aſſured, or at leaſtwiſe labour to make our ſelues ſo beleeue that wee haue no neede to feare: but notwithſtanding what reſiſtaunce ſoeuer wee meete withal, wee wil goe forewarde with our enterpriſes. The worlde *Gen.6.* deſtroyed by the flood, was ſtained with ſuche pride: as wee may *2.Pet.2.5.* knowe it, when by the ſpace of ſixe ſcore yeares they regarded not *6.7.* to heare Noe the Embaſſadour of righteouſnes. Euen ſo were the Zodomites which oppreſſed iuſt Lot, by their filthie conuerſation. The people of Iſrael likewiſe was blotted therewith: as wee may *Deut.32.5* ſee by the rebukes that Moſes and the Prophetes haue often giuen *Eſai.28.14* them. And nowe when the ſame wickedneſſes doe reigne amongſt thoſe which brag of the name of Chriſtendome, they ſhewe wel that they are defiled with the ſame pride: wherevppon wee muſt looke for an horrible deſtruction: for God chaungeth not. If in time paſt, hee hath ſo reuenged him ſelfe vpon the proude, declaring that hee abhorred them, although hee ſeeme to diſſemble, or that he knoweth not at this time the pride of theſe wicked mockers and contemners, yet after hee hath patiently looked for their amendement, hee wil deſtroy them in his wrath, the which they daily heape to them ſelues: for the puniſhmentes of times paſt doe *Rom.2.5.* declare that the wicked in time preſent ſhal not eſcape the hande of *2.Pet.2.5.* the Lord. Let vs therefore flye al pride, and not looke what credite, authoritie and power, the proude haue in the worlde, becauſe they are in great number, and are wel ioyned and confederated after the carnal ſenſe. Notwithſtanding, theſe thinges that the worlde eſteemeth greatly, ſhal nothing let that God at his appointed time ſhoulde not deſtroy them: they ſhal not be exempted from his wrath, but that it ſhalbe eaſie for him to deſtroy them therein. Solomon doeth ſignifie it when he ſayth, *Though hand toucheth hand, he ſhall not be vnpuniſhed.* The wicked doe giue handes one vnto another, to doe euill, and doe mainteine themſelues as though they did conſpire to reſiſt God: but he mocketh their conſpiracies. Heeretofore Solomon hath vttered the like ſentences againſt the frowarde and wicked, comforting alſo the vpright and perfect by promiſes.

6 *By mercie and truth iniquitie ſhalbe forgiuen: and by the feare of the Lorde they depart from euill.*

When the ſuperſtitious and idolaters doe thinke that God is angrie againſt them for their ſinnes, and that they feare to bee puniſhed for them, for to auoide the paine, and not ſorowe for their ſinne, they wil labour to content God with ceremonies and obſeruations of doctrines and mens traditions, with fooliſhe deuotions which they do vpon a good intent, & other inuentiõs of their own braines that God neuer commaunded, but doe diſpleaſe him: for hee woulde haue vs attentiue vnto his worde onely, and that wee ſhoulde ſerue him after his commaundementes, by the which hee doeth declare vnto vs his wil, whereunto wee muſt obey, forſaking al wickedneſſe. Thus doing we ſhal haue God merciful vnto vs: as Solomon doeth promiſe vs, ſaying, *By mercie & trueth iniquitie ſhalbe forgiuen.*

Solomon heere woulde not haue vs to linger about trifles for to pleaſe God, as if hee were a little childe that might bee pleaſed with an Apple or with a Ball; or ſome fooliſhe and vaine man, which is pleaſed with worldly paſtime: but that wee may not bee like vnto the Scribes & Phariſies, & leſt we deſerue the rebuke that is in Saint Mathew, he ſetteth before vs what is the greateſt pointe of the lawe, and that which God moſt requireth aboue al things: to witte, mercy and trueth: and doeth promiſe vs, that if wee bee true vnto our God, not turning from him after ſtraunge Gods, but haue al our truſt in him, beeing aſſured of his goodnes towards vs, and certified that he doth loue vs, & that in this certaintie & aſſurãce we be ſoft, gentle, louing & merciful towards our neighbours, in helping them with that which they haue need of, that God wil be merciful, and wil not impute our ſinnes vnto vs. Notwithſtanding let vs not thinke that hee will leade vs to truſt in our merites, nor that he intendeth that by our mercy & our truth we ſhould ſatisfie *Mat.23.23.*

our faultes before God, ſo that by ſuch ſatisfaction, God ſhould bee pleaſed, and ſhould forgiue vs the paine, the which otherwiſe hee had laide vpon vs for our offences: but after the maner of the ſcripture, hee ſignifieth that they which by mercy and trueth ſhall conuert vnto God, forſaking their former vices and ſinnes, that they ſhal finde him merciful: as if hee ſaide, If wee reſt and ceaſe from our miſdeedes and wickedneſſes, ſo wil God appeaſe his wrath, and make his iudgement to ceaſe, and wil forbeare the condemnation and puniſhment that wee had deſerued. Nowe becauſe it is needful for to haue conſtant perſeuerance in trueth, and folowe goodneſſe and mercie, let vs flye al wickedneſſe. Solomon doeth ſhewe vs howe wee ſhal come vnto the ende, when he ſaieth, *And by the feare of the Lord they depart from euil.* The which he hath taught vs before. Beſides this, let vs firſt of al note, that although Solomon nameth mercie before trueth: yet wee muſt vnderſtand, that by order fayth proceedeth, and mercy foloweth as the fruite, but vnſeparably.

Pro.3.7. & 8.13. & 14.16.

Secondly, let vs note, that the iuſtification that wee obteine by the remiſſion of our ſins, is giuen to fayth, for that it layeth hold vpon the free promiſes of God, from whome come al bleſſinges to vs, and nothing from our merites.

7 *When the wayes of a man pleaſe the Lord, he wil make alſo his enemies at peace with him.*

If wee be ſtirred to anger, or that wee haue a contentious and troubleſome ſpirite which wil ſodenly fight, and doeth delight in fighting, braules, and diſſentions, wee ſhoulde greatly deſire peace, and wee thinke that wee can haue nothing to profite vs without it: the worldlings and carnal men, which wil counſel their neighbours how they ſhal take their eaſe, ſaying, Buy peace, and an houſe alreadie made. And in deed peace is a verie great bleſſing, which is much deſired, and chiefly when wee haue to doe with enemies, that wee thinke to be ſtronger then wee bee, and whome wee feare ſhoulde hurt vs, and with whome wee ſhoulde haue mortal warre. But oftentimes it happeneth, that willing to auoide one warre, wee enter into a more dangerous. Wee ſeeke peace with men, and we make our ſelues the enemies of God : for wee folowe vnlawful meanes : as did the children of Iſrael for to deliuer them ſelues from their enemies, and to cauſe warre to ceaſe, had their refuge, ſometimes to the Egyptians, ſometimes to the Aſſirians againſt the commaundement of God, who had forbidden them to make leagues with ſtrange peoples and idolaters. Woe to them which goe downe into Egypt for to ſeeke for helpe, and haue not enquired of the Lord. The Papiſtes are of that number which ſeeke vnlawful meanes : as is ſeene in al their deuotions in time of warre.

Exo.3.&34.12.
Deut.7.3.
Eſay.31.1.

And as touching particular matters betweene man and man, for to get peace and to ſtay his enemie, hee thinketh there is no way but to ſuppreſſe him, againſt that which Ieſus Chriſt teacheth vs, Reſiſt not euil, &c. But as wee commonly feele by experience, by ſuch kinde of doings the fire is kindeled more ſtrongly, and for one enimie wee get many, as alſo wee deſerue: for in ſo doing wee follow not the waies of peace, which is to pleaſe, & to be an acceptable ſeruice vnto God, who is the authour of al peace, and giueth it too them which giue themſelues to pleaſe him : as Solomon doeth pronounce it, ſaying,

Mat.53.39.
Rom.12.17.
1.Peter.3.9.

When the waies of a man pleaſe the Lord.&c. If then we woulde haue that God ſhoulde ſtay our enimies, and that he ſhould quiet them (as there is none but he, that can doe it) let vs looke ſo honeſtly to gouerne our ſelues, that we neither thinke, ſpeake, nor doe any thing that ſhoulde diſpleaſe him. The which we ſhal do, if wee feare him, and truſt in him folowing his commandements, Hee delighteth not in the ſtrength of an horſe: but the Lords delight is in them which feare him with lowlines of minde. For the Lord delighteth in his people: and helpeth the meekeharted. Let vs then proceed after this ſort, truſting in the Lorde, that wee may proteſt, Lord, I lift vp my ſoule vnto thee: in thee my God doe I truſt. Thus doing, our wayes ſhal pleaſe the Lorde, and ſo much as ſhalbee expedient, he wil quiet our enemies: as he hath done Laban towardes Iacob, and Eſau towards Iacob, Pharao towards Moyſes, Saule towards Dauid: euen as we may ſee by the holy hiſtories. Let vs then walke in humbleneſſe of minde, fearing our God, depending vppon him, and giuing our ſelues to obey him, then may we ſay, The Lorde

Pſa.147.10.11.&149.4.
Pſal.25.1.2.

is my

Pſa.27.1. is my light and my ſaluation: whom then ſhall I feare? the Lorde is
&.118.6. the ſtrength of my life: of whome then ſhal I be afrayde? The Lord
is on my ſide, therefore I will not feare what man can doe vnto me.
We muſt thus thinke, ſpeake, and woorke with patience. Caſt not
Heb.10.35. away your truſt the which hath great recompence of reward. Truely
36. ye haue neede of patience, that after hauing done the wil of God,
you may obtaine the promiſe.

8 *Better is a little with quietnes, then great reuenewes without equitie.*

Solomon willing to leade vs to ſobrietie, contentation, ſoftenes,
and goodnes, to reuerence and obedience towardes God, vntoo
peace, vnitie and amitie, towardes our neighbours, doeth ſet before
vs, that, *Better is a little with quietnes. &c.* Wherin he agreeth
Pro.15.16. wel with twoo former ſentences. But what care ſoeuer hee hath to
17. teach vs wel and to ſhew vs how we ſhal make our profit of the riches
that God giueth vs. Neuertheles, thoſe which thinke and ſay,
that we muſt turne our backe vnto God for to become rich, as doe
the couetous & vſurers, they which occupie with wicked trades, &
do pille, & extort, theeues & robbers & al kind of people, which haue
their hearts ſo much in the world, that they feare the earth ſhal faile
wil mocke at his doctriue, euen ſo will the gluttons, and drunkardes
which haue vnſatiable bellies, and al they which knowe not the prouidence
of God, and ſtay not themſelues therevpon, but thinke that
fortune which is nothing, doeth rule, and that riches doe happen to
thoſe whom fortune fauoureth, or which taketh care and haue cunning
to get them. Al ſuch kinde of people wil mock at this doctrine
Luk.16.14. as the Phariſees which were couetous, did mocke our Sauiour Ieſus
9. Chriſt, when he ſayd, Make you freendes with the riches of iniquitie.
But what contempt and mockage ſoeuer they vſe, the former
ſentences ceaſe not to be true, & we haue not only Solomon which
giueth witnes hereof, but before him Dauid alſo, A ſmal thinge that
Pſa.37.16. the righteous hath, is better then great riches of the vngodly. And
alſo experience hath ſhewed it, and doeth ſtill ſhewe it. Abraham
being the land of Canaan as a ſtranger, was not after outwarde ap-

pearance to be compared in worldly wealth with the Kings & Prin-
ces of the earth: but the people that he had in reſpect of them, was
better thẽ their great abundance was: for with this that he was cõ-
tented & had enough, & poſſeſſed in a ſounde conſcience, without
doing wrong to any man, that which hee had, hee had obteined the
great heauẽly riches, which he looked for. Cõtrarſly, the great men *Heb.11.10.*
of the earth aſpiring continually vnto greater riches, hauing neither
contentation nor enough, but hauing committed much wrong and
violence, & being at continual ſtriſe, in the ende periſhed moſt mi-
ſerably. Sodome is a feareful example thereof. Moyſes did ſo vnder- *Gene.18.20.*
ſtande it, when hee denied to bee the Sonne of Pharaos daugh- *& 19.24.*
ter. Elie and the widowe which nouriſhed him, did prooue it true. *Eze.16.49.*
For the reprouing and condemning of wicked riches, we may bring *Heb.11.24.*
examples out of Saint Luke. And for the time preſent we may ſee, *1.Kinges.17.*
if wee haue eies, that the poore which are contented with a little, *10.*
liue more at their eaſe then they which aſpire vnto greater riches. *Luk.12.&*
I ſay expreſly the poore which are contented: for the poore world- *16.*
lings and carnal minded men which thinke they ſerue for nothing
but to get, are in a moſt miſerable ſtate: becauſe that firſt of al they
are neuer contented, but doe murmure and grudge, euen againſt
God, who ſeeketh to kil them, as they holde in their fantaſie and
minde: as by impatience they dare ſpue out. Secondly, they liue in
an euil conſcience: for being diſcontented with their pouertie,
they perſwade themſelues that riches are common, and that they
may take them where they finde them: and in deede, where they
are not ſeene, they pille, poule and ſteale whatſoeuer they can meete
withall.

Thirdly, as they are in paines & torments in this world, euen ſo
after this life they ſhal remaine for euer: for they haue bin iniurious
both to God & to their neighbors, in that they haue not bin contẽ-
ted with the things which God hath giuen them, though they were
ſmal, but murmured & waited not vpõ his prouidẽce, & in this that
they haue rauiſhed the goods of their neighbours, againſt the com-
mandement of God, Thou ſhalt not ſteale: & againſt loue. Let vs thẽ
looke to folow our Lord, Take heed, & beware of couetouſnes: lay *Luke.12.15.*
not vp your treaſures on earth, but make you treaſures in heauen: *Math.6.19.*

And

2.Cor.8.7.& And Saint Paul agreeth herewith, teaching vs to help the neceſſitie *9.6.* of the poore. The Apoſtle likewiſe, ſaith. Let your conuerſation bee *Heb.13.5.* without couetouſnes, &c. Thus doing, wee ſhal poſſeſſe our goods in righteouſnes, the which, as concerning our preſent purpoſe, conſiſteth in this, that we put our truſt in the prouidẽce of God, & that we be good & faithful ſtewards of the riches that he hath committed vnto vs. In this maner when wee ſhal haue but a little after the feeling of the fleſhe, it ſhal better profite, then if wee did otherwiſe poſſeſſe great wealth. For they that are riche without righteouſnes and equitie, ſhal periſhe with their goods. When Solo- *Mar.10.22.* mon ſpeaketh thus, Hee condemneth not abſolutely great reuenews, *23.* but thoſe which are wickedly gotten & poſſeſſed, which conſiſteth, touching the preſent matter, in diſtruſt of the prouidence *1.Timo.6.9.* of God, in vnſatiable couetouſneſſe, and in contempt of the poore.

9 *The heart of man purpoſeth his way: but the Lord doeth direct his ſteppes.*

As we beleeue that God hath created the heauen and the earth, the ſea, and al the contents in them, euen ſo ought wee to holde for certaine, that hee gouerneth al, & that al is diſpoſed & gouerned by his prouidence, & that al is done by his counſel & ordinance, & this that which we daily confeſſe, when we ſay, I beleeue in God the Father almightie, maker of heauen & of earth. For confeſſing him to be Almightie, we wil not only ſay, that hee hath the power without exerciſing it, but that he hath al creatures in his hand and ſubiectiõ, that he diſpoſeth al creatures by his prouidẽce, gouerneth the world by his wil, & guideth whatſoeuer is done after, as beſt pleaſeth him: for wee muſt not imagine, that the power of God is ydle: but wee muſt vnderſtande further: to wit, that hee is alwayes at woorke, and that nothing is done but by him, or with his leaue, and with his ordinance. The Scripture doeth giue it ſo to vnderſtande in *Pſa.33.6.&* diuers places. The heauens were made by the woorde of the *104.24.* Lorde. O Lorde, howe wonderful are thy woorkes! My Father *Iohn.5.17.* woorketh hitherto, and I woorke alſo. Turne you vnto the liuing *Act.14.15.* GOD, who hath made both heauen and earth, &c. Hee giueth

life

ſife and breath vnto al, &c. Hee which planteth, and hee which watereth is nothing: but God which giueth increaſe. There is one God which worketh al things in al men. It is God that woorketh in you both the wil and the deede, euen of his good wil. And foraſmuche as it is God which exerciſeth his power, neuer ceaſing from woorking, but dooing al thinges as ſeemeth him good both in heauen and in earth: as Dauid doeth confeſſe it, I knowe that the Lorde is greate: The Lorde hath done al thinges according to his wil, both in heauen and in earth: let vs take heede to attribute any thing to our ſelues, as if of our ſelues wee had ſome power: but in al humblenes, let vs confeſſe and acknowledge, Lorde I knowe, that the way of man is not in him ſelfe, neyther is it in man to walke and to directe his ſteppes. For wee muſt acknowledge, as the trueth is, that wee are altogether in the handes of GOD, and that hee diſpoſeth of vs, againſt al our humane and carnall thoughtes, that wee ſhoulde not preſume to aſſure our ſelues in our eſtate, allowing it good of our ſelues, for God can chaunge it immediately, and doe with it as hee hath ordeined in his eternal counſel, the which ought neceſſarily to bee fulfilled, and can not be altered.

1. Cor. 3. 7. & 12. 6.
Phi. 2. 13.
Pſa. 135. 6.
Iere. 10. 23.

Notwithſtanding, let vs take heed from falling into this falſe opinion and errour, for to thinke, or to ſay, that we haue nothing to doe, & to meddle, to think, to counſel & take aduiſe how we ſhould gouerne them our ſelues, ſeeing that it is neceſſarie that al muſt happen as God hath ordeined frō euerlaſting. For as it is great fooliſhneſſe and ouerboldneſſe to take in hande any woorke without the Lorde, by whoſe gouernment wee are al ruled: euen ſo is it great beaſtlineſſe and blockiſhneſſe, for to eſteeme that the prouidence of God ſhoulde ſtoppe and hinder vs that wee ſhoulde not conſult and deliberate vpon our affayres, and ſhoulde not labour to doe them with good diſcretion. And therfore, as here before, in the firſt verſe, hee hath mocked at the fooliſhnes and arrogancie of thoſe which enterpriſe of them ſelues: euen ſo nowe hee reprooueth the beaſtlines and blockiſhnes of thoſe which think that the prouidēce of God hindereth vs to counſel howe wee ſhoulde rule our ſelues in our buſines, when hee ſaieth, *The heart of man purpoſeth his way, &c.* When he thus ſpeaketh, hee doeth ſhew vs that the eternal ordinances of God doe not hinder vs, but that wee ſhoulde looke vppon his wil to prouide for our ſelues, and to rule al our actions. Now this is not without ſome manifeſt reaſon: for hee which hath bounded and limitted our life, hath alſo therewith giuen a carefulnes, and hath fenced vs with helpes & meanes to preſerue the ſame. He hath alſo made vs to foreſee dangers: and to the end that they ſhoulde not oppreſſe vs without warning, hee hath furniſhed vs with remedies. Wee may nowe ſee what belongeth to our office: to wit, if God hath committed the charge vnto vs to preſerue our life, let vs keepe it: If hee doeth offer vs helpes and ſuccours, let vs vſe them: If he doeth ſhewe vs of the dangers, let vs not caſt our ſelues at aduentures, and without conſideration: If hee furniſhe vs with remedies, let vs not deſpiſe them. Let vs not then folowe theſe dreamers which doe not conſider howe the Lorde hath inſpired and breathed the knowledge of counſelling and taking heede, whereby they ſerue the prouidence of God, and vnto the conſeruation of our owne life: as contrarily, by contempt and blockiſhnes they drawe and cal vpon them the plagues which the Lord God hath ordeined for them. For wee ſhal ſee that a man which is careful to conſult and deliberate, ſhal deliuer him ſelfe from preſent and neere dangers, and the fooliſh and negligent for want of conſideration and counſel, ſhal periſhe. And this becauſe that fooliſhneſſe and wiſedome are inſtrumentes of Gods prouidence, aſwel for one parte as for the other: For this cauſe God hath hidden from vs thinges to come, that wee ſhoulde withſtande them, as in aduentures that men looke for, not knowing what ſhal be the ende, and that wee ſhould not ceaſe to ſet againſt them the remedies prepared, till wee be come vnto the marke, or that our care ſerueth vs to no profite. Then the prouidence of God ought not to hinder vs, but that wee ſhoulde doe our office, and prouide for our ſelues. Phi.2.13. 12. Beholde, Saint Paule ſaieth wel, that God worketh both the will, and the deede in vs, and yet hee ceaſeth not to exhort vs to worke out our ſaluation.

10 *A diuine ſentence ſhalbe in the lippes of the King: his mouth ſhal not tranſgreſſe in iudgement.*

Diuination is a thing verie abhominable before God, as the ſcripture doeth ſhew vs: firſt of al, when it is commanded that the diuiners ſhal be put to death. Secondly, when Iſrael is praiſed for this, that they had no ſoothſaying nor diuining. Thirdly, when it is forbidden to aske counſel at the ſoothſayers. Fourthly, when amongſt the abhominations, for the which the people of Iſrael prouoked the wrath of God, it is ſaid, that they were giuen to folow ſoothſayers. Fifthly, when the Prophets are careful to turn the people away from the ſoothſayers: yet would Solomon haue that diuination ſhould be in the kings lips. Heere he deſireth nothing againſt the law of the Lord, but hee ſpeaketh by a ſimilitude, & would that as the Diuines doe promiſe them ſelues that they are inſpired from God, & that they perſuade men to beleeue that they giue a true and certaine anſwere, as if God had reuealed & ſpake by their mouths: euen ſo, that kinges and gouernours of the earth ſhoulde bee ſo inſtructed in the lawe of the Lorde, that according thereunto they ſhoulde conſult, purpoſe and counſel to doe iuſtice and iudgement, and ſhoulde giue them ſelues to pronounce righteous and true ſentences, and to publiſh holie decrees & ordinances: in ſuch wiſe, that for the aduancement of the glorie and honour of God, and for the profite and ſaluation of the people, they ſhoulde be in ſo great eſtimation towards the children of God, as were the Diuiners amongſt the ſuperſtitious and idolaters. Solomon doeth expounde him ſelfe, when hee addeth, *His mouth ſhal not tranſgreſſe in iudgement.* For hee declareth that hee woulde haue the diuination ſuche, that the Kinges ſhoulde neuer ſpeake but thinges that are right, and iuſt. Wherein he ſheweth not, what are the great men of the earth, but what they ought to be in their wordes, and ſo conſequently in their thoughtes and affections of their heartes, from which the wordes doe come. Wherein alſo hee giueth vs to vnderſtande, that they which can not diuine, doe ſtraye from equitie, and conſequently, are not worthie to bee in authoritie and gouernment: yet, it is not to ſay, that their ſubiectes ſhould not giue them honour and obedience in whatſoeuer they offend not againſt God, And they muſt pray for their Superiours. Likewiſe, let this ſentence ſerue vs to exhorte vs to leade ſo holy a life, that wee may pleaſe the Lorde, and that wee take good heede from prouoking him to

Leui.20.27.
Num.23.
Deut.18.11.
2.Kin.17.17.

Rom.13.1.5.
1.Pet.2.13.
1.Tim.2.1.

anger by our wickedneſſes: otherwiſe wee ſhould be worthie that hee ſhoulde remooue and take away from vs ſuche Princes & Gouernours as haue diuination: as hee hath threatened his people of Iſrael, and hath executed it, when hee gaue them Kings, Gouernors, and Prieſtes, vnder whom al thinges were corrupted, and when he made them ſubiect vnto idolatrous Kings. *Eſa.3.2.*

11 *A true waight and ballaunce are of the Lorde: all the waights of the bagge are his worke.*

The Kinges, Princes and Lordes of the earth, doe ordeine waights and meaſures in their countries, and according to their ordinances muſt the Merchants ſel and buy their marchandizes, without any deceit or guile. And to the ende that the ſame may bee the better obſerued, the Magiſtrates, Iudges and Superiours ought to be watchful that the waights, and meaſures ſhould be knowne of al men: they ought alſo to be vigilant and take diligent heede to this, that they which ſel, keepe not two kindes of waights, & two kindes of meaſures. Moyſes was as the Prince and Gouernour of the people, and it is to him that God ſpeaketh that hee ſhoulde cauſe it to bee obſerued. Yee ſhal haue a iuſt balance, and iuſt waightes, &c. *Leui.19.35.* Thou ſhalt not haue in thy bagge twoo maner of waightes. *Deut.25.13* Nowe foraſmuch as God hath commanded iuſt and true waights, and that hee abhorreth the contrarie, it foloweth wel, that they which cauſe iuſt waightes to bee kept, and alſo they which ſel them, doe the woorke of God: for hee commaundeth nothing but that hee him ſelfe ſhoulde doe. Solomon did ſo meane, as hee ſheweth when he ſaith, *A true waight and Ballance, &c.* Hee ſheweth alſo that the falſe ſellers and they which ſuffer them, doe falſifie the woorke of the Lorde God, and ſo muche as in them lyeth, doe make him a falſe God: and ſo not onely they deceiue their neighbours, but alſo they labour to make God guiltie of great enormities: for ſuche ſale is abhominable, as the places before alledged doe ſhewe it. And Micheas, Are not the treaſures of wickedneſſe *Mich.6.1.* yet in thy houſe? Shall I purge awaye the falſe Ballaunce? &c. *11.*

Suche ſellers alſo woorke the woorke of the Deuil, and doe ſerue him, for GOD muſt needes be ſerued, otherwiſe wee ſerue the Deuil. Furthermore let vs note, that Solomon doeth ſet vs downe heere one kinde of Ciuil ordinances, for to ſhewe vs that al ſuche as repugne not the worde, and are made for to mainteine good order in political gouernment, are of God and not of men. Finally, wee are heere admoniſhed that God loueth the diuiſion of goods of the world, which are done without deceit: for if al things were common, wee ſhoulde not neede balances nor waightes.

12. *It is abhomination vnto kinges to commit wickednes: for the throne is eſtabliſhed by iuſtice.*

The holie Ghoſt hath bene verie careful and diligent to ſhewe vnto Kings, Princes, & gouernors of the earth their leſſon: as wee may ſee by the Scripture. Moreouer, Prouide thou among al the people, men of courage, fearing God, men dealing truely, hating couetouſneſſe: and appoint ſuche ouer them, to bee rulers, &c. And when hee ſhall ſit vpon the throne of his kingdome, then ſhal hee write him this lawe repeated in a booke, by the Prieſtes of the Leuites. And now by Solomon hee inſtructeth them, ſaying, *It is an abhomination vnto Kings, to commit wickednes, &c.* For Solomon doeth not pronounce that which the Lordes of the earth daily doe, as experience doeth ſhewe it from al ages, for the moſt parte they haue bin & are giuen to great vngentlenes & crueltie: but he ſheweth them what they muſt do for to be truely kings, and ſtrongly to ſtabliſh their kingdome, for to reigne and to rule in peace, not only of this world, but in ioy and reſt of conſcience. Firſt of al, hee woulde haue the Kings and Rulers of the earth to abhorre wickedneſſe: that is, foraſmuche as they are Lieutenantes of the holie and pure God, which hateth al wickedneſſe, they ought to eſteeme them ſelues abhominable, and to be diſpleaſed with them ſelues, if they bee turned backe from pureneſſe and holineſſe, and if they ſhoulde bee giuen to thinke, ſay or doe, any wicked thing: ſo that they might ſay with Dauid, I abhorre al the wayes of falſehood. Againe, And I hate al falſe wayes. The Lorde would haue vs doe ſo: I hate falſehoode and abhorre it, but thy lawe doe I

Exo.18.21.
Deut.17.18.
Pſa.2.10.
& 58.2.&
82.3.
2.Chro.19.6

Pſ.119.104.
&.128.163.
Amos.5.15

loue, that is to hate the euil, and loue the good. And becauſe that men refuſe to obey him, hee vſeth great threateninges and com- Pſal.2.2. & 82.2. Eſai.1.22. 23. plaintes, and againſt the Rulers of the worlde. Nowe as the Kings ought to abhorre to bee giuen vnto wickedneſſe: euen ſo ought they to counte their ſubiectes which commit wickedneſſe, and wil not ceaſe, but doe delight to paſſe their time therein, and hate them which labour to withdrawe them from it, and ought to ſhew forth in deede that they hate and abhorre them. The which they ſhal doe, if they ridde both their houſes and countries of ſuche people, in puniſhing and rooting them out as they deſerue, & as God hath commaunded it. The which Dauid hath wel vnderſtood: for this cauſe, for to giue a leſſon vnto Kinges, hee maketh a goodly prote- Pſal. 101.2. ſtation. Some good Kings (but few in number) haue ſolowed Dauid: and ſo their throne was ſtabliſhed for their time: as the hiſtories do ſhew it: though ſome of them haue born off great ſtormes: as Dauid, Ioſias, Ezechiel. Notwithſtãding, becauſe that in the feare of the Lord they haue bene turned away from wickedneſſe, and ſo much as they haue bene able, haue rooted it out of their dominion, and haue ſolowed righteouſnes in gouerning both them ſelues and their ſubiectes rightly, they haue ouercome al dangers, and haue reigned in peace: and ſo they haue tried that to be true, which Solomon ſaieth, *For the Throne is ſtabliſhed by iuſtice.* The which we muſt not vnderſtande onely of Kinges, but alſo of al them which haue any authoritie, rule and gouernment: as of fathers and mothers, of maiſters and dames. This is yet not to ſay, that Kinges abhorring wickednes, ſhoulde tende to ſtabliſhe their throne, for to triumph and proſper after a worldly ſorte, but for to ſerue the glorie of God which doeth exalt them, and for to make their ſubiects liue in peace vnder the feare of the Lorde. And as Kinges haue here their leſſon, euen ſo alſo haue cloſely the ſubiectes, which deſire the proſperitie of their Kinges: that is, that it ſufficeth not to crye, God ſaue the King, but wee muſt abſtaine from al wickednes, and ſolowe righteouſnes: otherwiſe wee procure the ouerthrowe of the Throne,

13 *Righteous lippes are the delight of Kings, and the King loueth him that ſpeaketh right thinges.*

Hee continueth ſtil in giuing inſtruction to Kings, and woulde haue that he ſhould not delight to heare ieſters, flatterers, liers, and ſlaunderers, and that they ſhoulde not ſuffer vnder them, corrupt Iudges and Magiſtrates, which pronounce either for hatred, or for fauour, for loue, or for accepting of perſons, falſe iudgements, and wicked ſentences, and harde ordinances: but that they ſhoulde haue about them, and intertaine in their houſes and Courtes graue men, wiſe & faithful men, and that they ſhoulde delight and reioyce in the wordes of their lippes and mouthes which are very profitable and neceſſarie: for of ſuch men yee ſhal heare nothing but iuſt and righteous words, according as their hearts and mindes are directed: and that in their countries & dominions & Lordſhips, they ſhould be careful to place ſuch Iudges, Magiſtrates and Officers, not prouiding officers for men, but offices of fit & ſufficiẽt perſons, for to exerciſe rightly the iudgements of God, & to pronounce right things and ſentences, and to make iuſt and righteous ordinaunces for to guide and to mainteine the people committed vnto them, in true religion, in the feare of the Lord, and in the reuerence of his word, by the which their ſubiectes doe learne to liue in peace and loue.

14 *The wrath of a King is as meſſengers of death: but a wiſe man wil pacifie it.*

Solomon doeth not heere teach Kings and Rulers of the earth
to be furious and cruel, as was Pharao towardes the children of Iſ-
rael: Saule towardes Dauid, and towardes Abimelech the Prieſt in *1.Sam.22.*
Nob: Nabuchadnezer towards Sidracke, Miſacke, & Abednago, and *16.*
towardes Daniel: Herod towardes Saint Iohn Baptiſt: & as are *Dan.3.19.*
now the great Lordes of the earth towardes the faithful: Hee alſo *& 6.16.*
doeth not reprooue their wrath, which they ought to vſe againſt *Exo.2.12.*
the wicked, as did Moſes ſmiting the Egyptian: and againſt three *& 32.27.*
thouſande men: Ioſua againſt the inhabitants of the lande of pro- *Rom.13.4.*
miſe: and as al Rulers ought to doe againſt Rebelles: But when *1.Pet.2.14*
hee compareth the wrath of Kinges vnto meſſengers of death, hee
ſheweth firſt of al, that the Kinges ought not to be merciful & gen-
tle towards the wicked, as was Elie towards his childrẽ, & as rulers *1.Sam.2.23.*

commonly : wherevpon is come to paſſe as it is ſaide, The rent gatherers haue ſpared the Crowes & pardoned them : but they afflict and torment the pigions: and alſo the great theeues do eſcape, & the litle picke purſes are hanged: but they muſt do iuſtice in wrath, and not let the wicked eſcape from their hands without puniſhment for that they haue deſerued. *Rom.13.4.* Let the Kings be careful & diligẽt to weaken the wicked, & to take from thẽ al reſiſtance, & that they may haue no power to be reuenged: as Solomon doth wel teach it, when he is not contented to ſay, the meſſenger of death ſingularly : but in the plural number, as *Meſſengers.* For a man which hath but a litle heart, wil not ſuffer him ſelfe to bee beaten of a man alone, but if diuers doe aſſayle him, howe valiant ſoeuer hee is, hee can not withſtande, neither wil he trie to reuenge him ſelfe. Secondly, hee ſheweth to the ſubiectes, that foraſmuch as death is naturally fearful, therefore they ought to feare for committing any fault, wherby they ſhoulde prouoke the wrath of their Superiours againſt them. And not onely ſo : but alſo that they ought to labour to quiet the wrath of their ſuperiors, though they haue not prouoked it through their fault. And to doe it wel, they muſt be wiſe : as Solomon doth ſignifie here, when hee ſaith, *But a wiſe man wil pacifie it.* Hee ſheweth alſo to Kings what kinde of people they ought to haue about them, & to whom they muſt giue eare, for to beleeue & folow their counſels. Furthermore, foraſmuch as the wiſe do pacifie wrath, it foloweth, that fooles doe ſtil mainteine it. *Rom.13.1.* Nowe the wiſedome which we muſt vſe for to pacifie wrath and anger of Kings, is to be giuen to doe wel, and to giue them the honour and obedience that we owe them. I ſay expreſly, that wee owe them : for wee muſt not ſeeke the fauour of Kings by vnlawful meanes, as doe flatterers : but we muſt rather ſuſtaine and ſuffer the wrath of Kings, then to commit any thing that is againſt wiſedome, which is taught vs by the worde, in folowing the cuſtome and patience of Sidracke, Miſacke and Abednago : for wee muſt rather obey God, and honour and reuerence him, then men how great ſoeuer they be.

15 *In the light of the Kings countenance is life : & his fauour is as a cloud of the latter raine.*

As in the firſt parte of the former ſentence hee hath ſhewed to kings and rulers of the earth, what they ought to bee towardes the wicked, euen ſo in this ſentence hee ſheweth howe they ſhoulde behaue themſelues towardes the good, that is, that they ſhould be ſo ſweete, ſo gentle, ſo gracious & fauourable, that the good ſhould feele themſelues quickned, and reſtored & preſerued from hurt and detriment, from moleſtation and trouble, from ruine and deſtruction, and that they ſhoulde not liue in ſorrowe and languiſhing, but floriſhingly & in their proſperitie, and to be in peace and reſt, in ioy and pleaſure. Solomon ſignifieth theſe things by the *light of the kinges countenance*, whereunto hee attributeth life, of the which wee make little account, but thinke to bee in death, except wee inioy the former bleſſings: for as by night in darkeneſſe though wee liue, yet if they ſhoulde continue, and that we had no day, but were depriued from the brightneſſe of the Sunne, wee ſhoulde pyne away, and thinke our ſelues miſerable, and had much rather die, and alſo wee cal ſuch a life a very death: euen ſo when the good and ſimple, the righteous, and innocent, haue ſtraight and ſharpe, cruel, and tyrannous rulers, becauſe that vnder ſuche rulers they are il handeled, though they liue: yet for the miſeries, wronges and violences which they ſuffer, they languiſh and pine away, and are as it were in death. Contrarily, as when the Sunne ſhineth, and that wee haue the fruition of his brightneſſe, we liue in ioy and delight: euen ſo when princes doe ſhewe vnto the good, their fauour and gentleneſſe, they are at eaſe, and leade a ioyful life. Hee ſignifieth alſo theſe thinges, *by his fauour*: the which hee compareth vnto a cloude of latter raine. For as ſuch a raine doeth ripen the corne, and refreſheth the reapers, and maketh them glad, keeping them from thirſt: euen ſo the fauour of kings, is very pleſant and profitable vnto the good and innocent.

16 *Howe much better is it to get wiſedome then golde? and to get vnderſtanding, is more too bee deſired then ſiluer.*

When wee followe our natural inclination, which is corrupted and vitious, we thinke we proceede rightly, and that wee tende to make our profite for to keepe vs from hurt, and to mainteine vs in good eſtate.

Now our nature doth leade vs after couetouſneſſe: for when we yeelde vnto it, we praiſe aboue al thinges the worldly and temporall riches, and doe nothing eſteeme whatſoeuer wee thinke to ſtoppe vs, from atteining vnto the fruition & poſſeſsion of them, we turne our backes to God, we deſpiſe al religion, we forget al charitie, wee forſake all faithfulneſſe and trueth: wee make our ſelues beleeue that in this maner wee ſhal greatly profite, and that we ſhal builde a faire houſe, and that wee ſhal gather riches for to liue in honour, and reputation, for to enioy our eaſe and worldly pleaſures, and to bee in ioy, and at reſt, and that thus wee may liue a long time, and in good eſtate, and great proſperitie. But in this opinion wee are deceiued: as Solomon doeth ſhewe vs. And not content herewith, hee reiterateth and repeateth againe the ſame woordes, when hee ſaith,

Pro.2.1. & 3.13.& 4.4. & 8.10.

Howe much better, &c. Hee vſeth repetitions, knowing what is the nature of man, and that it cannot but very hardly bee changed. And the time is but loſt that is beſtowed about many: for the couetous wherewith the worlde is filled, hearing theſe wordes, doe nothing but mocke thereat, and doe preferre the goods of the worlde, before al ſpiritual graces, yea euen God: and haue no other God but their riches: albeit that with mouth and ceremonies of great apparance, they make profeſsion to knowe God. And as they doe, ſo doe they teache their children, to doe the like. The couetous are not alone which deſpiſe this inſtruction, but with them, are thoſe which haue their heartes more giuen vnto worldly and carnall thinges, then to GOD: as are the ambitious and voluptuous.

17 *The path of the righteous is to decline from euill: and he keepeth his ſoule, that keepeth his way.*

There is none but naturally doeth think himſelfe righteous: and euen the diſſolute and wanton, the moſt wicked and vngodly, are the moſt hardie to boaſt them ſelues that they are honeſt men.

And becauſe they are ſo arrogant and preſumptuous, therefore they are honeſt men. But becauſe they are ſo arrogant and preſumptuous, they wel deſerue to bee reprooued, and to bee diſprooued, and to bee ſaide vnto, Your wicked life which is giuen vnto euill, and therein doeth delight, is a very true argument that there is no righteouſneſſe in you. Solomon doth wel ſhew this ſame cloſely, when he ſaith, *The path,&c*, therewith he giueth vs a certaine proofe for to aſſure vs whether wee be righteous or no: to wit, if our conuerſation and manners are ſuche in deede, as that wee flie backe from al wickedneſſe. To helpe vs heerein, wee haue neede of the feare of the Lorde and of wiſedome, as Solomon hath ſhewed heeretofore. And therefore becauſe it is not enough to walke wiſely, in the feare of the Lorde, and to deſiſt from euil, as Dauid doeth teach it, promiſing the ſame, when hee addeth, *And hee that keepeth his ſoule &c.* And ſheweth that wee ought to giue our ſelues vnto goodneſſe, when he ſpeaketh of keeping his way. The which cannot bee doone but by reſiſting euil with goodneſſe.

Pro.4.26.27 & 8.13.& 14.2.16.
Pſal.34.13.

18 *Pride goeth before deſtruction, and an high minde before the fall.*

There is none which deſireth or wiſheth his deſtruction, and ouerthrowe: but wee al tende vnto the conuerſation and maintenance of our ſelues, and of our goods. And to doe the ſame, wee are al blinde, and cannot tel howe wee ſhoulde proceede therein, except wee bee guided by their worde: for after our humane and carnall ſenſe, we are led for to magnifie and praiſe ourſelues, and wee think that in this manner wee ſhal doe our buſineſſe wel, and that we ſhal proſper. But following ſuch an opinion and fantaſie, and holding ſuch trade we deceiue our ſelues: for in ſteed of proſpering, we go to deſtruction & decay. Solomon doth ſo declare it vnto vs, when hee ſaith, *Pride goeth,&c.* Adã hath wel proued it, when he tooke vpon him ſelfe ſo muche that hee woulde be like vnto GOD, for to knowe both good and euil, to the ende that hee might make his worke and buſineſſe to proſper, in ſteede of being like vnto GOD, hee made himſelfe the ſlaue of the Diuel: in ſteed of proſpering, hee ſought his woe, and hath brought both himſelfe and all his poſteritie to deſtruction. Wee might bring innumerable perſons which haue prooued that pride goeth before deſtruction, as Solomon doth pronounce, not once, but twiſe: for hee addeth, and *an high mind, &c.* Hee vſeth Repetition, the which ſerueth better to imprint the doctrine in our mindes and vnderſtanding, and that wee ſhould bee leſſe excuſable, if wee doe not make our profite of the doctrine, And alſo wee are taught, that the holy Ghoſt is very diligent and careful to teache vs. Therefore let vs not deſpiſe this diligence and care: and foraſmuch as wee deſire to auoide deſtruction, let vs take heede to flie pride, the which lyeth not onely in our outwarde conuerſation, but chiefly in the inwarde affections: as Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when hee calleth it *an high minde*. An high, braue, and magnifical conuerſation, is not properly pride, but the fruite thereof. Therefore to flie pride, let vs refourme our affections, and let vs not onely become of an humble and lowly behauiour, but chiefly of an humble minde. Thus doing, wee ſhal not be beaten downe, but raiſed vp: for whoſoeuer humbleth himſelfe, ſhalbe exalted, not of men, but by God, and ſo the exaltation ſhalbe eternal. And foraſmuch as pride doeth goe before deſtruction, if wee bee conſtrained to ſuffer ſome deſtruction, let vs confeſſe wee haue not walked in humilitie, but that pride hath takē & beaten vs down. Therfore let vs think that they are our owne cogitations & affections which deſtroy vs, and not the viſible aduerſaries, nor the accidens which happen without hauing forſeene them.

Mat.11.29.
Phi.2.3.
1.Pet.5.5.

19 *Better it is to be of an humble mind with the lowly, then to deuide the ſpoiles with the proude.*

It is farre better to ſubmit our ſelues willingly vnto the yoke of the Lorde, and to beare the croſſe, patiently to ſuffer al afflictions with the people and children of God in acknowledging and confeſſing our faultes and ſinnes, than to poſſeſſe abundance of temporal riches, and to bee partakers with the proude and high minded. In this ſort, wee ſhal bee companions and felowes of Abraham and other Patriarkes, of Moſes, of the Prophetes, made like vnto Ieſus

Chriſt, and followers of the Apoſtles. The Croſſe and afflictions are ſignified vnto vs by an *humble minde*. And to the ende that when they come wee may followe this admonition, Dearely beloued, thinke it not ſtrange concerning the firy tryal, which is among you, to prooue you, as though ſome ſtrange thing were come vnto you. 1.Pet.4.12. Solomon doeth ſhewe vs that wee are not alone, but that we haue ſome, whoſe example wee may follow and learne, when hee ſaith, *with the lowly*. And therewith hee woulde haue vs to haue compaſſion of the afflicted, ready to ſuffer all kinde of affliction with them, in folowing the Hebrewes. To whom the Apoſtle giueth witneſſe, Heb.10.32. Call to minde the dayes that are paſt, in the which, after yee had receiued light, yee indured a great fight in afflictions &c. The poſſeſſion of great riches, is ſignified by *diuiding the ſpoiles with the proude*. Wherein is marked the euil conſcience and alſo the violence of the proude, and heere is ſhewed vs that they are ſo proude and arrogant, that they permit themſelues to liue of ſpoile, and haue no pitie of the affliction of the humble. Of ſuch preſumption followeth deſtruction: and contrarily, foraſmuche as God accepteth an humble minde, there followeth reſtoring & life for euer. Let vs then conclude, that it is better to be of an humble minde with the lowly, then to diuide the ſpoyles with the proude.

20 *Hee that is wiſe in his buſineſſe, ſhall finde good: and hee that truſteth in the Lord, he is bleſſed.*

Albeit that wee muſt referre our ſelues altogether vnto the prouidence of God, and that we can haue nothing but thereby, and that wee muſt haue al things of his hande, and that nothing doeth come to vs but by the pure grace & liberality of our God, without being lawful for vs to thinke or ſay, that wee may obteine ſome thing by our wiſedome and cunning, by our care and labour, for it is the bleſſing of the Lorde which maketh men riche, Pro.10.22. for this cauſe alſo Dauid doeth admoniſhe vs, Truſt thou in the Lorde, &c. Pſa.37.3.& 127.1. Except the Lord builde the houſe, their labour is but loſt that builde it: yet this is not to ſay, that wee muſt bee ſlouthful, and not to doe ſomething looking that God ſhoulde feede vs. Euen before that man had ſinned, God put him into the garden of Eden for to dreſſe it, and to keepe it,and after his fal and offence hee laide paine vpon him, and *Gen.2.15.* woulde that man ſhoulde eate his breade in the ſweate of his face: *& 3.17* And Dauid alloweth greatly trauel and labour. And wee ſee that *Pſal.128.2.* men neuer ceaſſe to worke in the worlde,and ſtill to ſpend the time in working for to feede both men and beaſtes: and yet, wee muſt confeſſe that God prouideth for al, and feedeth them, and mainteineth them. Our Lorde doth teache it vs,commanding vs to aske *Pſal.104.14.* our daily bread of God,in ſaying, Giue vs this day our daily bread: *15.27.28* & foraſmuch as he forbideth vs to care for clothes or foode: there- *Mat.6.11.25.* fore let vs awaite vpon the prouidence of God,and let vs wholy depende therevpon,and not in ſlouth,and idleneſſe : for in ſo doing, wee ſhalbe worthie to want: but let vs bee occupied in care and diligence euery one after his vocation, committing our worke vn- *Pro.6.10.11.* to the Lord,and he will make that our labour ſhall not bee vnfruit- *& 10.4.* ful,but ſhal bring profite according as it hath beene woont in time *& 13.4.* paſt,and as he hath promiſed to the children of Iſrael,by Moſes and by his Prophets:and alſo experience teacheth it.For this cauſe Solomon douteth not to ſay,that hee which is wiſe and diligent in his buſineſſe,ſhal finde good : as he hath ſaide. And when he admoni- *Pro.10.3.4* ſheth vs to waite vpon the prouidence of God, ſaying, *5.& 12.11.* *And hee that truſteth in the Lorde,he is bleſſed.* And ſith that wee muſt worke,we muſt not looke vnto our cunning and labour, but muſt aſſure our ſelues of the goodneſſe of the Lorde, being certified that he wil make our worke to proſper enough,for to mainteine & feed both vs & our family,ſo much as ſhalbe neceſſary for vs:he wil do this firſt of al in this worlde,and finally wil cauſe vs to finde euerlaſting riches in the kingdome of heauen : as Solomon doeth ſignifie, calling him bleſſed which truſteth in the Lorde: for if God did vs but good heere in this worlde,wee ſhould be in like degree, either with the beaſtes or with the wicked: and ſo we ſhould not be bleſſed. And alſo the truſt that the faithful haue in the Lorde,ought not to be ſtaied vpon things of this world, where wee haue no abiding citie, but ought to bee lifted vp,aboue al heauens, wee muſt follow the faith of our father Abraham and of other holy Patriarkes. *Heb.11.9* Nowe foraſmuche as in working wee muſt truſt in the Lorde, and we cannot do it, except wee giue our heartes vnto his worde, the which doeth ſhewe vs what wee haue to doe, and doeth guide and leade vs in whatſoeuer wee haue to doe, therefore it followeth that the worde of the Lorde is chiefe part of our worke. And alſo the worde that we haue expounded, *buſineſſe*, ſignifieth, word: after the which ſignification, wee might giue an other ſenſe vnto this ſentence, and ſay, hee that is attentiue vnto the worde, ſhal find good. This ſenſe heere is diuers and not contrary, but true agreeing vnto the promiſes that God hath made to them which ſhal ſubmit them ſelues vnto his worde, by faith and repentance. Moreouer, ſith that in working wee muſt truſt in God, being certified that hee wil not deceiue vs, but wil fulfil his promiſe, making vs to finde good, and bleſſing vs, it followeth that we are taught howe wee ſhoulde followe the faithfulneſſe of our God, and in no wiſe to labour too diſguiſe and counterfaite our buſineſſe and our worke, for to beguile and deceiue our neighbours, otherwiſe wee ſhoulde not haue our truſt in the Lorde, but in deceit, whereby wee might draw the ſubſtance of our neighbours vnto vs, and in this manner we ſhould deſerue that our labour ſhoulde periſh in ſmoke, and that wee ſhoulde want al goods. Therefore if wee wil be partakers of the promiſes conteined in this ſentence, let vs proceede in doing of our worke and buſineſſe with al fidelitie and trueth, following the counſel of Dauid: Put not your truſt in oppreſſiō nor in robbery: be not vaine: *Pſal.62.10.* If riches increaſe, ſet not your heart theron. Finally, let vs note that Solomon doeth not attribute riches vnto workes, but vnto faith: though goods doe followe workes.

21 *The wiſe in heart ſhalbe called prudent: and the ſweetneſſe of the lippes ſhall increaſe doctrine.*

Wee finde very fewe people which delight to bee eſteemed or called fooles, ignorant or blockiſh, but al deſire to bee praiſed and commended as wiſe, learned, and diſcrete. Nowe for to obteine this reputation and praiſe, wee labour to doe or ſay ſome thinges which are eſteemed of the worlde, and which doe rauiſhe the mindes of men into admiration and wooonderment for the newneſſe and ſtrangeneſſe thereof, or for the faire ſhewe, or temporal profite that is receiued of it, or is loked of it. In the meane while God is forgotten, and his worde deſpiſed, the which onely is our true wiſdome and prudence, when our hearte is ſet therevpon, when we truely loue it, and that with a ſounde and perfect affection, wee frame our manners after that which it teacheth vs. If wee vſe our ſelues thus, God wil giue vs this grace, that for the wiſdome of our heartes, we ſhal obteine reputation and praiſe of prudence and vnderſtanding: Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee ſaith, *The wiſe in heart ſhalbe called prudent.* And becauſe that ſome might haue asked, whereby ſhal wee knowe a wiſe man in heart, that we may truely call him prudent or learned: ſeeing that man ſeeth but the face, and there is none but God which knoweth and ſearcheth the heartes. I anſwere, that the wiſedome of the hearte is ſhewed foorth in the lippes, and ſweete and gentle wordes, by exhorting our neighbours to learne, and giueth them a deſire to growe and increaſe in doctrine, and to become more and more learned. Solomon doth giue it vs ſo to vnderſtande, when he ſaith, *and the ſweetneſſe of the lippes ſhal increaſe doctrine.* Heere hee nameth nothing but the lips, becauſe they are the organes & inſtrumentes, by the which the worde of God is communicated vnto vs, the which is our wiſedome and vnderſtanding. And yet vnder the ſweetneſſe of the lippes, hee leaueth not to comprehende al actions and kindes of doings, whereto wee are led by loue, for to bee a good example vnto our neighbours, and to giue them inſtruction, not onely by worde of mouth, but alſo by conuerſation of life. For it is not enough that our lippes ſhoulde preache, but alſo al our life. Beholde, this is the ſweeteneſſe, whereby wee muſt exhort our neighbours too receiue doctrine more and more, ſhewing vnto them the wiſedome of our heartes, that to the glory of God, and profite of our neighbours, we may bee praiſed and commended as prudent. Notwithſtanding we muſt take heede of the ſweetneſſe of falſe Prophetes and lying Teachers, that wee bee not deceiued and beguiled aſwel by their words, as by their workes. Rom. 16. 17. 18.

22 *Vnderſtanding is a well ſpring of life vnto them that haue it: and the inſtruction of fooles, is folly.*

When we are greatly a thirſt, wee deſire very earneſtly to finde ſome good and cleere fountaine, that wee may drinke thereof, and ſlake our thirſt. Nowe wee are al naturally dry with blindneſſe, ignorance, vanitie, and with follie, through which wee faint, and do miſerably dye, except wee bee ſuccoured. And becauſe wee deſire life, and cannot tel where to finde it, and yet wee haue greate neede of it: for this cauſe Solomon wiſhing our good, hath heretofore exhorted vs vnto wiſedome, knowledge and vnderſtanding, and hath promiſed vs that there wee ſhal finde it. And not content heerewith, nowe hee maketh vs the ſame promiſe, when hee ſaith, *Vnderſtanding is a wellſpring of life, vnto them that haue it.* Wherein hee ſheweth vs that wee ought to bee very careful and diligent to reade the ſcriptures, to folowe good and true Doctours, to loue their doctrine, and to imprint and graue it in our heartes, that it may there take ſuch deepe rooting, that wee may be alwaies ſeaſoned, and may neuer bee depriued thereof: thus doing wee ſhal finde the ſpring of life, for to guide vs vnto immortalitie. And that this ſpring may not faile nor dry in vs, let vs continewe ſtil drinking of this water, without drunkenneſſe, and let vs not runne hither and thither by curiouſneſſe, for to heare newe thinges, and which haue greate apparance of wiſedome: for if wee turne backe from this vnderſtanding, wee can learne nothing but fooliſhneſſe: foraſmuch as, the heart of fooles babbleth out follie: and nowe hee ſaith,

Pro.2.1.& 3.13.& 4.1. & 20.& 28. 35.& 9.11.

Pro.12.23.

And the inſtruction of fooles is follie. And as the fooles can teache nothing but follie, euen ſo can they not abide to bee inſtructed, to bee exhorted, admoniſhed, corrected, and reprooued by the woorde of the Lorde: but for al inſtruction, they deſire to heare of pleaſant things to the fleſh and luſtes of things which haue a great outwarde ſhewe of wiſedome after the worlde, of vaine and friuolous things, of foule & ſlanderous things which are nothing elſe but fooliſhneſſe, the which doeth ſo change and drye our ſoules that they periſhe, and runne vnto eternal death for them. Solomō doth giue vs ſo to vnderſtand, when againſt the ſpring of life, he ſetteth follie: for ſpeaking of life, he would not haue vs to ſtay about this preſent life, which is common both to al men and to beaſts: but he laboureth for to make vs to aſpire vnto that bleſſed life, which neuer ſhal haue end. Now ſith that follie is ſet againſt this ſpring of life, it foloweth wel that it is no light vanitie, wherewith alſo the faythful are ſtayned: but becauſe they are truely diſpleaſed therewith, therefore the Lorde will not impute it vnto them. But folly is a filthines which greatly defileth the fooles, with the which they are not diſpleaſed, but doe take their pleaſure therin, and are ſo ſore changed thereinto, that they periſhe eternally and as many as doe folowe them.

23 *The heart of the wiſe guideth his mouth wiſely, and addeth doctrine to his lippes.*

For want of hauing wiſedome ſurely printed in our heartes, we are naturally inclined to ſpeake at aduenture, neither doe wee make any account to take heede for to ſpeake well. For this cauſe if wee bee reprooued for ſpeaking euill, and that wee can not deny it, wee excuſe our ſelues to haue ſpoken it without thinking to ſpeake it. This excuſe ſhoulde be true, if wee did adde this woord well: ſaying that we haue ſpoken euil, without wel thinking of that which we ſhoulde haue ſayde. We cannot ſpeake without thinking: for firſt of al if we ſpeake ioyfully, it is becauſe we delight therein, and that our heart taketh pleaſure ſo to doe: And if wee ſpeake angerly or ſorowfully, it is becauſe that we are troubled in our heartes, for the matter whereof we ſpeake. Secondly wee muſt not belye the infallible trueth, the which ſayth, that from the abundance of the hearte the mouth ſpeaketh. *Mat. 12.34.* Solomon hath wel ſhewed vs, that ſome doe ſpeake at aduenture and euil alſo, through want of wiſedome, becauſe he hath attributed it to the ſame. *Pro. 10. 8. 13. 14. 20. 21. & 15. 2.* Hee doeth ſhew vs the ſame nowe alſo, when he ſaith, *The heart of the wiſe guideth his mouth wiſely. &c.* Hee ſayth not ſimply and onely the heart, but he addeth of the wiſe: for the heart alone of it ſelfe is nothing woorth: wherupon foloweth that it can do nothing that is ought woorth. It muſt be reformed by wiſdome, for to guyde our mouthes well and prudently. If then wee bee voyde of wiſedome, wee cannot ſpeake as we ought, but where wiſedome is, there ſhalbee a good woorde: as Solomon doeth declare the ſame, when hee addeth,

And addeth doctrine to his lips. That is to ſay, that the hart of the wiſe doth teach his lips how they ought to be opened for to ſpeake wel: or that the hearte of the wiſe by his lippes teacheth other, and giueth them doctrine. Theſe twoo ſenſes are diuers, but they agree wel together: for a wiſe man alſo doeth them both, and the ſecond is not without the firſt.

24 *Fayre woordes are as an honie combe: ſweetenes to the ſoule, and health to the bones.*

The fleſhe reioyceth and is pleaſed, when a man is prayſed and flattered: it alloweth well of the woordes that are vttered: as hee thinketh none coulde ſpeake better to him, nor vtter any thing which ſhould pleaſe him more, but howe long ſoeuer it be, they which liſten and giue their eares vnto ſuch prayſes and, flatteringes ſhall feele that inſteede they thought to eate honie, they haue eaten gal: and that in ſteede of drinking ſome ſweete liquor, they haue drunken vinegre: and inſteede of hauing health, they haue beene taken with death: As Adam and Eue which beleeued the ſerpent, as Roboam which beleeued his yong counſellers, and as the children of Iſrael which cleaued vnto the falſe Prophets which preached to them peace, when the Prophets of God did foretel them the greate miſeries and calamities that were at hand. Solomon alſo doeth giue it vs to vnderſtand. The Papiſtes alſo ſhall feele what the woordes and preaching of their Friers are. I haue ſayde expreſly, that the fleſhe and ſenſualitie doeth wel allowe of flattering words and not that they are ſo indeed. Solomon doeth well ſhewe it, when he doth giue vnto fayre woordes three titles, which agree with the woordes of God. The firſt is, that they are likened vnto the honie combe, the ſecond, that they are ſweete vnto the ſoule: the thirde that they are health vnto the bones. For that which is proper vnto the woorde of the Lorde, cannot agree with the woordes which come both from the diuel & the fleſh: and it were a great blaſphemy *Pro. 5. 3. 4.*

to attribut vnto them ſuch fayrenes. Nowe that theſe titles belong vnto the woordes of God, the Scripture doeth ſhewe vs. The lawe of the Lord is perfit conuerting the ſoule. &c. Howe ſweete are thy promiſes vnto my mouth! yea more then hony vnto my mouth. Wee will not then ſay with the worldlinges, O howe wel is that ſpoken, when men talke of matters pleaſant to the fleſh: albeit that the woordes ſeeme to be of God and ſpoken of deuotion True it is that the gracious and gentle woordes of freendes are very fayre, and are profitable as well to the ſoule as to the bodie, when by them we proceede as God teacheth vs by his woorde, and not when ſome haue reſpect onely to pleaſe men, and to winne their fauour and good will. *Pſa. 19. 7. & 119. 103. Pro. 4. 20. 21 22.*

25 *There is a way that ſeemeth right vnto man: but the yſſue thereof are the waies of death.*

As it is not without cauſe, nor vnprofitable, that Solomon repeateth the ſentence woorde for woorde, that hee ſet in the fourteenth chapter and twelfth verſe: Euen ſo ought wee to bee carefull to meditate the ſame, and therein to beholde our corrupt nature, which followeth his fantaſie and good intent, turning away from the path that GOD teacheth vs by his woorde, alſo to beholde therein our deſtruction, that wee may labour to auoyde it.

26 *The perſon that trauelleth, trauelleth for him ſelfe, for his mouth craueth it of him.*

There is none except he be impudent, or blockiſh, which doth deny that wee muſt beare the yoke of the Lorde willingly, yet do we al naturally deny it not by woord, but in deede. For God hath layde payne, labour, and trauell vppon our backes, and yet wee loue reſt, ydlenes, & slouthfulnes: as wee are conuinced by our conſcience, and the rich worldlinges doe ſhew it, when they liue after the pleaſure of their fleſhe, making them ſelues beleeue that it is laweful for them to take their eaſe, delightes and pleaſures without applying them ſelues too ſome honeſt and profitable vocation:

for becauſe that they haue abundance of goods, for to liue without doing ought, they would thinke it too vile and bace a thing for their maiſterſhip and worſhip, to ſet hande to woorke, or to giue themſelues to ſome vocation, wherin they might get ſome mony, or ſerue their neighbours. Al that ſerue, and are hired either for a yeere, or from day to day, and doe not their worke ſo carefully and faithfully in the abſence of their Maiſters, as in their preſence, either bee it in preſence or in abſence doe make no account to doe their worke wel, do alſo ſhewe it. And albeit that diuers, euen of thoſe which are not taught in the worde of God, bee very earneſt and ſtoute at their worke, yet is it not to ſay that they worke willingly, but it is becauſe they loue themſelues, and deſire to gaine ſomething for their profit. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying, *The perſon or ſoule that trauaileth, &c.* Or, that moſt commonly, they feare to haue nothing put in their mouthes and to eate. The reaſon that Solomon giueth, doeth ſhewe it, when hee ſayeth, *for his mouth craueth it.* He ſheweth that it commeth not of a franke and free hart, nor by charitie, that they are giuen to worke: but that they haue regard to themſelues, and feare to want. And thus Solomon doth not teache vs expreſly what we haue to doe: but he doth ſhew vs what our nature is, and with what deſire it is led, and what wee do commonly. And yet we muſt not thinke that he alloweth vs to doe that which he pronounceth heere, except that in labouring for our ſelues we do alſo take care of our houſholdes, and ſhewe compaſſion on *Ephe. 4. 28.* the needie and on the neceſſitie of the poore: and that folowing the admonition: let him that ſtole, ſteale no more, but let him rather labour, with his handes the thing that is good, that hee may haue to giue vnto him that needeth. He therfore rebuketh the ſlouthfulneſſe of our nature, and therewith doeth ſomewhat ſhewe vs that hee which laboureth not, is worthy to dye for hunger: as Saint Paul declareth, for if any man wil not worke, let him alſo not eate. *2.Theſ.3. 10.* Some do take heere trauaile for moleſtation, trouble and puniſhment: and do interprete this ſentence, as if Solomon did ſay, The ſoule of man doeth forſake moleſtation: for his mouth giueth him occaſion: that *Mat.12.36.* is to ſay, That there happeneth great troubles vnto a man that ſpea- *37.* keth raſhly and without cauſe. This ſenſe is true, and very agreeable *Iam.1.26.* to the ſcriptures: it agreeth alſo with experience: notwithſtanding it *& 3. 6.*

is much conſtrained: and therefore wee wil receiue the firſt ſenſe the which doeth teache vs that wee muſt not bee ſlouthful, but at the leſt wee ſhoulde trauaile for to auoyde pouertie, I ſay, at the leaſt: for that which ought chiefly to induce vs to trauaile is obedience that wee owe vnto our Lorde, and conſequently the duetie that wee owe vnto our familie, and to our poore neighbors: For God hath no neede of our trauaile, nor of the profit that commeth thereof.

27 *A wicked man diggeth vp euil, and in his lippes is like burning fire.*

When a man ymagineth euil againſt his neighbour, that his wicked enterpriſe ſhoulde not bee knowne, and that he ſhoulde not bee let to atchieue the ſame, hee hydeth himſelfe ſo much as he can, counterfayting an honeſt man, or at the very leaſt diſſembling that hee woulde euil to him whome hee watcheth: and yet in the moſt deepeſt and moſt ſecrete corner of his hart, hee looketh and deuiſeth by what meanes hee may ouerthrowe and deſtroy the ſimple and innocent, which doe thinke nothing of his trappes that the wicked hath prepared, no more then doth the wilde beaſtes thinke and know that hunters haue digged pittes for to make them to fal into them. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, ſaying,

A wicked man diggeth vp euil. Hee attributeth wickedneſſe and vngodlineſſe, or, as ſome haue, no worthineſſe to thoſe which diuiſe euil, and conſpire to ouerthrowe the ſimple and innocent, euen God, if it were poſſible for them: as are they which bragge themſelues to bee reformed after the Goſpel, and ſay that they wil mainteine it: and yet haue no religion, and woulde gladly ouerthrow and put downe the holy doctrine, and ſo conſequently God, through hatred that they haue conceiued againſt his ſeruants. And whiles that theſe wicked and peruerſe men, digge vp euil, labouring to deſtroy the holy doctrine, and al order and pollicie, and to bring al to confuſion, if we rebuke them, then they cry that they are honeſt men, and are readie to make them repent which ſay the contrary, in miſcalling and reuiling them, or vnder colour of iuſtice cauſing them to make amendes by reſtoring their good name. In theſe cryings and manner of doings they bely the holy Ghoſt, who by the mouth of Solomon calleth them men of no eſtimation, and peruerſe. But finally they ſhalbee prooued lyers with effect, which they ſhal not helpe: for they ſhal receiue their rewarde with their father & their God the Deuil, who is the father of lyes, & a murtherer frõ the beginning, whom they folow: for no thanke to them that the children of God be not murthered. Now albeit that ſometimes, and for a while ſuch kinde of people of no valour and wicked do ſecretly deuiſe in their hartes, or with their like in their dennes of theeues, or on their alebenche: yet they cannot alwayes holde out, but that at the laſt, by geſtures, countenances, manners of doings and wordes, they wil declare their crueltie, and ſhew that they aſke nothing but al deſtruction and deſolation. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee ſaith, *That in his lippes is like burning fire.* Their heartes are ſo ful of wicked ymaginations and enterpriſes, that they muſt needs ſpue out as drunkardes which haue drunke too much wine, euen til they burſt. They cannot keepe themſelues backe from committing of haynouſe and cruel actes againſt thoſe which cannot reuenge themſelues, and to blowe out threatenings againſt them which deſire nothing but their good, and tel lyes, and vtter ſlaunderings, reuilings and ſhameful things againſt them which folowe trueth and are vnreprehenſible before men. Solomon compareth theſe actes and woordes vnto a burning fire: for as the fire conſumeth al that it meeteth with, except it be quenched: euen ſo men of no account, wicked and peruerſe, woulde ſpoile and deſtroy by their power and violences, by their lyes and ſlaunderings, by their iniuries and reuilings, the good and innocent, if God did not bridle them: ſo that they worke not ſuch deſolation as they would, but ſuch as GOD ſuffereth them. The wicked doe vexe and torment themſelues greatly for to hurt other: as they wel knowe, and as alſo the worldlings doe confeſſe it: for they ſay they take more paine to doe euil then to doe wel. Solomon alſo ſignifieth their great trauaile, when he ſaith,

That they digge, vp, and that there is a burning fire in their mouthes. And thus they are very miſerable and woful, when they deuiſe euil for their neighbours. But if they remaine hardened and obſtinate, and that they wil not conuerte from their wicked wayes, they ſhal bee yet much more woeful: for they ſhall bee made voyde of their intentes, and the euil that they deuiſe to doe vnto others ſhal fal vpon themſelues: as Caine, Pharao, Saule, Abſalom, Iudas and other wicked doe nowe feele it: and the ſcripture doeth witneſſe it, Beholde, hee trauaileth with miſchiefe, hee hath conceiued ſorowe, and brought foorth vngodlineſſe: heehath grauen and digged vp a pit and is fallen himſelfe into the deſtruction that he made for other. For his trauaile ſhal come vpon his owne head, &c. If wee ſee this daily come to paſſe in the worlde, God is righteous, and though he be ſlow, yet the wicked, obſtinate & hardharted ſhal not eſcape his hands.

Pſal.7.15. & 9.16.

28 *A froward perſon ſoweth ſtrife: and a taleteller maketh diuiſion among Princes.*

If we be not madde & furious, we do rather loue peace & vnitie, then diſſention and warre: wherefore wee haue neede to ſeeke the meanes of peace, and to mainteine it and to fly thoſe of warre, and to abhorre them. But there are ſome people ſo euil complexioned, and ſo filled with malice, that they woulde haue men to thinke of them that they deſire nothing but peace, whereas they tende to fil the world with braules and diſſentions: for whereſoeuer they become, they labour to ouerthrowe al good order, al good counſel, and lawful deliberations and ordinances, al good agreements, & louing pactions. Solomon calleth ſuch malicious men, *froward perſons:* or perſons of peruerſities: & not of peruerſity alone in the ſingular number: for they are not content to haue once brought ſome diſorder, trouble or confuſion, but they perſeuer in exerciſing their peruerſities, by the which they ſtirre vp diſſentions, not in one place onely, but as hee which ſoweth, doeth not onely ſowe one or twoo graines, but doeth caſt al ouer the grounde that he hath plowed, & doeth couer it throughout from one end to the other, euen ſo the froward doe raiſe vp diuers diſſentions, and no thanke to thẽ, that they fil not the worlde. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, when hee ſaith, *That a perſon of frowardneſſes, ſoweth ſtrife.* And for to declare vnto vs, of what peruerſities, and of what ſtrifes hee chiefly meaneth to ſpeake, hee addeth, *And a taleteller maketh diuiſion among Princes.* By a frowarde perſon, or man of peruerſeneſſe, hee meaneth lyers, flatterers, ſclaunderers, and houſe burners, which ceaſe not to blow into the eares of princes, for to encourage them againſt other princes, their neighbours, and to make warres againſt them, whereas before they were quiet, and vnited together: and by ſtrife he meaneth, the enimities, the hatreds, the troubles, & the warres which are ſtirred vp by the falſe tales of ſuch peruerſe men. Wherein he teacheth vnto princes of the earth, not to haue ytching eares, and that they ſhould not be eaſie nor inclined to heare tale tellers, but that rather they ſhoulde hunt them away, yea roote them out as ſeditious and rebelles, and diſturbers of the common wealth, and of common peace. Therefore let princes take heede to folowe the wiſdome that Dauid doeth ſhewe them ſaying, I wil ſet no wicked thing before mine eyes, I hate the woorke of them that fal away. &c. Secondly, he teacheth vs that we ſhould be careful too bridle our tongues, as alſo Saint Iames doeth admoniſh vs, ſaying, Let euery man be ſwift to heare, and ſlowe to ſpeake. &c. Againe, if any man thinke himſelfe religious among you, and refrayneth not his tongue, but deceiueth his owne hearte, this mans religion is vayne. Thirdly foraſmuch as wee loue, or ſhould loue peace, therefore ſo much as in vs lyeth wee ſhould be at peace with all men. Further Solomon doeth admoniſh vs that we ſhould not be frowarde nor tale tellers, according to the defence. Thou ſhalt not goe about amongeſt thy people as a backbiter.

Pſal.101.3.
Iam.1.19.26.
Leni.19.29.

29 A wicked man deceiueth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.

If wee wil keepe our ſelues from being deceiued and ſeduced, let vs not indifferently folowe al companies: let vs take heede of ſinners. And to doe this wel, let vs apply our eares vnto wiſedome, for when wiſedome ſhalbe entered into thy heart, then ſhall diſcretion preſerue thee. &c. Alſo he hath admoniſhed vs to hearken vnto wiſedome, for to keepe vs from the ſtrange woman. &c. Nowe him that Solomon hath before called, ſinner, wicked, a ſtranger, now he calleth him man of iniquitie, or man of violence: that is too ſay, which without doubt of conſcience doeth hurte vntoo his neighbours, and maketh as it were profeſſiō thereof, for to induce others

Pro.1.10.
& 2.2.10.
& 5.1.

to doe the like. Solomon ſaieth, that ſuch a man, ſeduceth or deceiueth his neighbour: and afterwardes he ſheweth what the deceit is, when he ſaith, *and leadeth him into the way which is not good*. Wherein wee ſee that hee ſpeaketh not of any light deceit, as to deceiue his neighbour in drawing ſubtilly his goods vnto him, his labour & his paine, euen as they are wont to do which deſire to make their particular profit by the hurt of other: & for to doe this, they vſe craftines & ſubtiltie, that we may take heede of them: but hee ſpeaketh of a deceit greatly hurtful, ſeeing it draweth ſoules vnto perdition: for they muſt needs periſhe which walke not in a good and ſafe way. The other deceit in compariſon of this ſame is but light for thoſe which ſuffer it: for it is nothing but a temporal matter, which is nothing to the ſoule: albeeit that they which vſe it, ſhal not finde it light: for they doe it with the loſſe of their ſoules, ſeeing they are couetous, vſurers, theeues and robbers: but they which leade men into the way which is not good, are murtherers not only of the bodies, but alſo of ſoules: wherupon doeth folowe that the deceit that they vſe ſhalbe very hurtful vnto them: for no murtherer hath eternal life dwelling in him. Wherfore we may vnderſtand that almoſt al the world goeth vnto damnation: for it is ful of men of iniquitie, which deceiue ſome after one ſorte, and ſome after another, in example of life and conuerſation, and in wordes & doctrine.

1.Iohn.3.15

30 *He ſhutteth his eyes to deuiſe wickedneſſe, hee moueth his lippes, and bringeth euil to paſſe.*

Hee continueth ſtil in ſpeaking of the wicked, vngodly, and froward, of whome he hath ſpoken in the three laſt ſentences: and that we ſhould be more careful & watchful to take heed and beware of them, he doth attribute vnto them certaine diſguiſings, which they vſe when they ymagine euil, & that they labour to accompliſhe it. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, *By ſhutting his eyes, and mooning of the lippes*. And this is very fitly, for when the wicked doe ymagine euil, they wil make as though they ſawe them not againſt whome they intend miſchiefe: or for better to betray them, they wil not looke vpon them with open eyes, ſhewing them that they are their open enemies, but wil ſhewe them a ſmiling countenance, with lyering eyes. Euen ſo the wicked which woulde take their neighbours at vnwares, for to hurt them, without being able to keepe and ſaue themſelues, they wil not crye out with a loude voice, ſaying, It is you whome wee malice: but for to deceiue better, they wil ſpeake ſweetly, as it were with a fained voice, and wil not but halfe open their mouthes. Likewiſe Solomon hath not ſaid, hee openeth: but *he moueth his lippes*. Let vs alſo vnderſtand that vnder theſe twoo ſignes Solomon comprehendeth al geſtures and manner of doings which the wicked vſe for to counterfaite, that they may deceiue & hurt more eaſily: for he hath ſtudied to giue vs ſhorte ſentences in wordes, but yet great in vnderſtanding. They which haue any doings with the wicked, which faine and counterfaite, doe feele that they do not only cloſe & ſhut their eyes, and that they do not only moue their lippes, but that they haue as it were an innumerable wayes of doing by the which they faine for to hurt openly. The Deuil is a ſubtil Doctor: and as he hath diuers knackes in his budget, euen ſo doth he teache them vnto his diſciples for to make thē maiſters of art. Among the which they are not the worſt which ſeeke our goods, and take away our good name, and hurt our bodies: but they are the worſt which lye in waite to deſtroy our ſoules.

31 *Age is a crowne of glory, when it is founde in the way of righteouſneſſe.*

Albeit that men naturally deſire to liue long in a flouriſhing ſtate, of meane age, and to continew ſtil in the ſame power & ſtrength, as we may know by old men, who lament their youth paſt, & gladly woulde that the youth had tenne or twentie of their yeeres: and haue no pleaſure to thinke nor to heare ſpeaking that they are old, except it be that for their age they thinke that they ſhal obteine ſome office, aboue and before the youth: yet for al this there is none but doeth deſire to attaine vnto a very olde age: the which deſire is not to bee blamed, ſo that it is not for feare of death, nor for doubt of what ſhal become of vs after this life, as doe the infidels and faithleſſe: but let our deſire beholde the promiſe that GOD hath made vnto them which ſhal obey his woorde: to witte, of prolonging their daies vpon earth. Likewiſe when a man hath liued Deut. 4. 40. & 5. 33. & 30. 16.

paſt ſeuentie or foure ſcore yeeres, hee boaſteth often of his olde age, and doeth reioyce therein, and hee looketh that ſome ſhoulde reuerence him, as a thing very honourable: euen as at al times, and amongſt al peoples, it hath beene, except towardes wanton and ſhameleſſe youths. For it is a natural and very reaſonable thing, that folkes ſhoulde honour their elders: and alſo God doeth commande it. *Leui.19.32.* Nowe wel to obey this commandement, the youthes muſt behaue themſelues towardes their elders, as children ought to behaue themſelues towardes their fathers and mothers, and chiefly to folowe their counſel, ſo farre as they labour to leade vs according as GOD teacheth them by his worde: otherwiſe age is no crowne of honour: euen as Solomon doeth ſignifie, when hee addeth, *When it is founde in the way of righteouſneſſe.* It is not age then which maketh the olde man to bee crowned with glorie: as they which were deſtroied by the flood, haue wel ſhewed, and they of Sodome and Gomor, and other olde doaters filled with fooliſhneſſe, ignorance and iniquitie: but it is wiſedome which maketh the crowne glorious. Therefore if wee wil bee honorably crowned for our age, let vs not aſke to bee praiſed for our great age, but let vs folowe that rightly which God requireth of vs, euery one of vs according to the ſtate wherein God hath called vs. Thus doing, though wee bee no old men, yet ſhal we haue age which ſhal bee a crowne of glory vnto vs. The ſcripture alſo ſpeaking of the Elders, hath not reſpect to the age, but to their duetie & office, neither is it required that a man ſhoulde be olde in yeeres for to beare office, but in manners. And foraſmuch as the aged ought to be of more experience and more wiſe, that rightly they may gouerne others, therefore for this they which beare office either in the common wealth or in the Church, are called Elders: and although they bee young, yet if they behaue themſelues as they ought, they haue age which is to them a crowne of glorie. Thus age doeth not make men honourable and glorious, but righteouſneſſe.

32 *He that is ſlow to anger, is better then the mighty man: and he that ruleth his owne minde, is better then he that winneth a Citie.*

The mighty, or rather the haſtie & furious, are eſteemed very excellent, & winne great fame in the world: as we ſee, & alſo the holy ſcripture doth giue vs examples thereof. At this time were the giants dwelling on earth, Thoſe were the mighty ones which in al ages haue bin men of fame, Nemrod became mightie on earth, &c. And as ſuch mightie men are eſteemed, euen ſo do they alſo make account of themſelues, & thinke they do profit, & that they are not cowards, but haue a couragious heart, becauſe they ſuffer none to deuour them, but can ſoone deuoure others. Notwithſtanding they which proceed with al gentlenes, humanitie, lenitie, modeſtie & clemencie, & which ſuffer with al patience that rather other ſhould do them iniurie, wrong & violence then to hurt any perſon, are cōſited dizzards, cowards, & nothing worth, vnworthy once to talke with men of honeſtie, & worthy to be deſpiſed & reiected of al honeſt men, which wil ſuffer at no mans hand any moleſtation. This is the iudgemēt of the world: that is to ſay, of al thoſe which are not made newe creatures by the regeneration and ſanctification of the holy Ghoſt. But they which are lightened, ſanctified & regenerated, doe iudge otherwiſe, & pronounce with Solomon, *he that is ſlow to anger, is better then the mighty*. Here Solomon doth firſt ſet and preferre the ſlowe to anger, before him that is mightie: not for to condēne the ſtrong & mighty, except that through their force they take leaue to do iniurie & outrage to their neighbors without cauſe: the which cannot be done without anger, hatred, wrath & furie. And it is in this only point that the mightie ought to bee condemned, for ſtrength is the gift of God, wherwith diuers of the elect & children of God haue bin indued, & haue vſed the ſame in anger & wrath againſt the enemies of God, & his people: as Moſes, Ioſua, and other gouernours of the people of Iſrael: & as al the iudges & mighty rulers ought to vſe againſt thē which do euil. We wil then with Solomon preferre the ſlow to anger, before him that is mightie, becauſe that he is of great wiſdom, whereby he can temperate his paſſions, and patiently beare the iniuries & outrages that are done to him, as he knoweth to be expedient: the which is no ſmal vertue: ſeing that in the ſame he is a folower of his God, of whome the ſcripture witneſſeth that hee is a God of pitie, of clemencie, and ſlow to wrath, &c. And as it is not for want of might that God is thus patient, as

Gene.6.4. & 10.8.91.

Exo.34.6. Pſa.103.8. Eſa.55.7. Rom.2.4.

hee can and coulde wel ſhewe taking vengeance of his enemies in conuenient time: euen ſo God doeth not take force for him that is ſlowe to wrath, but that hee may ouercome his enemies, when the time is come: where as the mightie for his arrogancie is often depriued of his enterpriſes, and his violence lighteth vpon him ſelfe by the iuſt puniſhement of God. Loe this is the firſt cauſe why we eſteeme the ſlowe to anger better then the mighty. Secondly, as the mighty which preſumeth on his ſtrength, doeth greatly hurte his neighbours by mouing ſtrife: euen ſo contrarily, the ſlowe to anger doeth profite his neighbours, ſetting them at peace. Conſequently, Solomon oppoſing and preferring *him that ruleth his owne minde vnto him that winneth a citie*. He doeth ſomewhat expounde what he meaneth by the ſlowe to anger and by the mightie: that is to ſay, that he is ſlowe to anger that ſuffereth not him ſelfe to be tranſported of his carnall affections, and humane and naturall paſſions which prouoke him to anger and wrath, vnto indignation and furie, to violence outrage and vengeance, but doeth rather ſubdue, tame and holde in ſubiection, and mortifie them. It is not without cauſe that Solomō ſetteth ſuch a perſonage againſt him which conquereth townes: For he doeth no outrage, violence nor hurte, but onely to his vitious and corrupted nature, he maketh no warre but with him ſelfe, that is, that his fleſhe or ſenſualitie, which luſteth againſt the Spirit, ſhould not obteine his deſires and affections: But he that taketh townes, doeth oftentimes make greate deſtruction and deſolation. Hee that ruleth his minde quencheth a greate fire: For naturally wee are al kindled, with wrath, with anger, and with deſire of vengeance: but hee that winneth cities, mainteineth his fire and kindleth it more and more, and by it hee lighteth another, burning caſtles and villages, yea cities and townes alſo. Hee that ruleth his minde is readie to doe good vnto them which trouble him without cauſe: But he that winneth townes, doeth wrong, and iniurie, outrage and violence, vnto innocentes.

Prou.15.18.

Now in theſe cauſes of compariſon, we ſee plainly that Solomon doth rightly more cōmend him that ruleth his courage, thē him that taketh and winneth townes and cities. But beſides theſe ſame wee may adde, that hee which winneth cities, doeth ſuffer himſelfe to be caried away of his paſſions and carnal affections, the which rule in him, and is not maiſter ouer them. The contrary is in him which ruleth his courage, as hath beene declared. Furthermore in the tongue is a fire, yea euen a worlde of wickednes: and in the tongue there is no euil, but that it commeth of the mind: therfore it foloweth, that he which ruleth his minde, is more valiant thē he which winneth cities and townes: for he ruleth and conquereth a world.

Iam.3.6.

33 *The lot is caſt into the lappe, but the whole diſpoſition thereof is of the Lorde.*

For to part or to make choyce of any thing, is when men vſe too caſt the chaunce or lot, for to knowe what parte they ſhal haue, or who ſhalbe choſen. And it is not come vp of late, that this maner of doing is vſed, but from al antiquitie, and euen by the commaundement of God among the children of Iſrael: the which commandement they folowed. And the Apoſtles alſo vſed too caſt lottes, Whereuppon foloweth, that it is laweful to vſe lotterie, ſo that there be no inchauntmentes, ſorceries and art magicke and diueliſh practiſes, mingled therewith: which are abhominable before the Lord. And in vſing of lottes for the partitiō or election, we muſt take heed of the falſe & wicked opiniō of infidels, which attribute vnto fortune and chaunce, that which hapneth, and commeth to them by lot. For contrarily we muſt attribute to the counſel and prouidence of GOD, whatſoeuer wee obteine by lot, bee it muche be it litle, be it good, be it euil, be it that it pleaſeth or diſpleaſeth vs. Solomon doeth teache vs this ſame, when he ſaith, *But the whole diſpoſition thereof, is of the Lorde.* Wherefore let vs bee readie to giue thankes vnto the Lord for al things that we obteine, euē thoſe things which ſeeme wel to be very caſual & ſet forth to fortune & chance: as are thoſe which happen by lot, for the worldlings caſting into the lotterie, are wont to ſay, come what may come. Likewiſe ſhal the children of God, if they take not heede and beware. Wee muſt bee aſſured that howſoeuer the lot bee caſt, that nothing

Leuit.16.8.
Num.33.54
Ioſu.14.& 15
Acts.1.26.
Leui.19.31. & 20.6.
Deut.18.10.

can happen but by the prouidence of God, and that that muſt neede come to paſſe without changing, which God hath purpoſed and ordeined in his eternal counſel. It is therefore good reaſon that we committe al our affaires vnto him, beſeeching him to guide them according to his good wil, and that wee content our ſelues with that which ſhal happen to vs, and giue him thankes and praiſes therefore. Let vs then acknowledge and confeſſe that whatſoeuer commeth to vs by lot, the ſame is the gift of God, vpon ſuch condition that we ſhoulde bee faythful ſtewardes thereof. And though the lotteries be lawful in harde matters, yet the leſſe that they are vſed the better it is.

The xvii. Chapter.

1 B*etter is a dry morſel, if peace be with it, then an houſeful of ſacrifices with ſtrife.*

Leui.23.40.
Deut.12.7.
& 14.23.

WHen according to the law that God ordeined by Moſes, they did ſacrifice, & offered their oblations, the people did eate of the ſacrifice, and therein neither the Leuite, ſtranger, fatherleſſe child, nor widow ought to be put by and left out. In ſuch aſſemblies they made good cheere, they eate and dranke ynough and were filled: yet is it not to ſay, that ſuch feaſtes were the beſt refreſhing that they could inioy: for the goodneſſe of the banket or feaſt did not ſtand in the abundance of meates, neither in the delicate and fine dreſſing thereof. Solomon doeth ſo ſhewe it. *Pro.15.17.* Therfore if we wil feede at a good banket, let the meates be ſeaſoned with friendſhip and loue: let both the hoaſt or maiſter of the feaſt & the gueſt or friend, be good friends & louers togither, let there be peace betweene them without any ſtrife. Solomon doeth ſignifie it nowe againe, when hee ſaieth, *Better is a dry morſel, if peace bee with it, then an houſefull of ſacrifices.*

by the dry morſel, hee meaneth a dinner that asketh not much coſt for to dreſſe, and in the which wee liue ſoberly without exceſſe: If they which together at ſuche a banquet are freendes and louers together, their meale is better then are thoſe bankettes, wherein is ſtrife and debate, yea though that GOD hath ordeined ſuche bankets: as Solomon doeth well ſignifie, when hee doeth cal them Sacrifices, wherewith the temple was filled, the which is ſignified by the *houſe full of Sacrifices with ſtrife*. Strife and debate doe then defile that which God hath ordeined for his ſeruice, and for the vſe and ioy of men, and for to leade them to ſing him praiſes, and to giue him thankes. Wherefore let vs vnderſtande that Solomon doeth commende peace vnto vs, and woulde haue vs to flie ſtrife, for to liue eaſily, quietly, and pleaſantly, and chiefly according too our minde. The fine mouthes, gluttons and drunkardes cannot eaſily agree with Solomon, but rather will mocke him.

2 *A diſcrete ſeruant ſhall haue rule ouer a lewde ſonne, and hee ſhall deuide the heritage among the brethren.*

The greateſt part of the youth do thinke that they ought to doe nothing els but play, and take their eaſe and pleaſures, and chiefly when they haue riche fathers, and are ſerued and obeied by their ſeruantes and houſhold folkes, and alſo they think that they ſhould bee ſerued aſwel as the maiſter of the houſe, and are not long in waſting the goods that their fathers and mothers, the ſeruants and houſholde folkes haue gathered with paine and labour, with greate care and diligence, and labour to rule and gouerne, and to be feared and reuerenced.

Now in this manner they magnifie them, and extol themſelues, and doe promiſe to themſelues great riches: but very often they fal very lowe, and are ſuppreſſed and humbled, and alſo are depriued of their hope: for they doe not obteine the goods that they promiſe themſelues, but others doe take them, at the leaſt a good part of them. Solomon doeth ſhewe it vs, ſaying, *A diſcrete ſeruant ſhall haue rule ouer a lewde ſonne: and hee ſhall deuide the* *inheritance among the brethren.* Heere Solomon doeth well ſhewe that God ſuppreſſeth and humbleth the proude younglinges euen to make them ſubiect vnto the moſt miſerable after the world, and to thoſe which ſhould be their ſeruants and ſlaues: for theſe ſeruants of whom Solomon ſpeaketh, were of ſuch conditiō, that they were bought & ſold as beaſtes, & were ſo compelled to labour for thoſe which had bought them, that they & their children, & whatſoeuer they did get, did appertaine and belong vnto their maiſters, & vnto their poſteritie & linage. Solomō doth not ſpeak this without experience: as hee doeth witneſſe, *Eccle.10.7.* I haue ſeene ſeruantes on horſes, and princes walking as ſeruantes on the grounde. *Gen.14.* This was ſeene in Ioſeph the ſonne of Iacob.

Nowe although that ſuch ſeruantes, before the worlde, were miſerable, vile and abiect, yet there were ſome of them which were not diſcouraged, but with good wil and right affection endeuoured what they could to pleaſe their maiſters: as they are exhorted chiefly. And euen ſo muſt al they which ſerue for wages & reward do the like for the time that they ſerue and are hired: for they are, after a maner of ſaying, as it were bought for a time, and are bounde to yeelde ſubiection and obedience. *Ephe.6.5 Col.3.22. 1.Tim.6.1 Titus.2.9 1.Pet.2.18.* Whereunto if they bee giuen carefully and faithfully, they are wiſe and diſcrete ſeruantes, and by their prudence they ſhal bee exalted, as out of the mire and duſt vnto honour aud glory, euen aboue the children of the houſe, which bring confuſion: that is to ſay, which by their folly, falling away, & diſſolution, doe ſet al in diſorder, in making ſuperfluous and exceſſiue expences. Wee may ſee this gouernment and ruling euen in this worlde: but it ſhal bee ſeene plainely in the laſt reſurrection, when the ſheepe ſhal be receiued before the goates: for let vs not think that Solomon would haue vs onely to ſeeke worldly and temporall honour. True it is, that hee ſpeaketh of a temporal ruling whereat the children of God ought not to bee ſtaied, but hope for the eternal, wherein they ſhal truely gouerne ouer the lewde children. For they ſhal as it were treade them vnder their feet, when they ſhalbe exalted vnto the heauenly kingdome, & the lewde children ſhal diſcende downe into hel and death eternal. And when Solomon ſaith, that the *diſcrete ſeruant ſhall deuide the heritage,*

tage,&c. Hee ſheweth that God can wel tel howe to depriue the lewde children of their hope, & to worke that they ſhal not enioy the heritage. And therewith he alſo promiſeth temporal welth vnto ſlaues: and in this, he would aſſure vs, that although we be the moſt miſerable in the worlde to the ſenſe of the fleſhe and outwarde ſight, yet ſhall wee not want riches: but if neede bee, GOD ſhall make vs equal in wealth, with the moſt richeſt. This ſame is wel ſignified by diuiding the heritage with the brethren: for after the Hebrue expoſitors, to diuide the heritage among brethren, is to take a portion of goods with thoſe which are brethren, and to whome after the world goods do appertaine. But when wee heare ſuch temporal promiſes, let vs vnderſtande that God wil not ſatisfie his diſcrete and wiſe ſeruants, with riches which are common to fooles: and therefore, let them bee aſſured that the heauenly and eternal riches are theirs, and that they ſhal haue the poſſeſſion of them by continuing in prudence & wiſedome. Solomon hath ſhewed vs the ſame plainely. *Pro. 3. 13. & 4. 5.* Contrarily, if God threaten the fooliſh and lewde, to depriue them of their worldly wealth and honour: and make no account to amende them ſelues, wee muſt vnderſtande that hee counteth them not worthie of the heauenly glory, and eternal bleſſedneſſe.

3 *As is the fining pot for ſiluer, and the fornace for golde:*
ſo the Lorde trieth the heartes.

Saint Peter doeth admoniſhe vs, ſaying, Dearely belooued, *1. Pet. 4. 12.* thinke it not ſtrange concerning the firie trial, which is among you, to proue you, as though ſome ſtrange thing thing were come vnto you. This trial ought in no wiſe to bee giuen vnto fortune. And though the Diuels and men bee organes and inſtrumentes for too trouble and torment vs, yet they doe not prooue vs, but it is God that doeth it: As the Scripture ſheweth it. *Iob. 1. Exo. 20. 20. Iob. 7. 18.* Solomon following the ſame, ſaith,

As is the fining pot for ſiluer, & the fornace for gold: &c. Wherin we haue to note, foraſmuch as the trial of God is compared vnto the fining pot & fornace, that therefore it foloweth, that god trieth *Pſal. 26. 2. & 66. 10 & 139. 1*

our heartes by tribulation and afflictions, by miſeries and calamities:
and that ſometimes for one cauſe, and ſometimes for another.
For as by the Fornace, ſometimes golde is purged and purified from
his ſcumme, and from his filthineſſe, and ſometimes wee trie whether
it be good, fine & lawful: euen ſo God alſo doth trie our harts
in ſending to vs afflictions, for to purifie them: for by temptations
wee are admoniſhed to confeſſe our faultes, and to aske pardon:
and thus wee are purged from our ſcumme and filthineſſe.
The Scripture doeth ſhewe vs that diuers ſaintes being vnder affliction,
Num.21.7 haue confeſſed their faultes, and haue asked forgiueneſſe,
1.Sam.7.5 and alſo for thoſe of their neighbours. Otherwiſe by afflictions
& 12.10. and aduerſities, GOD trieth our heartes, for too prooue their
Pſal.106.6 righteouſneſſe and perfectneſſe, or to ſhewe foorth their wickedneſſe
Eſay.59.12. and vngodlineſſe. After this ſort GOD tried Abraham,
& 64.5 commanding him to ſacrifice his ſonne. Hee hath alſo prooued the
Dan.9.5. children of Iſrael. Wherefore this ſentence may ſerue to teache
Gen.22.1. vs paciently to beare the afflictions that wee may ſuffer, knowing
Deut.8.2. that it is God which layeth them vppon vs, for to purge and too
Pſal.26.2. cleanſe vs, & to make vs wiſe and very diſcrete to walke vprightly:
&.66.9 the which are two bleſſings greatly to bee deſired. As alſo Dauid
& 139.23. doeth wel ſhewe it when hee requireth to bee tried, and when hee
woulde haue men to prayſe the Lorde. And adding the reaſon,
hee ſaith, O God thou haſt proued: thou haſt alſo tried vs, like as
ſiluer is tried. Trie mee, O God, and ſeeke the grounde of my
hearte: Prooue mee, and examine my thoughtes. Saint Iames
alſo ſaith, Bleſſed is the man which indureth temptation: for
Iam.1.2. when hee hath beene tried, hee ſhal receiue the crowne of life,
which GOD hath promiſed vnto thoſe which loue him. And
when the Apoſtle Saint Peter ſayth, That the prouing of your faith,
being much more precious then golde that periſheth (though it
be tryed with fire) might bee founde vnto your praiſe, and honour
and glory, at the appearing of Ieſus Chriſte. Therefore let
vs willingly receiue the admonition of the Apoſtle: My ſonne,
deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lorde, neither fainte when
Heb.12.5.6. thou art rebuked of him. For whome the Lorde loueth, hee
chaſteneth; and hee ſcourgeth euery ſonne which he receiueth.

Wee may learne this out thereof alſo, that we can neither doe, ſay, nor thinke any thing that GOD ſeeth not better then wee our ſelues: as hath beene ſhewed by the ſcripture.

4 *The wicked giueth heede to falſe lippes: and a lyar hearkeneth to the naughtie tongue.*

All men are ready and enclined naturally to hearken vntoo them which ſpeake wickedly of other. Some are ſo delighted therewith, that they thinke that they are wel thought of therefore, and perſwade themſelues that they are ſuche, and doe turne the rebuke that is giuen to their neighbours vntoo their owne praiſe and good commendation. Wherein they are deceiued: as Solomon doeth ſhewe, attributing vnto them wickedneſſe,, the which in this place is very fit and meete, chiefly to Princes & Lordes of the earth who worſhip themſelues in their lordſhips, power and authoritie, and require for to bee worſhipped. And as they delight to heare wickedneſſe ſpoken, as lying, ſlaundering, and falſe witneſſe bearing for to helpe forwardes the deſtruction of their neighbours: euen ſo they themſelues are lyars: as Solomon doeth pronounce, ſaying, *And a lyar hearkeneth to the naughtie tongue*, or tongue of deſtruction. Heere hee calleth him a lyar, whom before hee hath called wicked or naughtie. Wherein he ſheweth of what naughtineſſe or wickedneſſe hee ſpeaketh: that is to ſay, of lying. And thus hee accuſeth the wicked not onely to giue eare vntoo them which lie wickedly, but alſo that he himſelfe lieth: the which is no wonder: for euery man gladly reuerenceth his like. Wee may ſee that the princes of the worlde doe loue wel to lye, they are no niggardes of their promiſes: but they perfourme little or put nothing in execution, and doe delight in making them faire & goodly (as is ſaide) not onely in light thinges: but where by their leaſinges men ſuffer moſt, there doe they laugh moſt of all. Wee doe alſo often ſee come to paſſe that the ſtrifes of Princes doe bring great deſtruction. There are ſome which are no Princes, and yet labour to doe the like: ſo that on what ſide ſoeuer wee turne vs, wee meete with none but lyars: ſo full is the worlde of them. And therefore it is not

Pſa.5.10. & 12.2.3. Eſay.30.9 & 57.4. without cauſe that Dauid lamenteth. And euen of the people of God, it is ſaide, It is a people prouoking to wrath. Lying children, children which wil not heare the Lawe of their GOD. On whome haue yee ieſted? Vpon whome haue yee gaped, and thruſte out your tongues? Are not yee rebellious children, and a falſe ſeede? And they bende theyr tongues like their bowes for Iere.8.6.& 9.2. lyes, &c. Hee alſo calleth deſtruction or naughtie, that which before hee had called wicked. Wherein hee ſheweth that the lyars, falſe witneſſes, ſlaunderers and flatterers, are daungerous, and greatly hurtful: as alſo experience teacheth: for by their tales they doe ſtirre vp anger, malice, ſtriefes, ſeditions, warres, whereby diuers houſes and families, euen townes and regions doe come vnto deſtruction.

But the worſt deſtroyers, are thoſe which ſet foorth diueliſhe doctrine and mens traditions, in ſteede of the pure doctrine, or els doe mingle them one with another, colouring the trueth: for the deſtruction that they make is not of any temporal goods and bodies, but they looſe the ſoules and bodies for euer. And albeit that it is by deceit, trappes and vnder colour of religion, yet they which are deceiued: ceaſſe not to bee giltie: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, when he calleth them lyars which hearken vnto the naughtie tongue, or tongue of deſtruction: and the Apoſtle S. Paul doeth ſhewe it. 2.Theſſ.2.9.10

Furthermore let vs note, that in this place to hearken and to giue eare, is not to heare as paſſing by: for otherwiſe wee muſt attribute wickedneſſe and lying, vnto thoſe which are regenerate and ſanctified by the Spirite of GOD: ſeeing they often heare lippes which ſpeake iniquitie, and tongues which woorke deſtruction, for the which cauſe they are afflicted, ſeeing that GOD is therein offended, and that their neighbours haue hurt thereby alſo: and therefore they doe reproo ue them ſharpely: but to hearken and to giue eare, is to hearken with the hearte and minde, and therein to delight. If then wee wil not bee called neither wicked, nor lyars, let vs delight to heare the trueth, the which is exempted from al wickedneſſe, and tendeth not to deſtruction, but to conſeruation and righteouſneſſe.

5 *Hee that mocketh the poore, reprocheth him that made him: and he that reioyceth at deſtruction, ſhall not be vnpuniſhed.*

Al the worlde boaſteth to honour God, and perſwade themſelues that they woulde in no wiſe diſpleaſe him: for there is no motion ſo barbarous, nor ſo ſuperſtitious, and idolatrous, yea ſo corrupted and diſſolute, ſo paſſing meaſure and vntemperate, which hath not ſome kinde of doing, by the which men thinke to ſerue God, yea euery mā particularly laboureth to gouern him ſelf in ſuch ſort that none may thinke of him but that hee ſeeketh the honour of God, at the leaſtwiſe, hee laboureth to perſuade him ſelfe hee doeth ſo. And yet wee deſpiſe the ſtranger, the fatherles, the widowe and other needie and poore, yea, they are wronged and oppreſſed againſt the expreſſe ordinance of God, who hath commanded, Thou ſhalt not doe iniurie to a ſtranger, neither oppreſſe him, for ye were ſtrangers in the lande of Egypt. Ye ſhal not trouble any widowe, nor fatherles childe. Thus doing we do mocke the poore, with a mockage that is not light for to offende a man ſmally, but to doe God great diſhonour. Solomon doeth ſignifie it, ſaying, *Hee that mocketh the poore, reprocheth him that made him, &c.* Foraſmuche as there is none but God that inricheth and maketh men poore, it foloweth, that wee doe reproch him when wee mocke the poore, in not helping him as they ought, & in doing him wrong, and in perſecuting him, for hee is deſpiſed for his pouertie, & troubled therefore: and therfore it is euen aſmuch as if we did reproche God for ſetting ſuch a man to bee mocked, troubled, and moleſted, and that if they doe him iniurie out of the which he can not deliuer himſelfe, that hee is the cauſe thereof. This ſame is but totoo common in poperie: albeeit that they perſwade themſelues that they woulde doe no ſuch iniurie vnto God: but the effect doeth ſhewe the contrary, when wee make no account of the poore, in compariſon of Images and ceremonies: euen when for to mainteine them wee will polle the poore: and woulde to GOD that they which boaſt themſelues to bee reformed after the Goſpell were

Exo.22.21.
22.
Leui.19.33.
35.

not giuen vnto ſuche mockery, or rather worſe. But what? For to mainteine themſelues at their eaſe and pleaſure, to winne credite and authoritie, they wil vſe crueltie towardes the poore, or at the leaſt will make themſelues companions of thoſe which doe oppreſſe them, & will as it were holde vp their chinne, and make them more bolde. All ſuch kinde of people doe take their paſtime and ioy, ſo to handle the poore, for to deſtroy them: for the which they ſhal not eſcape vnpuniſhed. Solomon doeth declare it, ſaying,

And hee that reioyceth, &c. Hee calleth the trouble, vexation, damage and detriment, the ſpoyling and deſolation which the poore doe ſuffer, deſtruction, becauſe they are voide of humane helpe, and are tormented and moleſted, and no man helping nor ſuccouring them as they ought, but contrarily, they haue not ſo little but they wil haue it. This violence may wel be called deſtruction, when they which doe it, care not what miſerie and deſolation they bringe vppon the poore, and woulde rather put them to death, then to fayle of eating them, euen to make them to begge their bread. And therefore the Scripture calleth them murtherers
Eſai.1.21. and menſlears. And ſo they well deſerue puniſhment: as
Oſee.4.1.2 alſo the threateninges are conteined in diuers places, as wee may
Pſal.94.3. ſee by the Scriptures, God hath executed them alſo. And foraſmuch
Zach.11.4.5 as there is none of ſounde iudgement which woulde bee counted a
1.Iob.3.15. mocker, nor contemner of God, nor deſtroyer of the poore, nor that
Rom.12.15 would haue God to puniſh him, we muſt weepe with thoſe which
1.Cor.12.26. weepe, that we may haue compaſſion of our poore mēbers which
Mat.9.13. ſuffer, ſhewing mercy by vnfained charitie to the needie: I wil haue
Pro. 14.31. mercy and not ſacrifice. Thus doing we honour God. For the good
Mat. 25.40. that we do towards the poore, is counted to be done vnto God.

6 *Childrens children are the crowne of the elders: and the glorie of the children are their fathers.*

Gene. 1.28. Foraſmuch as God bleſſing man, ſaide vnto him, growe and increaſe,
& 19.1.7. and repleniſhe the earth: and to Noe, and to Abraham, and
& 13.16. to other holy Patriarkes: Therefore olde men ought wel to re-
& 17.2. ioyce, and count themſelues happie, and to counte it for

a great honour and beautifying, when they haue a great ſtocke and linage, and that they may ſee them ſelues to bee Grandfathers. Dauid ſheweth wel this ſame: and Solomon hauing regard vnto ſuche promiſes, ſayeth, *Childrens, children, &c.* If wee haue then a multitude of children and couſins, let vs confeſſe it with ioye and gladneſſe that God hath bleſſed vs, and honoured vs: and let vs not reſemble the worldly and couetous infidels, which complaine to bee charged with too many children, when they haue more then they doe deſire, where they ought to reioyce, and thanke God, who doth communicate vnto them the title of Father, the which belongeth vnto him onely. Let vs not alſo be like vnto them which doe ſo dote ouer their children, that they ſuffer them to runne at randon, and where they liſt, and doe not teache them the ſeare of the Lord, and neither doe correct and rebuke them for ſeare that they ſhould trouble them. Suche kinde of people, ſo muche as in them lieth, doe deſpiſe their Crowne: for they take the way for to be troubled and diſhonoured for their children: ſeeing it is a daily & common thing that the children which are not corrected, waxe corrupted, and giue them ſelues vnto diſhoneſt and wicked liuing. Therefore for to be crowned honeſtly with our children, let vs folowe Saint Paules teaching: Fathers, prouoke not your children vnto anger: but bring them vp in inſtruction, &c. Be ye the folowers of Abraham, to whō God giueth witnes that he woulde commande his ſonnes and his houſholde after him, that they keepe the way of the Lorde, and to doe righteouſnes and iudgement. And although it is a common matter aſwel vnto the children and elect of God, as alſo to the children of the Deuil and reprobate, to haue great poſteritie, and that ordinarily the infidels haue more children then the faithful, & that God ſuffereth them to increaſe: yet the minde of Solomon is not to giue the Crowne vnto the faithful, but onely to the beleeuers: for what hee ſaieth, is ſpoken according to the former promiſes, the which are not ſure and ſtedfaſt but vnto the faithful, who doe acknowledge the honour that God doeth vnto them, when he giueth them children abundantly. And becauſe they are not vnthankful towardes God, hee doeth giue them a continual ioye, the which ſhal neuer be taken from them: but it ſhal rather growe vnto an eternal bleſſing, wherin they ſhal obteine the crown of immortal glorie: for

Pſal.128.1.

Mat.13.9.

Ephe.6.4.
Collo.3.21.
Gen.18.19.

God doeth not corporally crowne his, for afterwardes to make no account of them: otherwiſe their ſtate ſhould be no better then the ſame of the infidels: for they reioyce and are glad, and count them ſelues bleſſed to ſee them ſelues fathers of a greate ſtocke and kindred: but ſuche ioye is not of any continuance, conſidering the teares, and gnaſhing of teeth, which ſhal folowe it. Nowe that it is the intent of Solomon to giue the Crowne vnto the elect of God, hee doeth ſomewhat ſhewe it, when he addeth, *And the glorie of the children are their Fathers.* For ſith hee conferreth the glorie and honour of the children with the crowne of the Elders, it foloweth wel, that his minde is to attribute the crowne vnto the faithful Fathers: for the children are not honoured by infidels fathers, but rather diſhonoured: and chiefly when they folow the way of their fathers: for their fathers faults & iniquities are laid to their charge by the Prophets, ſaying, they are like their fathers. The Scripture is ful of ſuche reproches. And if the children haue had good fathers, and that they be wicked, their fathers alſo are not honoured by thē, Iohn the 8 Chapter, 37. verſe.

Pſa.95.& 106.6.7.
Eſay.43.27. &.65.7.
Iere.2.5.6.
Exe.2.3.& 16.3.
Mat.23.30.

7 *High talke becommeth not a foole, much leſſe a lying talke a Prince.*

There is none ſo fooliſhe in the worlde, but perſuadeth himſelfe that when hee ſpeaketh, none could ſpeake any thing better: and the moſt fooliſhe doe thinke they ſpeake goldenly (after a kind of ſpeaking,) and yet they neither ſaye, neither can, or they wil not ſpeake any thing woorth, nor wherein they which are truely wiſe, may be delighted therewith. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, ſaying,

High talke, or the lippe of excellencie, &c. The foole can not haue the lippe of excellencie: and therefore let vs vnderſtande that Solomon doeth not ſpeake of that which the foole hath, but of that which he thinketh to haue, or that would that other ſhould giue it him. Now foraſmuch as there is no word of excellēcie, but the pure trueth, it foloweth therefore, that by the lippe of excellencie, Solomon vnderſtandeth the mouth which ſpeaketh agreeably & accordingly vnto the worde of God. Hee ſheweth this ſame, when againſt the lip of excellencie, hee ſetteth a lying lippe, or lying talke: ſaying,

Much leſſe, &c. For the contrarie of lying, is trueth. Herein
hee ſheweth that the foole hath nothing more proper to him
then lying, and that hee is ſo filled therewith, that trueth cannot agree
with him, neither can hee delight in it, but doeth hate it. For
the fooliſhe whereof Solomon ſpeaketh are the children of the Deuil, *Iohn.8.44.*
who is the father of lying. They are like vnto him of whome
Dauid ſpeaketh in his 52. Pſalme and 4. verſe. Hee ſheweth alſo vnto
kings and Princes of the earth that they ought not to be fooles to
ſpeake leaſing, in peruerting of iudgement, in making wicked lawes,
and pronounce vnrighteous ſentences againſt the trueth, right and
equitie: for ſeeing that they doe not exerciſe the iudgement of men,
but of God, and that the ſcripture calleth them Gods, God is truth, *2.Chro.10.6*
therefore they ought to vnderſtande that it is more vndecent for *Pſal.82.16.*
them to pronounce and to doe any falſe matter, then it is for the
fooliſhe and wicked to counterfaite honeſt and wiſe men. Notwithſtanding
if the worlde bee repleniſhed with thoſe which ſit in the
thrones of Kings, and iudicial ſeates, which commit either in deed
or in woorde greate falſneſſe: in ſuch wiſe that wee may almoſt *Pſal.82.2.*
complaine of al ſuperiours and gouernours, and ſay to them, howe *Eſay.1.23.*
long wil yee giue wrong iudgement: and accept the perſons of the *Iere.5.26.*
vngodly? And ſo there are but a fewe which are worthy of ſuch *Za.7.9.*
ſeates, but rather to bee placed in the order of fooles. Wherefore
they ought to looke for an horrible and feareful vengeance. If they *Pſa.2.4.5.*
which haue any knowledge of God, wil auoide it, let them dayly *Eſay.1.24.*
growe and goe forewarde in the ſame knowledge by the continual *Deut.17.18*
ſtudie of the diuine doctrine. *Pſal.2.10.*

8 *A reward is as a ſtone pleaſant in the eyes of them that haue it: it proſpereth, whitherſoeuer it turneth.*

Wee doe naturally iudge that it is a foule and wicked thing for magiſtrates & ſuperiours of the earth, which haue the adminiſtration of iuſtice, to loue gifts & rewards, and to take them: and euen they alſo which receiue them coulde wel condemne others which ſhould ſhoulde doe as they doe: but couetouſneſſe hath corrupted and doeth ſo corrupt the nature and blinde the wits,and peruerte iudgement,in ſuch wiſe that men delight to forget natural honeſtie, and finde nothing more faire, nor more delectable then to enriche themſelues by the coſt of other: they loue wel to receiue and take that which doeth coſt them nothing,but onely to doe them pleaſure which haue rewarded them, for to doe wrong and iniurie vnto other. Solomon doeth diſcouer this corruption and wickednes, ſaying, *A rewarde, &c.* Hee doeth firſt compare the giftes and rewards that are giuen vnto iudges,vnto precious ſtones,the which wee gladly beholde,becauſe wee eſteeme them and find them faire: and thus he expreſſeth the greate affection that the wicked iudges haue to take rewards and giftes. Wherein let vs note that hee ſaieth not what they ought to doe,but he toucheth the great actiuitie & wicked couetouſneſſe of the iudges of the earth, which are very glad and ioyful that men wil blinde their vnderſtanding by force of giftes and rewards. And thus hee ſheweth that the worldly and carnal wiſedome, which wee commonly deſire to bee in iudges and gouernours of countries, (for oftentimes,for the gouernement of the pollicie and iuſtice,we ordeine worldly wiſe men) doeth holde vs backe to forget natural honeſtie, and to bee fouly corrupted.

Wherefore wee ought to knowe that the rulers of the earth haue
*Pro.*3.13. neede of another wiſedome: the which is mentioned before in the
& 8.14. 8.chapter and 14.verſe. Iethro(the father in lawe of Moyſes) did
*Exo.*18.21. knowe that this wiſedome was fit and meete for iudges: and there-
1.*Sam.* 12. 3. fore hee ſaide vnto Moyſes, Do thou ſeeke out amongſt al the peo-
2.*Chro.*19.5. ple,men of courage,fearing God, men dealing truely, hating coue-
*Exo.*23.8. touſneſſe: and appoint ſuch ouer them, to bee rulers ouer thou-
*Leui.*19.15. ſands,&c.Samuel was indued with this wiſedome: Ioſua requireth
*Deut.*1.16. the like of iudges. Theſe twoo perſonages and ſuch like had re-
& 16.18. ſpect vnto the lawe of the Lorde. And becauſe that GOD
*Eſay.*1.21. hath giuen this leſſon vnto iudges, the Prophetes doe crye out
& 5.23. ſharply againſt thoſe which doe the contrary, calling them theeues
*Iere.*5.26. and murtherers.Secondly, when hee ſaieth, *Whither ſoeuer hee*
Eze. 22. 27. *turneth, &c.* Hee compareth the giftes and rewardes vnto
*Miche.*3. 9. men, to whome al things come as they woulde and wiſh,of what
*Sopho.*3.3. ſide ſoeuer they turne them, they obteine whatſoeuer they deſire.

Wherein hee ſheweth that they which take rewardes, doe neither regarde right nor equitie, but peruert iudgement, and folowe the ende for the which they haue receiued the rewardes. And as it is not lawful to take rewardes for iudgement, ſo alſo ought no man to giue them, howe good right ſoeuer they be aſſured to haue. For in thus doing they ſhoulde bee an inſtrument of Satan, for to accuſtome the Iudges vnto theft and polling: and they were farre better to looſe their cauſe, howe good ſoeuer their matter bee, then to induce the Iudges by giftes to giue ſentence: forſomuche as in vs lieth, we make them to breake the lawe of God, and to forget honeſtie and natural equitie, and are cauſe of their deſtruction and perdition. They then which haue an euil cauſe doe moſt wickedly, to giue rewardes. They therefore which haue an euil matter, let them forbeare and ceaſe to doe ſo, and they whoſe cauſe is good, let them commit it to God, ſtaying them ſelues vpon his prouidence.

9 *Hee that couereth a tranſgreſſion, ſeeketh loue: but hee that repeateth a matter, ſeparateth the Prince.*

The Princes of the worlde doe deſire neither Eſaies, nor Ieremies, nor Ezechiels, nor Iohn Baptiſts, nor Paſtours, nor Doctors, which wil rebuke them to their faces, for their euil doings: but rather they ſay vnto the ſeers, See not, and to the Prophet, Prophecie not the trueth vnto vs: but preach vnto vs pleaſant things, &c. *Eſai. 30. 10. 11.* And they doe abhorre thoſe which tel and ſhewe vnto them their tranſgreſſions. They thinke al thinges are lawful for them: they flatter them ſelues, and alſo would be flattered by other: and therfore ſuche as can diſſemble not to ſee their wickednes, are the beſt welcome towardes them, they winne their fauoure and friendſhip, as they doe wiſhe and deſire the ſame. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, when hee ſayeth,

Hee that couereth a tranſgreſſion, &c. Though it be an ordinarie thing to hide the euil that they doe, whoſe fauour and friendſhip according to the worlde wee deſire, of what qualitie ſoeuer they be, yet doe wee chiefly expounde this ſentence of thoſe which labour to inſinuate and creepe into the fauour of Princes: partly

for to ioyne this ſentence vnto the two former: and partly for that,
that Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when hee addeth, *But hee that re-*
peateth, &c. That is to ſay, that hee which is not ſatiſfied to haue
once admoniſhed the Prince of his euil doing, but, ſeeing that the
Prince perſeuereth and continueth in euil, or, againe doeth worſe,
doeth continue ſtil alſo to reprooue him, hee ſeparateth the Prince
from him, ſo that hee is hated of him, and is perſecuted vnto death,
if the Prince can apprehend and take him. The Prophets and Apo-
ſtles haue truely prooued this ſame. So alſo do they which reprooue
any people which perſuade them ſelues that they are Princes, and
woulde be eſteemed for ſuche: but what ſeparation ſoeuer is made,
wee muſt not ceaſe to repeate the thing, and wee ought wel to take
heede from hiding their faultes, labouring to hold worldly and car-
nal friendſhip with the wicked. It is al our dueties: but chiefly it
Eſai.58.1. doeth belong vnto the Miniſters of the worde. And our Lord would
Ier.1.7.8. haue vs to preache repentance: the which is not done as it requi-
18.19. reth, except that the faultes be diſcouered. And hee would haue e-
Mat.18.15. uerie man to rebuke his brother. Wee ought then to vnderſtande
that Solomon doeth not heere pronounce what wee ought to doe:
but hee ſheweth what the nature of flatterers is: to wit, that they
wil not rebuke the trangreſſions, not becauſe they loue their neigh-
bours, but becauſe that they loue them ſelues, and woulde alſo bee
beloued of other. Suche were the falſe Prophets amongeſt the peo-
ple of Iſrael, who in ſteede of rebuking and threatening the people,
Ier.23.16. and the Princes of their miſdoinges, made them beleeue that al
Eze.13.6. ſhould goe wel on their ſide: and ſo they loued them not: for they
did deceiue and deſtroy them. Suche are thoſe nowe which become
the felowes of the wicked, or that flatter the Nicodemites. He ſhe-
weth alſo what the hardineſſe & arrogancie of thoſe is, which think
them ſelues great, and mightie: to wit, that it ſeemeth to them
Rom.12.18. that they haue licence to doe whatſoeuer they wil, and that no man
Hebr.12.14 ought to rebuke them. But becauſe that wee ought to haue peace
with al, ſome expounde to couer the tranſgreſſion, as (Chapter, 10.
verſe 12.) wee haue expounded couereth al treſpaſſes: and to ſepa-
rate the Prince, as Chapter 16. verſe 28. If wee wil folowe this
ſenſe which is true, and conteineth good doctrine, as wee haue
ſeene,

ſeene, wee muſt ſay that this ſentence is a repetition of the two for-
mer ſentences, the which is not vndecent nor vnmeete. Neuer-
theles, becauſe that Solomon by theſe ſentences hath laboured to
aduertiſe vs of diuers and many thinges, there is no inconuenience
to ſay, howe Solomon doeth giue vs heere a newe aduertiſement.
And therefore, I haue taken this ſentence in the firſt ſenſe, leauing
the readers in their libertie to chooſe which of the two ſenſes they
ſhal like beſt, and moſt meeteſt.

10 *A reproofe entreth more into him that hath vnderſtanding, then an hundreth ſtripes into a foole.*

Foraſmuche as wee al doe offende in many thinges, it folow- Iam.3.2.
eth that what wiſedome ſoeuer we haue, yet is it not ſo perfect but
that wee haue great neede to be aduiſed and admoniſhed, to be cor-
rected and reprooued, that wee may become more wiſe and better
aduiſed. Solomon would giue vs the ſame here to vnderſtand. Alſo Pro.9.8.9.
they which are truely wiſe and learned, are not arrogant and pre-
ſumptuous, ſo farre as to thinke that they haue no neede to bee ad-
moniſhed and rebuked: but with al humblenes doe heare inſtructi-
on, and thinke wel of them that rebuke them. They looke not to
be handeled ſharply, but by the onely woorde of the meſſengers of 2.Sam.12.13.
God, they doe truely confeſſe their faultes: as Dauid at the Prea- Luk.22.61.
ching of Nathan the Prophet, and as Saint Peter at the onely looke 62.
of Ieſus Chriſt. Contrarily, the fooliſhe are ſo proude, arrogant,
and ſo hardened, that not only they diſdaine the rebukes by words,
and doe ieſt thereat, but alſo they kicke againſt the ſpurre, deſpigh-
ting and murmuring againſt the roddes & corrections of God: and
ſo muche it wanteth that they humbly and with patience receiue
them to amendment, that rather they waxe obſtinate and indurate,
and become worſe. Pharao King of Egypt is a glaſſe thereof: as we
may ſee from the beginning of the ſeuenth Chapter of Exodus, vn-
to the ende of the 14. Euen ſo are the Iewes alſo which were cha-
ſtened ſo farre as that they forſooke GOD, as a man might ſaye,
as it appeareth by the Scripture.

11 A ſe-

11 *A ſeditious perſon ſeeketh onely euil, and a cruel meſſenger ſhal be ſent againſt him.*

The beginning of this preſent ſentence may be taken after two ſenſes. The firſt is, That hee which is a rebel to God and his worde, and to them which haue charge from him, doeth ſhewe by his rebellion and reſiſtance that hee beareth hatred and malice, whereby hee deuiſeth nothing but to deſpight God, to tread his word vnder foote, and to hurt thoſe which exhort him in the name of GOD. The children of Iſrael haue thus done in al times: as the Scripture witneſſeth. They beganne euen at the departing out of Egypt, and ſo continued in the wildernes, and in the lande of Canaan. Our Lord Ieſus Chriſt doeth rebuke them for it. *Mat.23.34.* When we were vnder Poperie, liuing in infidelitie and ignorance, we were neuer a whit better. Let vs nowe take heede that we become not worſe, when the light of life doeth ſhine vnto vs. This firſt ſenſe agreeth wel: for the rebellion of ſuche, commeth becauſe they loue not God, nor their neighbours. Now they which haue no loue, can not but imagine euil. The ſeconde ſenſe is, That hee which thus rebelleth, doth tende to nothing but his deſtruction and ouerthrowe, ſeeing hee hath to doe with a ſtrong enemie: for albeit that hee dealeth as he thinketh good, with weake and frayle men: yet he riſeth vp againſt God.

Exo.16.7. *Num.14.11.* Beholde, this is for the ſeconde ſenſe, the which dependeth vpon the firſt: and foloweth it: for it foloweth wel, that if *a ſeditious perſon ſeeketh onely euil to his neighbour*, that euil again muſt happen to him: as hath bene ſhewed here before. The wicked man muſt needes fal into the pit that hee hath digged for other. Now after what ſorte ſoeuer the ſeditious ſeeketh the euil, hee is wel worthie that euil ſhoulde light vpon him: and therefore, that he might bee puniſhed, *A cruel meſſenger*, ſhalbe ſent. By the cruel meſſenger, hee meaneth al meanes by the which God afflicteth and puniſheth the ſeditious, for to deſtroy them, without any remedie, be they men or Deuils, yea Angels of heauen: bee it by peſtilence, famine, pouertie, warre or other ſickneſſe. To bee ſhorte, al things that are ſent vnto the ſeditious for to deſtroy him, howe good ſoeuer they bee of them ſelues, yet are they cruel meſſengers vnto the rebel: though by nature they are not ſuche. In this ſenſe the day of the Lord is called a cruel day; and the Aſſirians and Chaldeans cruel, and the Medes and Perſians, and the chaſtiſements of the Lorde cruel: The Angel of the Lorde was a cruel meſſenger vnto the Aſſirians.

Eſai.13.9
Ier.6.23.
& 50.42.
& 30.14.
Eſai.37.36

12 *It is better for a man to meete a Beare robbed of her whelpes, then a foole in his follie.*

Man by his firſt creation was made verie excellent, but by his ſinne hee became ſo vile and abiect, ſo curſed and wicked, that he is not woorthie of him ſelf, to be placed amongſt beaſtes, but ought to be ſet more lowe. The holie Scripture doeth compare him often vnto cruel beaſtes, as to Foxes, Wolues, Lions and Leopards. Herein it ſheweth after a ſort, that man is worſe then they: conſidering that theſe beaſtes doe folow the nature that God hath giuen them: and man of his owne malice hath corrupted his firſt nature, wherin hee was created, for to giue him ſelfe vnto al wickednes, making him ſelfe like the Deuil, which is the moſt dangerous, the ſtrongeſt and the moſt cruel beaſt to meete with al that is on the earth, for there is no force nor wickednes to bee compared vnto the ſame of the Deuil, as Saint Paule doeth wel ſhewe. Nowe ſeeing it is thus, it is vpon good cauſe that Solomon ſaieth, That it is not ſo dangerous to meete with a *Beare*, which hath newly loſt her whelps, then to haue to doe with a foole, that foloweth his fooliſhneſſe with a looſe bridle: and as touching our nature, corrupted and malitious, wee are al fooles and ledde by follie, from the which wee can not neither wil be exempted, but doe folowe it moſt haſtily, it foloweth therefore, that we are verie fierce and cruel, except that God by often admonitions, rebukes, threateninges and chaſtiſements, doe make vs ſoft and gentle. And thus, it is a verie dangerous thing to haue to doe with a man, before that God hath regenerated and renewed him by his holie Spirite, and hath mortified his members which are on earth. If then wee bee not ſo vngentle, nor ſo cruel as others, it commeth not of our goodneſſe, but of the onely mer-

Gen.1.26.27
Eccle.3.18
& 7.30.
Ephe.6.10
Coll.3.50.

cie of God, whereby hee hath changed and ſoftened vs.

Pſal.5.6.
& 18.26.
Collo.3.12.

Furthermore, let vs learne that follie is no ſmal vice, but a wickedneſſe greatly furious, by reaſon whereof the fooliſhe are vnequally yoked with other: and thus they are forſaken of al, the which is a great miſerie, for no man can dwel with them. And as by their violence and crueltie, they driue away other, euen ſo, God can not abide them in his preſence. And ſuche as they ſhew them ſelues towardes or againſt their neighbours, euen ſo wil God ſhew him ſelfe towardes them againe.

Let vs then take heede to folowe Saint Paule, which doeth admoniſhe vs thus, Nowe therefore as the electe of GOD holie and beloued, put on tender mercie, kindneſſe, humbleneſſe of minde, meekeneſſe, long ſuffering: forbearing one an other, and forgiuing one an other, if any man haue a quarrel to an other: euen as Chriſt forgaue you, euen ſo doe yee, &c.

Eſai.11.6.7.

And in this ſorte ſhal bee accompliſhed in vs, The Woolfe ſhall dwel with the Lambe, and the Leoparde ſhal lye with the Kid and the Calfe, and the Lion and the fat beaſt together, and a little childe ſhal leade them.

13 *Hee that rewardeth euil for good, euil ſhal not departe from his houſe.*

Exo.23.4.5.
Mat.5.44.
Rom.12,17
1.Pet.2.9.

The worldlinges and carnally minded, doe eſteeme and pronounce a man to bee of a fainte courage, when hee ſteppes not foorth to be reuenged of his enemies, and to yeelde them the like, or woorſe: but God iudgeth cleane contrarie, when he commandeth vs to doe good for euil vnto our enemies.

Whereuppon it followeth, that they are woorthie and valiant, which doe beare the iniuries and doe not render euil for euil, but rather good for euil.

It foloweth alſo, ſeeing that God hath commanded to doe good vnto our enemie, that hee which yeeldeth euil for euil, ſhal not goe vnpuniſhed, as a tranſgreſſour of the lawe: although that in reuenging hee ſeemeth not to offende againſt natural light. I ſay expreſly, he ſeemeth: for in this place, that which is called natural light are

diuiliſhe

deuiliſhe darkneſſes, with which the ſenſual man hath his mynde darkened, and can not knowe howe patient hee ſhoulde bee, and beare with his neighbours which fayle. Nowe if God puniſh them which yeelde euil for euil, by a ſtronger reaſon the vnthankful, vngentle and cruel which oppreſſe thoſe which haue done them good, ought to looke for ſharpe puniſhment. Solomon doeth plainely ſhewe this ſame, when hee ſayeth,

Euil ſhal not depart from his houſe. This is not alwayes ſeene with the eye: for the Lorde doeth ſuffer the vnthankful and cruel to proſper in this worlde, that they diſpoſe and order their houſes at their deſires, yea, euen a long time, in outwarde appearance: but his vengeance ceaſeth not for al that to be readie, for to be executed at time conuenient openly: the which he doeth vppon ſome later, and vpon the other ſooner ſending them great troubles. And yet he that ſuffereth not that they ſhould bee without euil: for by reaſon of their ingratitude and crueltie which they knowe to bee againſt nature, their conſciences doeth reprooue them, and haue their mindes in continual feare, and are terrified with the iudgement of God. For albeit they labour by al meanes to take their pleaſure and bee mery, for to forget the euil they doe, or perſwade themſelues to beleeue that they doe none: yet ſeeing that they yeelde euil for good, they reſiſt againſt nature, and fight againſt it, they cannot auoid but that their wickedneſſe will appeare before them, and conuince them in their conſcience that they are wicked: and therfore they are in a continual trembling and fearefulnes, although they labour ſore to aſſure themſelues and to be glad: For there is no peace to the wicked. And ſo they beginne their hel euen here both they and their houſholdes which folowe their ſteppes and wayes.

Now foraſmuch as by our corrupted nature we are al inclined and geuen to yeeld euil for good, we ought wel to feare this threatning, ſeeing we deſire that al ſhould be wel and proſper in our houſes and families, both in our time, and after our deceaſe from generation to generation.

Let vs take heede, that we folow not our corruption leaſt wee be of the number of thoſe againſt whom the Prophet Ieremie doth

Ier.18.19. both pray and propheſie. Therefore to be exempted from ſuch euil, wee muſt bee gouerned by the holie Ghoſt, which may make vs to yeeld that duetie which wee owe vnto our neighbours.

14 *The beginning of ſtrife is as one that openeth the waters: therefore ere the contention be medled with, leaue off.*

It is a verie dangerous thing to breake howe litle ſoeuer it be, a browe or bancke which keepeth in a riuer in his courſe, leaſt it ſhoulde ſpreade ouer the erable lande or meddowes, or through townes or villages: for ſo ſoone as ther is but neuer ſo litle a breach begonne, if the riuer beginne once to grow and to ſwel, the violence & rage of the water wil eaſily enlarge the breach: & thẽ there is an inundation & flood made, which bringeth great temporal hurt whereas the ouerflowing happeneth.

Nowe if wee feare ſuch an opening for the danger or hurt that foloweth, wee muſt needes feare to begin a ſtriefe, and to ſtirre vp any debate amongſt our neighhours of what qualitie or condition ſoeuer they bee, but chiefly betweene kinges and Princes, and lordes of the earth. For looke by how much as the riuer is the greater, by ſo much ſhal the breache of the banke bee more dangerous: euen ſo alſo by howe much as men are of greater ſtrength aud power, by ſo muche is the ſtriefe more dangerous which is begunne to be raiſed betweene thẽ. We ought then to feare to begin any ſtrife: for as by a breache and opening of the banke, the waters breake in, which bring great hurt to the goods on the land: euen ſo alſo the beginning of a ſtrife, bringeth greate hurte both to the bodies and *1.Ioh.2.3.14.* ſoules of men: for hatreds, ſpites and deſires of vengeance are kindled, which kil the ſoules. Alſo by the beginning of ſtrife are rayſed ſeditions, inſurrections, frayes and cruel warres, and much blood is ſpilt, beſides theftes and ſpoylings, beſides whoredomes, and adulteries, and beſides other oppreſsions. Solomon maketh this compariſon, when he ſaith,

The beginning of ſtrife is as one that openeth the waters, &c. Not that al thinges are like and equal, as hath beene alreadie ſhewed, and alſo may be ſeene by experience, but Solomō maketh this compariſon, for to ſhewe that it is verie harde to let and ſtop, that many euils ſhoulde not folowe vpon the beginning of ſtryfe. And therefore hee admoniſheth that wee ſhoulde take heede from beginning of debate, ſaying, *Therfore ere the contention,&c.* Hee doeth heere teache vs, that if wee ſee our neighbours to bee incouraged to make debate with vs, let vs bee readie to ſeeke peace and reconciliation with them, and let vs be ſo gentle, gracious and patient, that wee may leade our neighbours vnto quietnes, and to deſiſt and leaue off the euil that they deuiſe. And for to doe this wel, we muſt take heede from nouriſhing of hatred in our hearts: for hatred ſtirreth vp ſtrifes. *Pro.10.12* And ſo to leaue off wel, before the contention bee medled with, wee muſt bee enclined to brotherly loue.

15 *Hee that iuſtifieth the wicked, and hee that condemneth the iuſt, euen they both are abhomination to the Lorde.*

Wee al doe naturally knowe that God loueth the righteous and keepeth thē: & contrarily, that he hateth the wicked, & letteth them periſhe, yea, doeth puniſhe and deſtroy them. Wee know alſo naturally that we muſt be folowers of God, hating euil, and perſecuting it, & to bee louers of goodneſſe, & folowers of it, and wee would be accounted to be thus affectioned: and are readie to think and pronounce of others which doe the contrarie, that they be no honeſt men. Wee alſo iudge naturally, that the righteous ought to be mainteined and conſerued, and the wicked reiected and caſt off. Nowe for to helpe this natural iudgement, and for to make them which ſhal ſtande againſt it more vnexcuſable, God hath giuen vs his lawe by writing, by the which hee commaundeth vs the good, and forbiddeth vs the euil, not onely giuing vnto vs the twoo tables of ſtone, but alſo diuers other commaundementes and forbiddinges, for the expoſition of the ſaide tables: as wee may ſee it in the Bookes of Moyſes: whoſe doctrine Solomon folowing, ſayeth,

Exo.23.6.
Leui.19.15.
Deut.1.17
& 16.19.
Eſai.5.23.
& 59.14.
Ier.21.12.
& 223.
Amos 5.6.

He that iuſtifieth the wicked, &c. When hee ſpeaketh thus, hee hath regarde vnto that which is ſaide: for to declare this ſame wel, the Lord hath added vnto his lawe, the Prophets, which haue often cried out vpon the wicked Iudges. And foraſmuch as in iuſtifying the wicked, wee goe againſt the right and natural writing, wee woorthily deſerue to be abhorred of the Lorde, which is authour not onely of the lawe written, but alſo of natural knowledge: for we haue no knowledge, nor natural light, but that which hee hath giuen vs. Againſt the which if wee ſtande, wee are worſe then bruit beaſtes which folowe their nature: and in going againſt the lawe written, we are like vnto ſeruantes and maides which deſpiſe that which they be ordeined and commaunded to doe about their maiſters woorke, and labour to marre al for to vexe and to deſpite them whom they ſhoulde pleaſe and obey. Nowe if ſuch, ſeruantes and maydes are hated of vs, if we haue any ſuch, it foloweth rightly that wee muſt be in abhomination to the Lord, whome wee ought to obey and pleaſe, if wee ſtande agaynſt the Law that he hath giuen vs by writing. Whervpon foloweth eternall death: for none can obteine ſaluation except he pleaſe the Lorde God. Wherefore the wicked iudges ought well to tremble: for this ſentence is cheefly directed to them, and alſo the threatnings which are in the places before alleadged.

16 *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of the foole to get wiſedome, and he hath no heart?*

The flatterers which deſire to make their particular profite with the riche, howe wicked ſoeuer the riche bee, ceaſe not to labour to perſuade them to beleeue that they are good men, and that they doe very wiſely whatſoeuer they take in hande: and cheefly when they are giuen to gather together: and contrarily, the poore are deſpiſed, and are counted fooles, except they laboure to become rich: and thus it ſeemeth vnto the worldlings that wiſedome commeth from riches. But let the wicked man which is here named a foole, haue in his hand readie for to giue ſo great a price as he can: or that hee hath for to holde it and to keepe it, yet ſhall hee not be wiſe. For firſt of all ſuch fooles deſpiſe and reiect all meanes fit and meete to come by wiſedome, and alſo refuſe the thing it ſelfe. Secondly, bleſſed is the man which findeth wiſedome. Wherevppon foloweth that no ſufficient price that may be giuen, can get it. But the meanes fit and meete to come by wiſedome, is to apply our heartes thereto: the which the foole can not, nor will doe: as Solomon heere ſheweth, when he ſayth, *The foole hath no hearte.* Leauing then the fooles, let vs ſet our mindes, our heartes and vnderſtandinges, vpon the pure woorde of God: and we ſhall obteine wiſedome by the grace and gift of GOD. Sith then it is the Lord who giueth wiſedome, the which we muſt ſeeke with al our heart and we haue no heart that is ought woorth: Therefore it foloweth wee muſt demaunde a cleane hearte as Dauid did.

Pro. 1.7.22. & 3.13.

Pro.2.1.

Pſal.51.12.

17 *A freend loueth at al times, and a brother is borne for aduerſitie.*

They that are rich or mightie, which haue credit and authoritie, they whoſe matters happen as they woulde haue them, and are in great proſperitie, doe finde many which doe honour and reuerence them, which declare themſelues to be at their commaundement and ſhew them great tokens of loue, labouring to make them beleeue that they are their ſingular freendes, but if fortune change and growe to woorſe, they which before ſhewed them ſelues their freendes, doe mocke at them, turne their backes vpon them, or perſecute them, where they ought to be more ready and careful to help them, if they were truely freendes: for in neceſſitie a freende is knowne.

Wherevppon foloweth rightly, that they which ſhewe them ſelues freendes in proſperitie, were not freendes indeede. For, as ſayth Solomon, *A freende loueth at all times.* Hee regardeth not whither it be day or night, whether they bee in aduerſitie or proſperitie, in a ſtorme or fayre weather, in peace or in war in power or in weaknes, in honour or ſhame, in riches or pouerty, but the true friende loueth & declareth chiefly his loue, whē his neighbour is in trouble, griefe and vexation, in ſorowe, affliction, and neceſſitie: yea, though hee were hated and perſecuted of all the world.

Solomon ſheweth wel this ſame, when hee addeth, *And a brother is borne for aduerſitie.* Foraſmuche as the friende is borne as a brother to tribulation (ſeeing that the brother neuer ought to forſake his brother for any miſerie that hee ſuffereth, but ought to haue care of him, chiefly in his afflictions: for then haue wee alſo moſt neede of true friendes) hee ſheweth wel, that wee muſt bee friendes vnto the needie and painful, and to them which ſuffer calamitie and miſerie, and brotherly to helpe them with al our power: for the true brother imployeth and beſtoweth him ſelfe gladly altogether for his brother, ſparing nothing that hee hath, or may haue, til he hath deliuered his brother out of affliction. And when hee ſpeaketh of birth, in the which the creature is al newe, and beginneth to bee, hee ſheweth that hee which hath ſhewed him ſelfe to be a true friende to his neighbour in proſperitie, that in time of miſerie hee wil begin to declare vnto him more abundantly his loue, not by wordes onely, but in deede: as wee are admoniſhed by the Scripture in expreſſe examples and teſtimonies. Abraham may bee an example, in the deliuerance of Lot: and alſo Moyſes when hee ſmote the Egyptian, and in the labour that hee tooke to deliuer the children of Iſrael: Ioſeph likewiſe.

Gen.14.14
Exo.1.12.
Gen.43.
Exo.22.25.
Leui.19.9.
10.18.
Deu.15.7.
Iam.2.15.16
1.Ioh.3.17.

As touching the witneſſes, they are many in number. He ſheweth vs alſo by this birth, that if wee haue not ſhewed ſome ſigne of friendſhip vnto our neighbour, when hee was in proſperitie, that yet we ſhould begin to loue him in his neceſſitie, in helping him after our abilitie and power. By theſe things wee may knowe, and alſo by experience, that the poore, the fatherles, the widowes, and the ſtrangers, haue not many friendes.

18 *A man deſtitute of vnderſtanding, toucheth the hande, and becommeth ſuretie for his neighbour.*

Albeit that Solomon doeth attribute want of vnderſtanding, or faintneſſe of heart vnto a man which becommeth pledge for his neighbour, yet hee pretendeth not to turne vs away from anſwering for our neighbours, when neceſſitie requireth, and ſo that wee may doe it without bringing our ſelues and our familie into danger of begging our bread miſerably, and not that ſtrangers ſhoulde bee ſet at eaſe at our coſt : as hath beene handeled, Chapter 6. verſe 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

19 *Hee loueth tranſgreſſion, that loueth ſtriefe : and hee that exalteth his gate, ſeeketh deſtruction.*

Foraſmuche as there is none of vs that woulde bee eſteemed a tranſgreſſour, neither is there any man that deſireth (as hee thinketh) his deſtruction, let vs vnderſtande, that when Solomon doth ſhewe vs that from ſtrife wee come to delight for to tranſgreſſe, & that frō pride or exaltation, which is ſignified by *him that exalteth his gate*, proceedeth death and deſtruction, let vs vnderſtande, I ſay, that hee doeth exhorte vs that wee ſhoulde turne away from al ſtriefes, which come of enimitie, hatred, malice, and appetite of vengeance.

Nowe hee ſayth, that hee which delighteth to haue ſuche ſtrifes, delighteth to doe euil, giuing himſelfe vnto al ſinne and vices, in committing the which he thinketh to ouercome his enimie with whome hee is at ſtrife : and ſo ſtrife is the roote of much miſchiefe, when we are led to ſtrife through hatred and enuie : contrarily, the ſtrife ſhoulde bee mainteined , when it requireth the maintenance of the honour and glory of God, his pure trueth , and the edification of his Church, againſt the Heretikes, and to defende the righteous & innocent againſt the violēce of the wicked. He that loueth ſuch debates, loueth not tranſgreſſion, but doeth abhorre it,
and loueth trueth : for he followeth that which God deſireth and *Iere.17.17.*
commandeth. Let vs alſo vnderſtand that he doeth admoniſhe vs 18.19.
to put of al pride and highneſſe of minde, when hee threateneth him *Gen.11*
with deſtruction which exalteth his gate. Wherefore, let vs not be *Eſa.36.& 37.*
like vnto them which builded Babel: nor like vnto Zennacherib, Na- *Dan.4.*
buchadnezer, nor Abſolom. Wee are alſo exhorted after a ſort that *2.Sam.15.*

wee ſhoulde bee carefull to builde the Churche and houſe of God, and to make our ſelues freendes in communicating of our goods vnto the needie: and in ſo doing, we ſhal haue not onely gates made of corruptible ſtones, but alſo eternal tabernacles in the heauens.

20 *The frowarde hearte findeth no good: and he that hath a naughtie tongue, ſhal fall into euill.*

Wee may ſee before our eies that the wicked and froward haue temporal felicitie and ioy, that they are at their eaſe, and doe greatly floriſhe: and therefore, it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that Solomon ſtandeth againſt experience, when he ſaith,

The frowarde heart findeth no good, &c. But if wee conſider the nature of the frowarde heart, which is to deuiſe euil continually, and to giue no reſt vnto his minde, wee ſhal knowe that the froward heart howe floriſhing ſoeuer hee bee, ſhal not finde the good that is ſpoken of in this place: for Solomon ſpeaketh not heere of temporall goods which are common both to good and to bad: but of thoſe goods whereof Dauid ſpeaketh in his Pſalme.34. ver.13. If ſuch goods are not founde by the froward heart, it is no wonder, for hee neither asketh nor ſeeketh it: the which is required in the finding thereof, and alſo hee is in abhomination too the Lorde.

Nowe the Lorde doeth not giue vnto the frowarde whome hee hateth and abhorreth, that which hee hath ordeined properly for his children, whome hee loueth, and in whom hee taketh his delight, but ſendeth them euil, whereinto they fal and periſhe. Solomon pronounceth this fal and perdition, ſaying, *And he that hath a naughtie tongue, ſhall fall into euill.* For although he ſpeaketh heere of the tongue, yet doeth hee not ſay any thing which is not ioyned to the former part, and which followeth not alſo: for ſith there can come nothing out of the poke and ſacket, but that which is within, euen ſo it followeth, that it is neceſſary for the frowarde heart to haue alſo a lewd & naughtie tongue, the which ſpeaketh frõ the abundance therof. And ſo, they which ſpeake euil, cannot be ſaid to bee good and honeſt men, if they wil not lie, and falſifie the vnfallible

Mat.7.7.
Pro.11.20.

Mat.12.34.

fallible trueth, which calleth the Phariſees which ſpake euil, Generation of vipers. And alſo foraſmuch as the frowarde hearte doeth finde no good, he muſt then needes finde euil, that if it bee in this worlde openly, yet hel ſhal finde him. And therefore, let vs not bee enuious to be of a frowarde heart, nor naughtie in our tongues, but let vs folowe Solomon. *Pro.4.23.* And becauſe it is the gift of God, wee muſt aske it of him.

21 *Hee that begetteth a foole, getteth himſelfe ſorowe: and the father of a foole can haue no ioy.*

Foraſmuche as it is a bleſſing of God to beget children, and to haue kindred, it is no reaſon that we ſhould bee greeued when wee haue a multitude of children, but confeſſing truely that it is the gift of God, wee muſt therefore giue him thankes and praiſes, in following the good old fathers, which reioyced when the Lord gaue them linage. And for to continewe in this ioy, the fathers and mothers muſt bee careful and diligent for to enſtruct their children in the feare of the Lord, admoniſhing, correcting, and chaſtening them, for to make them obediēt vnto God, which commandeth them, to honour their father and mother. *Gen.4.1.25. & 21.6. 1.Sam.2. Luke.68.* And for to obey them wel, let them folow what S.Paul ſaith, Children, obey your father and mother in the Lorde: for that is righteous. *Ephe.6.1. Collo.3.20.*

Now for to leade them rightly thereto, let the fathers and mothers bee careful, of that which Saint Paul doeth admoniſhe them, *Ephe.6.4.* And yee fathers, prouoke not your children to wrath: but bring them vp in inſtruction, and information of the Lord: And this they muſt not doe onely with word, but chiefly with holy conuerſation, giuing them good example: let them followe alſo that which Saint Paule teacheth. Let the elder men bee ſober, honeſt diſcrete, ſound in the faith, in loue, and in patience. *Titus.2.2.* Otherwiſe the children in ſteede to ſtande in feare, to bee obedient, humble and modeſt wil bee proude, rebellious, arrogant and diſſolute: and thus in ſteed too bee wiſe, they ſhal bee fooles: and in ſteede of giuing ioy to their parentes, they ſhal bring them ſorowe: For *hee that begetteth a foole &c.* Solomon hath already heeretofore fore-

Pro.10.1. & 15.20

taught vs this ſame. And foraſmuche as parentes do not conceaue any ſorowe for their children, except folly appeare, the which cannot bee ſeene til they are paſt their infancie, therefore it followeth that to beget, is not taken for the firſt generation, wherein the children haue no knowledge nor diſcretion, but for the diſpoſition that the children do get, either by the negligence and wickednes of their parents, or els by the wilfulneſſe, and obſtinacie of the children themſelues, or els by them both. If the diſpoſition come by the fault of the parents, then can they not of themſelues bee ſory, for the folly of their children, but doe rather delight therein, take pleaſure and reioyce thereat. But wee muſt not thinke for al this but that Solomon ſaith true: for God can tel howe to finde out ſuche parentes, & conuert their ioy into ſorow, in raiſing vp their children againſt them, or giuing vp their children vnto ſuch wickedneſſe that they ſhal come to the gallowes, or els by deſtroying both them ſelues and their children by diuers miſeries and afflictions. But if hauing doone their duetie, by admonitions, corrections, and chaſtiſinges, they coulde beget none but fooles, they ſhal be ſorowfull, but yet it ſhalbe to the hurt of their children. Wee may apply this ſame vnto Superiours and ſubiectes, to Miniſters and their people.

22 *A ioyfull heart cauſeth good health: but a ſorowfull minde drieth the bones.*

There is no man but vnderſtandeth and confeſſeth, that if a ſicke man doe willingly and gladly take Phiſicke, but that it may be profitable for to reſtore ſtrength to the members weakened, and good colour vnto the face againe, which was decayed by ſickneſſe: contrarily, if a man bee vexed and troubled, and that hee delighteth in nothing, nor in any good medicine that is preſcribed him, it ſhal not profite his body, but wil come to nothing, and vaniſhe away without reſtoring him. Solomon doth plainely pronounce it, when hee ſaith,

A ioyful heart cauſeth good health: but a ſorowfull minde dryeth the bones. And in this hee teacheth vs, that wee may not giue ouer reioyſing, though that God doeth ſmite vs and ſende vs ſickneſſe: but that with ioy wee ſhoulde vſe the meanes ordeined of God for the recouering of helth, ſtrength, and force, that we may not bee vnprofitable, as dry bones, but may bee fit and apt to ſerue God and our neighbours in the vocation whereto wee are called. And ſo hee teacheth vs howe wee muſte vſe the thinges that God giueth vs for this body, that wee make them not vnprofitable and vnfruitful: and hee ſheweth vs that wee muſt not deſpiſe our bodies: for God alſo hath not diſdained them, when hee created al thinges for them, and that he would adminiſter vnto them al things neceſſary for them: as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte doeth teache vs, when hee ſaith vnto vs, That wee ſhoulde aske of our heauenly father, that hee would giue vs this day our daily bread. Alſo he hath created both the Phiſition and Phiſike, reteining neuertheleſſe to himſelfe the healing. Therefore in vſing ioyfully the helpe of Phiſitions, and of medicines, let vs not put our truſt therin, but in God: *Eccl.38.* not doing as Aſa did. *2.Chro.16.[illegible]*

Nowe albeit that in this ſentence wee may learne that which hath beene ſaide, yet wee muſt vnderſtande that Solomon pretendeth by corporal thinges to bring vs vnto ſpiritual. And therefore that our bones may not dry away, leaſt wee periſhe without remedie, let vs take heede that when wee are ſicke, yea dead by our ſins, that wee bee not greeued that the chiefe Phiſition Ieſus Chriſte ſhoulde come vnto vs, and exhort vs vnto repentance, whereunto *Luke.15.4* let vs bee giuen with ioy: as alſo there is ioy in it. &c,

23 *A wicked man taketh a gift out of the boſome to wreſt the waies of iudgement.*

There are many which perſwade themſelues to beleeue that they doe no euil in taking giftes, prouided that they haue not exacted nor required them, and that no man ſeeth any thing, for it is the cuſtome of wicked iudges, which woulde be in eſtimation, more to feare men then God, or to labour to ſet God wholy in contempt and forgetfulneſſe, and haue their reſpect vnto men. But what wiſedome ſoeuer they challenge, yet are they wicked: as they ſhoulde wel vnderſtande, when God forbiddeth iudges expreſly too take giftes, and that hee calleth them which receiue giftes, theeues and murtherers. Solomon alſo doth giue them it to vnderſtande, when he ſaith,

A wicked man taketh a gift, &c. He diſcouereth and openeth the wickedneſſe of ſuch iudges: firſt of al when hee ſaith that they take it out of the boſome: for hee ſheweth that in taking the gift ſecretly, they doe againſt their conſcience, and that they haue more reuerence to men then to God, or that they bee of the number of thoſe of whome the Pſalmiſt complaineth. Secondly when hee ſaith,

Pſal.94.3.

To wreſt the waies of iudgement. For he ſheweth that hee violently pulleth the right from him to whome it belongeth, as hee knoweth wel, but his couetouſneſſe doeth compel him to counteruaile the gift to him which hath giuen it him, as Solomon hath ſhewed heeretofore, ſaying, *that whereſoeuer the gift is giuen, it proſpereth.* And thus Solomon doeth ſhewe vs that the iudges, which receiue giftes, neither can, nor wil adminiſter iuſtice, and therefore they rightly deſerue to bee called wicked. Let iudges and magiſtrates vnderſtand that they are heere admoniſhed, that if they wil rightly adminiſter iuſtice, they muſt wholy abſteine from taking of giftes. Alſo they ought to ſhunne flatteries and worldly honours, and to haue no reſpect of perſons, for by theſe thinges they wreſt iudgement, aſwel as by the receite of giftes, but the holy Scripture doeth more often make mention of giftes, becauſe that giftes are of greater power, ſo that they which loue them, wil be ready for to betray their fathers and mothers.

24 *Wiſedome is in the face of him that hath vnderſtanding: but the eies of a foole are in the corners of the worlde.*

There are many men which thinke that they cannot be wiſe, except they viſite and ſee farre countries, and except they can vnderſtande diuers languages, and except they giue their eies to beholde, and their mindes to conſider the faſhions and manners of diuers peoples and nations, and except they had prooued many thinges: but the true wiſedome requireth no man to trot hither nor runne thither, for to bee talked with, but ſhee doeth offer her ſelfe vnto thoſe which giue their mindes and vnderſtanding vnto the woorde of the Lorde, for to beleeue it and obey it. Such men ſo attentiue and learned in the worde, which is our only wiſedome and prudence, neuer want wiſedome, as Solomon doeth ſhewe it, ſaying,

Pro.2.1.

Wiſedome is in the face, or in the preſence of the wiſe: but hee that wandereth hither and thither for to make himſelfe wiſe, is deſtitute of wiſedome and prudence: for hee is a foole: as Solomon doeth pronounce, ſaying, *But the eyes of a foole, &c.* Notwithſtãding wee wil not condemne the Queene of Saba of fooliſhneſſe, for the voyage that ſhe made vnto Ieruſalem. For then there was wiſedome but in Iewrie, where the woorde of God and his ſeruant were, and that tyme there was no ſuche wiſedome in al the worlde as was the ſame of Solomon. Our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt alſo hath allowed the voyage of the ſame Queene. Wee wil not condemne the Apoſtles of our Lorde, which wandered vp and downe through the worlde: for it was done at the commandement of Ieſus Chriſt, and was not taken in hande for to learne wiſedome: for before that they departed from Ieruſalem they were filled with the holy Ghoſt, which is the ſpirite of wiſedome: but they went to winne wiſe men vnto our Lorde, by the preaching of the ſame wiſedome wherewith they were indewed. Wee wil not alſo condemne thoſe of follie which wanting this wiſedom in their countrie, ſeeke out the places, where God hath planted his pure worde, which is the true wiſedome.

1.Kings.10
1.Kin.11.12.
Mat.12.42.
Acts.2.4.
Eſay.11.2.

25 *A fooliſhe ſonne is a griefe vnto his father, and a heauineſſe vnto her that bare him.*

When Solomon hath alreadie ſo often reprooued the fooliſhe ſonne, and praiſed the wiſe childe: and not contented therewith doeth ſtill rebuke the fooliſhe childe, hee ſheweth wel that it is very needful that fathers and mothers, and all ſuperiours and gouernours, ſhoulde bee very wiſe, that they may teache wiſedome vnto their children, vnto their ſubiectes, & to thoſe which

Pro.10.1.
& 13.1.
& 15.5.20.

they haue in charge and gouernement. Hee ſheweth alſo that it is a very deteſtable thing both before God and men, which haue any good feeling, that *A fooliſh ſonne*, which by contempt of holy and honeſt, modeſt, and humble conuerſation doeth vexe and torment his parents, to whome hee oweth al honour and reuerence, al obedience and ſubmiſſion, al pleaſure and ſeruice. Hee ſheweth further by ſo many reprehenſions that the fooliſh children wil not gladly bee amended, but doe delight in follie, and bee hardened therein by cuſtome, and perſeuerance in wickedneſſe. And thus follie is ſo familiar and acquainted with them that it is almoſt vnpoſſible for to heale them of it. Wherefore let the fathers and mothers, and alſo al gouernours of youth, not bee ſlouthful and negligent. And when for to ſignifie the mother he ſaith,

Her that bare him, hee doeth giue vs to vnderſtande that there is greate ingratitude and vnthankefulnes, yea crueltie in the fooliſh ſonne, when in vexing his mother, hee wil not confeſſe the great bleſſing that he hath receiued by her, when ſhe did beare him, nine mouthes in her wombe with great paine and many ſorowes, and that with extreeme trauaile ſhee brought him foorth into the worlde, and with great care ſhee did nource and bring him vp tenderly in his infancie and youth.

26 *Surely it is not good to condemne the iuſt, nor that the Princes ſhoulde ſmite ſuch for equitie.*

Wee might meruaile why Solomon ſetteth downe that which the moſt idiot and ignorant doth know and confeſſe, for a notable ſentence and prouerbe. It might wel ſeeme that it were for nothing that hee hath pronounced ſuch a ſentence, ſeeing alſo that the moſt wicked doe agree theretoo. But the ſcripture requireth not onely confeſſion of mouth, but true conſent of hearte. Nowe though the wicked haue goodly ſhewes for to counterfaite themſelues to bee honeſt and good men, and make vs beleeue that they woulde not conſent that any righteous and faythful, little or greate, ſhoulde bee in any wiſe troubled, becauſe they knowe naturally that it is not wel doone: neuertheleſſe they ceaſſe not to be fleſhed, to doe hurt and violence vnto the innocent, iuſt, and faithful man, they are of ſo frowarde and wicked a minde, and conſcience corrupted. And therefore, when Solomon ſaith,

Surely it is not good to condemne the iuſt: It is not chiefly to teache vs that wee ſhoulde not condemne the iuſt: for the ſame is ſo wel knowne, that it may make thoſe which do contrary vnexcuſable. But it is to reproove the tyranny and violence of the wicked which haue authoritie and power, and to make them feele that they doe againſt their conſcience. And this is chiefly directed vnto kings and lords of the earth, becauſe that without regarde to right and equitie, they woulde haue al thinges to bee doone after their will and fantaſie. Wee may thus vnderſtande it, by that that hee maketh mention heere *of ſmiting* princes for equitie, by which are ſignified al good gouernours, which are often moleſted and preſſed to pronounce wicked ſentences, for the pleaſure of their ſuperiours. This ſerueth alſo for to admoniſhe kinges and ſuperiours of the earth, not to do wrong vnto the righteous, but that they ſhoulde mainteine them, and conſerue them: and that if they haue good gouernours and magiſtrates in their countrey and lordſhips, that they ſhoulde admoniſh and ſtirre them vp to iuſtice and iudgement, rather then to trouble and torment them for iudging rightly. And herein we haue almoſt a repetition of the 15. verſe, the which repetition is very neceſſary, for to rebuke the tyrãny & crueltie of the great, the which is ſo deepely rooted in their heartes, that their wil ſtandeth for a lawe. And when they which commit euill, ſhoulde bee abhorred, chaſtized and rooted out, hee ſheweth that wee ſhoulde not ſuffer tyrants to beare rule.

27 *Hee that hath knowledge, ſpareth his woordes: and a man of vnderſtanding is of an excellent ſpirite.*

There is neither man nor woman but doeth praiſe him ſelfe in his hart, & we all doe deſire naturally to appeare learned, though we be ignorant, and feele and iudge it in our conſciences: and euen the moſt ignorant doe ſtriue by many wordes to winne eſtimation and reputation. This is prooued by experience after diuers ſortes: and amongſt other wee ſhal ſee the ſophiſtical doctours and diſputers, which woulde ſhewe them ſelues by long and diuers diſputations to bee good diuines, whereas they vnderſtande nothing of that which belongeth to God. Wee may thus ſpeake of them after Saint Paule. And as touching humane artes, they which knowe leaſt of them, wil ſpeake of them moſt boldly. Solomon doeth ſhew vs wel, that wee muſt make no account of ſuche people, when hee ſaith, *1.Tim.1.4 & 6.3 2.Tim.2.15 16.17.23*

Hee that hath knowledge, ſpareth his woordes, &c. Wherein wee muſt learne, that hee which hath true knowledge of any thing, ſpeaketh not thereof at aduenture and vnconſiderately, but he marketh fit opportunitie, hee conſidereth how, when and before that neede requireth him to open his mouth. And heerein hee ſheweth that he hath not a flying ſpirit nor ſenſeles mind but a ſtaied and ſetteled minde, which is not toſſed aboue meaſure to thruſt out wordes, but wayeth what hee hath to ſay. The ſame commeth of great excellencie, whereof they are partakers which are not delighted with folly nor with ignorance, but are carefull to know and vnderſtande profitable and neceſſary thinges: and chiefly by the worde, which is our wiſedome and knowledge. Solomon doeth affirme it when he ſaith,

And a man of vnderſtanding is of an excellent ſpirite. Now foraſmuch as the excellencie of the ſpirite is not giuen vs that wee ſhoulde hide it (for a candle is not lighted for to bee put vnder a buſhel, but vpon a candleſticke: and it lighteth al that are in the houſe) let vs not thinke that when Solomon praiſeth him which ſpareth his woordes, that hee woulde haue vs dumbe, nor that wee ſhoulde feare, as greeued to make our neighbours partakers of our knowledge, and vnderſtanding: ſeeing alſo that it is the nature and propertie of wiſedome and vnderſtanding for to communicate themſelues: but hee would haue vs to ſpeake wiſely, the which dwelleth and abideth with diſcretion. *Pro.1.21*

28 *Euen a foole when he holdeth his peace, is counted wiſe: and he that ſtoppeth his lippes, is prudent.*

Commonly fooles doe talke very muche , vttering not onely vaine,friuolous,and pleaſant thinges to the fleſhe,but moſt often vngodly and wicked thinges, abhominable and deteſtable thinges : as flattering woordes, lyes,falſe witneſſinges,ſlaunders,othes,periuries,curſinges,blaſphemies,and deniynges of God. This is the common trade of wicked fooles to vſe ſuche filthineſſe and infections,and to ſpue them out of their ſtincking mouthes, becauſe that their inward parts ouerfloweth:but the wiſe,which haue no deſire but to pleaſe God,& to profite their neighbors,do diligently heare and are ſober in wordes. They loue better to bee ſchollers and diſciples,then to be maiſters and doctours : except they know that their duetie requireth to ſpeake,for to ſtoppe the mouthes of the wicked,and to inſtruct the ignorant,and to arme them , that afterwards they may reſiſt the euill ſpeaker,as need and opportunitie ſhal require.

Pſal.5.1.

Nowe becauſe that in ſobrietie of wordes their wiſedome ſhineth,when the fooles diſſemblingly doe holde their peace, they are counted wiſe and learned : it is not therefore to ſay that they are ſuche : but if wee deſire to ſhewe our ſelues wiſe and prudent, as behoueth, wee muſt keepe backe thinges which are hurtful and bring damage,and which ſerue for nothing but to diſhonour God, and to offende our neighbours . Solomon hath ſhewed vs the ſame.

Nowe let vs note , that to ſhewe our ſelues wiſe and prudent in holding our peace it is not enough too vtter nothing that is euill : but wee muſt abſtaine from al hurt, or rather to ſuffer with patience the iniuries and wronges,then to doe the ſame vnto our enimies and aduerſaries, being aſſured that God wil not forſake vs, but wil deliuer vs at the time appointed : for the ſilence that pleaſeth God conſiſteth chiefly in patience, in faith and repentance.

Pro.10.19.
20.21.

The xviii. Chapter.

1 *HE that is at libertie, ſeeketh freely, and ſtudieth euery doctrine, for the deſire thereof hee wil ſeparate himſelfe to ſeeke it, and occupie him ſelfe in al wiſdome.*

IT is a common ſaying, whoſoeuer hath a fellowe hath alſo a maiſter: for hee cannot doe whatſoeuer he would, but muſt ſometimes diſſemble, and ſuffer thinges which pleaſe him not, and to leaue many workes that hee would gladly take in hand, becauſe hee thinketh them either profitable or neceſſary, and muſt ſubiect himſelfe and agree with his fellowe, for to mainteine familiaritie and friendſhip, and to haue peace, and to auoide and ſhunne greater hurt.

Nowe if betweene felowes and companions the matter thus ſtandeth bounde, it foloweth wel that hee which is bonde and ſlaue, cannot folowe his deſires, but muſt yeelde him ſelfe ſubiect and obedient to the wil and commaundement of his maiſter and lorde, and cannot meddle with ſuche workes as come in his minde, but is bounde and tyed to the will of his maiſter. Wherefore it ſeemeth right, that there is nothing better then to bee at libertie that wee may doe according to our wil, and followe our counſelles. And if wee doe make this accounte of corporall libertie amongeſt the worldlinges, the children of GOD ought muche more to ſet by their ſpiritual libertie, of the which we are depriued through the corruption of our nature, and are the ſlaues of ſinne, our fleſh conſenting therto, & which to obey, it fighteth againſt the ſpirite: in ſuch wiſe as we do not that which we would before God. But if wee wil be ſet free, & to do our wil at libertie, let vs take heede for

Ioh.8.34.
Rom.6.16
& 7.14.
Gala.5.17.

to ſeparate vs from ſinne, in not ſuffering it to rule in our mortall bodies: as wee are admoniſhed. In this ſorte wee ſhal bee deliuered, ſeparated and made free for to followe our deſires, which ſhall not bee to obey the fleſhe and his luſtes, but for to ſerue God willingly and gladly, according to his worde: which is al our doctrine: for in ſeeking it after our deſire, and thruſting our ſelues into the ſame by faith and good woorkes, we ſhall bee furniſhed with neceſſary doctrine to get wiſdome, knowledge and vnderſtanding withal. And there is nothing that wee can deſire further, except that wee ſhoulde perſeuer and profite more and more in the ſame. But wee cannot attaine the ende thereof, vnleſſe wee fight valiantly againſt the Diuel and the worlde, yea euen againſt our ſelues. Saint Paule doeth wel giue vs this ſame to vnderſtande, when hee woulde haue vs armed with al the armour of God, and when hee ſheweth vs the cōtrarietie which is betwene the fleſh & the ſpirit. Therfore when by the worde of the Lorde wee labour to reduce the corrupted and diſſolute, they muſt not complaine that wee wil take away their libertie, and make them ſubiects.

Rom.6.12.
& 13.13.14
Gal.5.16.
1.Pet.2.11.
Ephe.6.10.
Rom.6.13.
& 7.14
Gala.5.17.

2 *A foole hath no delight in vnderſtanding: but that his heart may be diſconered.*

The fooliſh, the number whereof is infinite, doe not delight, but to thinke wickedly, to ſpeake vngodly, and to do workes abhominable. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, ſaying, *But that his heart may be diſcouered*, which is filled ſo ful of vncleanneſſe, that he muſt needes ſpue it vp, and publiſh his folly.

Pro.12.13.
& 13.16
& 15.2.

3 *When the wicked commeth, then commeth contempt, and with the vile man, reproche.*

When Dauid ſaith, The wicked hath made boaſt of his owne heartes deſire, and the couetous bleſſeth himſelfe: hee contemneth the Lorde, &c. hee declareth the nature of the wicked, and his maners, and kindes of doing, which are much vnreaſonable, and ought not to bee borne withal. For it is not againſt man that he ſtandeth

Pſal.10.3.

vp by contempt, but alſo againſt God : and is ſo vile, filthie and vnſhamefaſt,
that hee hath no ſhame at al, and careth not to ſpoile
God of his honour, to whome onely wee owe all honour and glory,
neither maketh hee any account to giue that which hee ought vnto
his neighbours, but without conſcience giueth him ſelfe to doe
them iniurie wrong and violence, which is to diſhonour them. For
as the honour lyeth not in geſture of body, or wordes which haue
ſome ciuilitie and faire ſhewe, but in readineſſe and diligence of doing
our office and duetie towardes them : euen ſo the diſhonour
ſtandeth chiefly when wee paſſe not to doe that wee ought. The
Rom.1 Apoſtle Saint Paule very largely deſcribeth this nature and maner
of doeing. And Solomon doeth expounde it in fewe woordes,
ſaying,

*When the wicked commeth, then commeth contempt, and with
the vile man reproche.* Nowe as the wicked diſdaineth euen ſo is
hee diſdained of GOD : and as hee doeth diſhonour, ſo ſhal he
bee diſhonoured. This is ſhewed vs, when the wicked are compared
1.Sam.2.30 vnto hay; and to the ſmoke, and to dounge, and to goates.
Pſal.1.4. And thus contempt and diſhonour commeth with the wicked
Mat.3.12 and vile man in two ſortes : that is, that hee contemneth and is
Pſal.2.4 contemned : hee diſhonoureth and is diſhonoured. But the two
Prou.1.25 ſortes are not like. For although that by contempt and diſhonor
Pſal.37.2. hee laboureth what hee can to ſet GOD and his neighbours at
20.& 68.3 naught, and at perdition, yet his paines bringeth not foorth his
Eſay.65.5. effect, as he pretendeth, but fall vpon himſelfe, as hee ſhal one day
Pſal.83.11 feele.

Iere.16.4.& Moreouer, let vs note that the lordes of the worlde are heere
25.35. chiefly accuſed to bee wicked, albeit that for their authoritie and
Math.25.32 power they are declared honeſt and good men; and to bee villaines,
though nowe they bee named noble, magnificent, worſhipful,
right honourable, high and mightie : for in their heartes they
worſhip them ſelues, and thinke not that they are ſubiect vntoo
God, nor that they ought to honour any man : but God can tell
wel enough howe to beate downe their loftineſſe and pride : as
Deut.6.13. hath beene heeretofore alledged. Wherefore let vs take good
Eſay.58.7 heede from making our ſelues beleeue that wee bee great and

noble,but let vs walke in al feare, carefulneſſe, and reuerence, and let vs folowe the commaundementes and admonitions of our God and of his ſeruants.

Rom.12.10 & 13.7 Phil.2.2.

4 *The woordes of a mans mouth are like deepe waters: and the well ſpring of wiſedome is like a flowing riuer.*

If wee haue neuer ſo little good feeling with good affection, wee deſire to knowe and to vnderſtande howe wee ſhoulde rule our ſelues for to pleaſe God, and bee fruiteful and profitable vnto our neighbours : and woulde bee very ſory if our vnderſtanding failed vs : but wee neede not to feare the ſame, if willingly wee yeelde vs Diſciples and ſchollers of our Lorde, hearing them, whoſe mouthes hee hath indued with wiſedome for too inſtruct vs : for as wee finde alwaies ſomething to drawe out off hollowe and deepe waters and riuers abounding with waters : euen ſo in reſorting to wiſe men, and diligently hearing them, wee ſhal neuer want doctrine, but ſhal haue abundance and grow in wiſdome, and in al ſpiritual and neceſſary bleſſinges.

Nowe alſo Solomon vſeth the foreſaide ſimilitude, for to ſhewe vs the ſame, when hee ſayth, *The woordes of a mans mouth are like deepe waters, and the welſpring of wiſedome is like a flowing riuer.*

Prou.1.5.

Wherevpon let vs firſt note, that when the doctrine, the graces and giftes of the holy Ghoſte, which are communicated vntoo vs by the mouth of the wiſe, are compared vnto hollow and deepe waters, vnto great and flowing riuers, out of the which it is lawfull, for euery man to drawe freely, the ſaide ſpiritual bleſſinges are freely giuen vnto vs : as it is plainely and openly declared, when the Scripture ſpeaketh of gifte and of giuing. And thus, muſt not they which haue wiſedome, and chiefly the Miniſters of the woorde of God, be niggardes of this water, when they haue it in all abundance, and that they labour not to enriche them ſelues by the communication of their owne wiſedome,

Eſay.55.1. Ioh.4.10.14

Iohn.7.38. Mat.10.8.

but let them be contented to liue by their woorke. Secondly let vs note, that though the ſluce be ſet open, & that we make no account of the water that runneth through for the abundance thereof, yet it is very neceſſary. Euen ſo, though that the worldlinges and carnal men doe deſpiſe the graces and giftes of the holy Ghoſt, yet without them they ſhal periſh. Albeit then that the holy Ghoſt doeth diſplay and vnfolde his graces in diuers ſortes and abundantly, yet it is not to ſay that wee muſt contemne them or loath them.

Thirdly let vs note, albeit that Solomon ſayth ſimply *of a mans mouth*, without adding eyther good or wiſe, or righteous or learned: yet ought it to be ſo vnderſtood: as he him ſelfe doeth ſhew it, when he addeth, *and the welſpring of wiſedome is like a flowing riuer*. For out of the mouth of fooles, vnrighteous and wicked, commeth nothing but myre and durte, and not water. And alſo none is woorthie to be called a man, except that in his ſpeech hee ſheweth that the image of God, where after hee was created, is not altogether blotted out in him. The which the wicked wil not, nor cannot doe, but by their woordes they ſhewe that they haue the marke of the diuel their father. Let vs vnderſtand therefore, that for to ſhewe our ſelues men indeede, our woordes muſt be as cleare and cleane water. And for to doe this, let vs obey Saint Paule.

Fourthly, let vs note that the vſe of the doctrine and of the Sacraments ought to be continually in the church, and thoſe that are placed doctours and paſtours in the ſame, ought to doe their office ſo carefully, that they ſhould content and ſatiſfie the thirſtie people with the woord. For if we muſt quench bodily thirſt through charitie, by a more ſtrong reaſon ought we to refreſh the thirſtie ſoules: and that that, which the Prophet ſaith may be fulfilled, In the wildernes ſhal waters breake out, and riuers in the deſert: and the drye grounde ſhalbe as a poole, and the thirſtie as ſpringes of water in the habitation of Dragons. &c.

Ephe.4.25
& 5.3.

Eſay.35.6.7.
& 44.3.

Fifthly let vs note, that wee muſt diligently thinke vppon that which we muſt ſpeake: for if wee ſpeake at aduenture, inſteede of drawing of cleere water, we ſhal draw puddle. And therfore it is not without cauſe that Saint Iames, woulde haue a man to be ſlowe in ſpeaking, and haſtie in hearing.

Iam.1.19

5 *It is not goood to accept the perſon of the wicked, to cauſe the righteous too fall in iudgement.*

Man loueth himſelfe ſo much, that he is naturally enclined to ſeeke his profit: and for to doe the ſame, he laboureth ſometimes to be at the commaundement of thoſe whoſe diſpleaſure hee feareth: ſometimes he fauoureth thoſe whom he thinketh wil bee profitable vnto him: and ſometimes he beareth with thoſe to whom he thinketh he is beholding & ſtandeth bounde: & albeit that he is conuinced in his conſcience, that they are wicked, and that hee cannot be mainteined of them except he doe wrong to other: yet hee ceaſeth not to haue this affection and to doe wrong vnto his neighbour againſt his conſcience. Amongeſt ſuch people, the moſt pernicious are the iudges and gouernours of the lande which are led with flattering woordes, and deſire to be commended and praiſed, which are led with ambition and vaynglorie, and which are couetous, coueting to get riches for to haue credite, and to bee mightie. For this cauſe Solomon hath alreadie rebuked them, and nowe againe he reprooueth and accuſeth them, when hee ſayth, *It is not good. &c.* Wherein he ſpeaketh like vnto Moſes, and vnto other Scriptures alleaged alreadie heere before, which ſerue vntoo the greater condemnation of the wicked, which beare fauour and regard, their like, for to depriue the iuſt of his right. For though the Scripture did make no mention that ſuch kinde of dealings are wicked, yet is there not ſo wicked a man that is not conuinced naturally: ſeeing that al iudges would be eſteemed that they doe iuſtice and iudgement: and if they had any iuſt cauſe or quarrel, they could tel well howe too condemne thoſe which ſhoulde make them too looſe it.

Pro.17.15.
23.26.
Exo.23.1.
2.6.

6 *A fooles lippes come with ſtrife, and his mouth calleth for ſtripes.*

Seeing that iniquitie doeth couer and cloſe the mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the wicked ſpeaketh frowarde thinges: and the hypocrite hurteth his neighbour with his mouth: The tal-

Pro.10.11.
32.& 11.9
& 12.6.

& 13.16. king of the wicked is to lye in waite for blood: *and a foole ſpreadeth abroad follie:* and in the mouth of the fooliſhe is the rodde
& 14.3. of pride. And the mouth of fooles babbleth out fooliſhnes: and the
& 15.2.28. wicked mans mouth babbleth euil thinges: and a wicked man diggeth vp euil, and in his lippes is like burning fire: and ſeeing alſo
& 16.27. that they which haue not their affections wel ruled and ordered, nor their paſſions wel tamed, but are vnpatient, can not ſuffer to bee contraried, and wil not diſſemble that which diſpleaſeth them, it is not without cauſe that Solomon ſaieth nowe.

A fooles lippes come with ſtrife, and his mouth calleth for ſtripes.

Therefore if wee deſire to doe as Saint Paule doeth teach vs, that is, to haue friendſhip and peace with al men, wee muſt flye backe from follie, leſt it take roote in our heartes, and fil them therewith, ſo that from the abundance thereof, our mouthes ſpeak flattering woordes, leaſinges, ſlanderinges, falſe witneſſinges, curſings, and other iniurious and outragious woordes. For if ſuche thinges come out of our mouthes, and that wee ſhould haue to do with men that woulde bee ſodeinely mooued to anger, impatient and brainſicke, wee ſhoulde not bee without ſtrifes and diſſentions, without warres and battels.

Notwithſtanding, this is not to ſay, that wee muſt not continue ſtil to rebuke vices and wickednes with anger, ſharpneſſe and rigour: and chiefly when they are committed with obſtinacie, arrogancie and offence. Neither ought wee to care though ſome take ſuche reprehenſion iniuriouſly, cal vs fooles, and ſtarte vp againſt vs: for the Saintes which are gone before vs, haue ſuſtained ſuche combattes, and wee muſt followe them. And if wee muſt take heede for ſpeaking fooliſhly, for to auoide ſtrife and blowes, and to bee at diſcorde and hatred with our neighbours, by a ſtronger reaſon muſt wee beware of ſpeaking fooliſhely before God.

7 *A fooles mouth is his owne deſtruction, his lippes are a ſnare for his ſoule.*

For to ſhewe that the vanitie and follie, that the malice and wickednes of the fooles woordes hurt him: and that the euil hee ſeeketh to doe to another by his mouth and his lippes, wherewith hee vttereth flatteries, ſlaunderinges, lyes, falſe witneſſings, wanton and laſciuious woordes, vayne othes and blaſphemies, ſhal fal vpon his heade, and that he ſhal beare the puniſhment, Solomon vſeth twoo ſimilitudes. The firſt is taken from a thing, which may bee diminiſhed and broken, and can by no meanes be repayred and ſet vp againe.

And thus the fooles, are deceiued in their ſpeaking: For albeit they knowe wel that they flatter and lye, yet they ſay, Wee
wil preuaile with our tongues, our lippes are our owne: who is Pſa.12.4.5.
Lorde ouer vs? But the holye Ghoſt demaundeth that the Gene.9.22.
Lorde woulde cut off all flattering lippes: as hath beene doone & 11.4.21.
towardes many: amongeſt the which wee may ſet Cham, the 9.
builders of Babel Tower, Iſmael, Roboham, Sennacherib, Pſa.31.18.
Nabuchadnezer. And with theſe examples, wee haue alſo diuers 19.& 35.19
threatnings. & 50.17.

The ſecond ſimilitude is taken from beaſtes, which runne into &.52.3.
the netes and ſnares, out of the which they cannot eſcape, and ſo muſt dye. Euen ſo the foole is taken by his woordes, and is condemned: Whereuppon followeth his deſtruction. But the thinges are not altogether like: For the beaſtes are ſimple, and thinke on none euil when they runne into the cordes, nettes, and ſnares. And ſo they periſhe without their fault. And the foole
by the vanitie and folly, by the wickeduesse and abhomination Pro.1.17.
which proceedeth and commeth out of his mouth, and his lippes doeth ſet cordes and nettes for his neighbours, which haue done him none euil: and therefore his iniquitie ſhal fal vppon himſelfe, and ſhal periſh therein. The preachers of the popiſh Church and the ſingers or quier mẽn doe ſet ſnares for the poore ſimple and vnlearned: But at the laſt they ſhalbe taken therein Pſa.9.16.
them ſelues, with al thoſe which ſeeke by their talebearing the Mich.3.5.
deſtruction of their neighbours. After this ſenſe we may ſay that this preſent ſentence doeth folowe the former: for of ſtrife and blowes doe come and proceede great ouerthrowes and deſtructions

deſtructions : and becauſe wee feare them, wee muſt be carefull to ſpeake wiſely : to the which let vs vnderſtande that Solomon doth exhort vs : but after the opinion of ſome, wee are exhorted vnto faſting, abſtinence, ſobrietie and temperancie : for as they take it, Solomon doeth ſhewe the hurt that commeth of gluttonie & drunkennes, of the abundance and ſuperfluitie of meates and drinkes, which paſſe through the mouth and betweene the lippes. True it is, that the gluttons and drunkardes doe kil them ſelues, and ſende their bodies and their ſoules vnto perdition. Notwithſtanding the firſt ſenſe ſeemeth vnto me to agree beſt.

8 *The wordes of a talebearer are as flatterings, and they go downe into the bowels of the bellie.*

Solomon here ſheweth vs, that the foole which medleth with ſlandering, and to beare falſe witneſſe, and to carrie about wicked tales, doeth not onely ſeeke his owne deſtruction, but theirs alſo of whome hee ſpeaketh ſiniſterlie : and it is chiefly his purpoſe to hurt his neighbours by his mouth and to deſtroy them. And for to ſhew the ſame, he vſeth a ſimilitude taken of a ſpeare or lance which hurteth a man, and is ſo ſharpe and pricking, that not onely it pearceth vnto the bones, but vnto the deepeſt parte of a man, and woundeth him to death. And heerein hee ſpeaketh according to the Pſalme. The ſimilitude may bee taken from the poyſon which hurteth the man, and pearceth to the bowels. Wee haue ſeene heeretofore diuers times, that talecariers and ſlanderers, liers, and falſe witneſſes, doe bring great hurt, and worke great deſtruction : as wee may ſee it heere againe, when Solomon doeth compare them vnto murtherers and poyſoners, which ſpare not the liues of their neighbors. Nowe if we muſt labour to flye ſuche kinde of people, which deſire the deſtruction, either of our goods, or of our good name, or of our bodies, muche more them which labour to deſtroy our ſoules by falſe doctrine. And let vs learne, that as wee woulde haue none to hurt vs either with tongue or with weapon, euen ſo alſo let vs not hurt any other man.

Pſal.52.4.
& 57.5.
& 59.7.
& 64.3.
& 140.2.

He

9 *He alſo that is ſlouthful in his worke, is euen the brother of him that is a great waſter.*

Many through the world doe take their paſtime after the fleſh, permitting to them ſelues whatſoeuer they deſire, in playe, in gluttonie and drunkennes, in ſlouth and careleſnes, in pleaſures & voluptuouſnes: and care not at al to ſet their hande to worke, and to doe their office, after the ſtate whereuntoo they are called: and yet they woulde haue vs beleeue that they ſpoile nothing, becauſe their intent (as they thinke) is not ſuche, and that they commit no euil of ſet purpoſe. But if wee beleeue Solomon (as wee ought) we wil hold them for great waſters: for he calleth him which is ſlouthful in his woorke, *Brother of him that is a great waſter*. Wherein hee ſheweth that hee would haue vs to count the ſlouthful & careles for wicked waſters. And ſo hee priuily accuſeth them to bee theeues & murtherers, and that rightly: for they ſteale that wherby they liue, ſeeing that they winne it not lawfully: and ſo much as in them lyeth, they kil the poore, for whome they ſhould be careful, and diligently to woorke. And ſo ſlouthfulnes or ſlackneſſe, is no ſmal vice: ſeeing that hee which is giuen thereto, is not hurtful onely to him ſelfe, but alſo to his neighbours: though hee wil not knowe it. For if wee tel him which is ſlouthful at his woorke, that hee doeth not his duetie: hee wil anſwere, hee doeth wrong to none but to him ſelfe: wherein he belyeth Solomon, yea the holy Ghoſt which calleth him brother to the maiſter of waſting. Let vs then vnderſtande that al men are admoniſhed to be watchful and diligent in their vocation, and carefully to doe their office: & chiefly the fathers of houſhold, Magiſtrates, & the Paſtours of the Church: for the negligence of the maiſters of the houſe, doeth ſo muche or more hurte in the houſholde, then the ſuperfluous and exceſſiue ſpending. The careleſneſſe of Magiſtrates, hurteth as muche or more the common wealth at home, thã the enemies do with warres abroad. The ſlouthfulneſſe of Miniſters and their ignoraunce together doeth no leſſe hurte to the Churche, then the crueltie of tyrantes, which ſtriue to oppreſſe it by warre and violence. And

Mat.25. as the negligent and ſlouthful is like vnto a great ſpender and waſter, euen ſo ſhal he be puniſhed likewiſe: as it is ſhewed vs, in
the parable of the virgins and talentes. That wee may not bee of
the number of ſuche, let vs watche carefully to doe our worke with
Mat.24.42. prudence and faythfulneſſe: as wee are taught in the ſaide parables.

10 *The name of the Lorde is a ſtrong Tower: the righteous runneth vnto it, and is exalted.*

There is no man but deſireth to liue in peace, and to bee out of danger of his aduerſaries. And for to obteine the ſame, euerie man according to the power hee hath, doeth arme him ſelſe with leagues of friendſhip, and retyereth into ſtrong places, and if he can, hee wil remaine in places which ſeemeth him inuincible. In olde time it was thought that the higheſt places were the ſureſt, for that the enemies had not eaſie acceſſe to the ſame. We may ſee the ſame in the building of the Tower of Babel.

Likewiſe Dauid ſignifying the ſafetie either that hee had had
Gen.11.4. before, or that hee deſired preſently to haue, ſpeaketh of the high
Pſa.18.3.34 places and of high rockes, and heerein hee ſheweth vs, that all
& 27.5.40.3 our truſt is and ought to bee ſet in one onely GOD, and when he
& 16.3. keepeth vs, that wee are ſtrongly armed, and defended againſt al
contrarie power, and that there is no violence either earthly or
helliſhe that can hurt vs. Solomon doeth ſignifie the ſame, when
hee ſaieth,

The name of the Lorde is a ſtrong Tower, &c. Wherein wee haue to note, that the name of the Lorde, is not this woord, God or Lorde, or any other worde that wee ſpeake of, for to ſignifie that we ſpeake of God: neither is it alſo this writing of foure Hebrewe letters, *Iehouah,* which the Iewes doe ſay, is the name of God, and that it is ineffable: And not knowing what this name of God ineffable is to ſay. (The which is none other thing then that there is nothing either in heauen, earth, hel, depthes vnder the earth, nor tongue, nor voice that is able to expreſſe the leaſt prayſe which belongeth to God, becauſe of his great glory and excellencie) they obſerue a fooliſh & foule ſuperſtition, and dare not pronounce theſe foure letters aboueſaide, and in their place they ſay, Adonaie But the name of the Lorde, is him ſelſe, as he is named the Euerlaſting, Creatour, Gouernour, and diſpoſer of al thinges: according as hee is called wiſe, iuſt, holie, mightie, merciful Father and Sauiour: and according to the ſame of theſe vertues & bleſsings which are without number, incomprehenſible, and can not be expreſſed. The holie Scripture doeth ſhew it vs. For this word of God ought not to be called vpon. Hee expreſſeth wel this name. And when he would haue vs to ſweare in his name, hee meaneth not this worde, God, or Lorde, in witneſſe of trueth. His name therfore is himſelf, which is compared vnto a ſtrong Tower: not as touching himſelf, that hee can or ought to be compared vnto any corruptible thing, howe excellent ſoeuer it can be: but the Lorde for to humble him ſelfe vnto our rudeneſſe and weakeneſſe, doeth compare himſelfe vnto earthly thinges. As here by Solomon he is compared vnto a ſtrong Tower, for to teache vs that as the worldlinges doe thinke them ſelues out of the danger of their enemies, when they are incloſed in a ſtrong Tower: euen ſo, if hee keepe vs, wee ſhal not periſh. Now for to obtein ſuch ſafetie, we muſt fly al wickednes, infidelitie and incredulitie, al ſlouthfulneſſe, and careleſneſſe, and giue our ſelues vnto al goodneſſe, and with care & diligence commende our ſelues vnto the keeping and protection of our God. Solomon doeth teach vs this ſame, when he ſaieth,

Gen.4.26.
Exo.3.13.
14.15.
& 34.6.7.
Deut.6.13

The righteous runneth vnto it, and are exalted. For the wicked, vnbeleeuing, negligent and contemners of the grace and helpe of God, are caſt off from him: and thus they are not exalted out of the dangers of their enemies, but are giuen vnto them to doe with them as they wil: as diuers wicked men haue felt, and doe feele. For if they be not at the wil of their carnal enimies, yet are they at their ſpiritual, to wit, the Deuils: as finally, they ſhall feele it in eternal tormentes, being thruſt downe into the infernal gulfes.

Let vs therefore vnderſtande, that Solomon doeth exhort vs to loue righteouſnes, and to delight therein, and that in folowing carefully our vocation, and walking ſtraight in our wayes, wee ſhould depend wholly vpon the protection of our God, and he

Pſal.9.16.

ſhal

Pſal.9.10.
& 12.6.
& 33.18.19
& 34.8.
& 18.
& 37.39.
& 27.1.
& 31.2.

ſhal exalt vs high, and ſet vs in ſo ſtrong a Caſtle, that our enemies ſhal not be able to doe any thing againſt vs : and alſo wee ſhal not feare them, but holding faſt the promiſes of our God, wee ſhal ſay, The Lorde is my light and my ſaluation, whome ſhal I feare? Bee vnto mee a ſtrong Tower, and as an houſe wel fenced, for to ſaue mee. Let vs alſo vnderſtande that hee teacheth vs to knowe who they are that are righteous, what their rewarde is. Whereupon we may gather who they are that are wicked, and what their deſtruction is. And when hee ſaieth not, Hee ſhal exalt him ſelfe : *But he is exalted,* hee doeth teache vs to renounce our merites and free wil.

11 *The riche mans riches are his ſtrong Citie : and as an high wal in his imagination.*

Act.4.11.12

Exo.15.1
Pſal.48.2.

Albeit that Saint Peter doeth teache vs, that al our ſtrength and ſafetie ſtandeth in the name of the Lorde : and that it is alſo the trueth, as diuers holie men haue prooued, and amongſt other the people of Iſrael, as they doe acknowledge it with Moyſes,yet the worldlings can not receiue it into their mindes, but deſpiſing whatſoeuer is ſaide of the prouidence of God, and of the care that God hath ouer vs, doe occupie them ſelues about that which they thinke, and looke for, and ſtaye vppon that which they ſee, and thinke they can laye holde on, or vppon that which alreadie they haue poſſeſſion of as they thinke. The ambitious wil think them ſelues to bee verie ſtrong, and to be in ſafetie, if many doe commende and prayſe them, and bowe vnto them, if they haue credite, and that they thinke they are eſteemed and had in admiration. Wee might heere make a diſcourſe of al the vices, and of al the vanities whereby men are ſo deceiued, that they make their fortreſſe of them : not ſo that they be truely aſſured : for if there commeth to them neuer ſo little affliction, but that they tremble as an Aſpine leafe, though they ſhewe a great bragge : for the infallible trueth hath pronounced, that there is no peace to the wicked.

Eſai.48.22.

Nowe leauing ſuche diſcourſe, let vs come to conſider the riches of this worlde, the which of them ſelues are good, after the vſe wheretoo GOD hath created them, and it is laweful to poſſeſſe them, and to vſe them with thankesgiuing. If wee looke narrowlie howe they are vſed, howe they are eſteemed, wee ſhall ſee that they which are without them, or which haue not ynough, doe tremble and quake oftentimes, with feare they haue, either that the earth (as it is ſaide) ſhoulde faile them: or that if ſtriſe, diſſentions and warres ſhoulde ariſe and bee moued againſt them, that they ſhoulde not haue wherewith to defende them: on the other ſide, that they which haue abundance of them, wherewith they are contented as they ſeeme, except they haue the feare of God, and that they knowe howe they muſt vſe the abundance of riches that God giueth: wee ſhal ſee that ſuch kinde of people wil ſo abuſe themſelues, that they wil make of their riches their God, or themſelues to bee gods: and wil perſwade themſelues to beleeue, that none euil, howe greate ſoeuer it bee, ſhal light vpon them, but that they ſhal ouercome it wel ynough: for they haue this Diuelliſh opinion, that al things obey vnto money. And therefore, Solomon ſpeaking vpon their opinion, ſaith,

The riche mans riches are his ſtrong citie, &c. Wherein Solomon doeth cloſely reproou e the opinion of the worldlings and carnal minded, which thinke and ſay, that the riche of the worlde are happie and good men: for when hee diſcouereth the imagination and fantaſie of the riche, which is, to haue no truſt nor aſſurance but onely in his riches: In that hee ſaith that the riches of the riche are his ſtrong citie: hee ſheweth wel that the worldly riches are not righteous: and ſo they are not good men, otherwiſe they would holde the name of God for a ſtrong tower, and would there to haue recourſe and woulde not imagine their riches to be their ſtrong citie, nor their high wall. In ſuch imaginations there is no righteouſnes, but all iniquitie, wrong, extortion, and violencee: for ſith that they haue ſuch imagination, and ſuch eſtimation, of their riches, no thanke to them though they do not ſpoyle and rauiſh away the ſubſtance of other. And therefore it is not without cauſe that riches haue and beare the title of iniquitie, and that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt doeth ſet them againſt God, and that he doeth depriue them of the kingdome of heauen. Solomon then ſpeaketh not of al rich men: *Luke. 16. 9. 13* *Mat. 19. 23.*

for

1.Tim.6.6.
17.18.
Iam.1.9.&
2.5.& 5.1.
Pro.10.22.
&.11.28.

for many haue bene riche, which haue truſted in God, and haue ſerued him according to his woorde: but hee ſpeaketh of thoſe which contemne God and his woorde, and haue al their affection ſet and giuen to the riches of the worlde, of whoſe number Saint Paule woulde not haue vs to bee. Saint Iames alſo laboureth earneſtly to turne vs away from them. Solomon alſo hath trauailed to pul vs away from them. If wee wil folowe and obey them, let vs take heed to chalenge to our ſelues any force, as doe the riche worldly men: euen as Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when hee ſaieth, not ſimplie, a ſtrong cite: but *his ſtrong Citie*. Let vs not alſo folowe our imagination, for by it wee coulde not giue our ſelues vnto goodneſſe. As touching the reſt, let vs note that Solomon doeth not here pronounce what the riche ought to thinke or to ſay: as hath bene handled. It ſhal not bee alſo vnfruiteful to note that Solomon hath compared the name of God onely to a tower: and heere hee compareth riches vnto a Citie, which is much greater then a tower. It commeth not becauſe that he eſteemeth riches more then the name of the Lorde: but wee may ſay that it is becauſe that the worldelings and carnal minded eſteeme more the temporal goods, and are more in loue with them, then are the righteous with the graces and giftes of God: and alſo that they which deſire and loue riches, and thereuppon ſet their heartes, and truſt in them, are much more in number, then are they that haue their refuge vnto God. And therefore, the riche haue need of a citie, where the righteous haue ynough of a tower. Moreouer, a citie which is often more faire to ſee too, & of greater ſhew then a tower, ought to be attributed vnto worldly riche men, for they wil bee greatly ſeene.

12 *Before deſtruction the heart of man is hautie, & before glorie goeth lowlineſſe.*

Gen.1.26.
27.
Eccle.3.18.
&.7.30.

The firſt creation of man was very excellent, but hee remained not in this excellencie, becauſe that he contented not himſelf therewith. Now although that his poſteritie did wel knowe that for hautineſſe of his heart he had deſtroyed himſelfe, and al mankinde, yet did they make no count to humble themſelues, and to yeelde obedience vnto their Creatour: and therefore a greate deſtruction ſet vppon the worlde: as wee haue ſeene in al ages, from the beginning of the worlde: the which is yet ſeene to this day: but the world doeth iudge ſuch deſtructions and ouerthrowes to come by fortune, or through the deſire and violence of men: and no man knoweth and ſeeth that it is God, who ſmiteth, to beate downe the arrogancie and hautineſſe of mans heart. For this cauſe, Solomon doth admoniſh vs, & would haue vs to know that the ruines which happen vnto vs, come for the pride of our harts, when he ſaith, *Before deſtruction the heart of man is hautie. &c.* When hee pronoũceth this ſentence, he ſheweth vs that we ſhould abhorre pride and arrogancie, not onely that wee ſhoulde ſhewe our ſelues ſo by wordes, by workes, by geſtures, and behauiour, but chiefly that the roote ſhould be ſuch from whence ſuch fruites do come, the which lyeth in the heart poſſeſſed with hautie & hie thoughts, deliberations inuentions, & deſires: but we perſwade our ſelues that wee are ſomething. Seing that for ſuch hautineſſe, he pronounceth that deſtruction ſhal folowe, the which we in no caſe deſire, but do ſhunne and feare it, he doth ſhew it (as is ſaid) that wee ſhould deteſt pryde ſo that we might truly ſay, Lord, I am not high minded, I haue no proude lookes. Thus doing we ſhal abace our ſelues, & walk in humilitie of minde, the which ſhal make vs honorable, & ſhal exhalt vs vp to glorie: for the which to attaine and come too, we muſt not labour to ſhew our ſelues, & to put forth our ſelues after the manner and cuſtome of the worldlings, who counterfayting the humble minded, do praiſe themſelues, and alſo woulde bee praiſed of other, either for their riches, or for their knowledge, or for their race and kindred, or for their credite and authoritie: but we muſt pul downe our harts, nothing eſteeming our ſelues: and it is neceſſarie that we ſhoulde ſuffer the worlde to count and holde vs as vile and abiects. For Solomon ſaith, *Pſa. 131. 1.*

Before glorie goeth lowlineſſe. Albeit that many, as Abraham, Ioſeph, Moſes, Dauid, & others, after hauing bin deſpiſed, yea & perſecuted, haue beene rayſed vnto temporal glorie: yet by our lowlines and humbleneſſe, let vs take diligent heede not to looke for and deſire the ſame: but if walking in true humilitie of minde, and being caſt of & perſecuted, it ſhal pleaſe God to rayſe vs vp vnto temporall glory, and to make vs honourable before men, as he hath done theſe good men, let vs vſe it as though wee had it not. The which we ſhal doe, if being raiſed wee ſhal procure and ſeeke the honour and glorie of God, the profit and ſaluation of our neighbours, and if wee haue not ſet our affection vpō this worldly glory, we ſhal aſpire and mount vp to the heauenly and eternal: for alſo it is the ſame which doeth chiefly folowe lowlines. And alſo the holy Scripture doeth not teach vs howe to come vnto glorie, by ſeeking honours and high roomes of this world, the which are good: prouided that wee obteine them without deſiring them: and beeing placed, doe behaue our ſelues therein rightly: but by teaching vs to haue patience when we are deſpiſed, hated and perſecuted in the world, knowing that ſuch lowlines ſhal not long continue, and that after the ſame we ſhal enioye ineſtimable and eternall glory. As touching the reſt, wee might heere alledge that which was ſayde, Chap. 16. verſe. 18. 19.

13 *He that anſwereth a matter before he heare it, it is folly and ſhame vnto him.*

They that haue nimble and light tongues, and can readily ſaye, whatſoeuer cometh into their minde, doe greatly delight to babble & to reaſon, to pronounce vaine, friuolous, foule, filthie, infamous, vngodly and wicked thinges: and are ſo ſwift and readie to ſpeake, that they cannot ſuffer another to ende his matter, yea hardly to beginne: and yet they would be counted wiſe, and labour to caſt of al ſhame from them: as though they did wel deſerue to bee praiſed and honoured, for their readines or rather haſtines, of their vndiſcrete babbling. And indeede they which are like vnto them: or which affect ſuch babbling, doe praiſe them, and woonder at them, as though they were very eloquent, and were an honorable thing, and woorthie of praiſe to haue ſuch nimblenes in tongue. But the holy Ghoſte by Solomon doeth pronounce that they are but fooles and vnſhamefaſte, when hee ſaieth. *Hee that an-*

ſwereth a matter before hee heare it, it is follie and ſhame to him. If they wil not or cannot confeſſe themſelues to bee ſuch in this life, and learne to heare, and to holde their peace, til neede requireth them to ſpeake, and that they knowe what and howe they ought to ſpeake, they ſhal at laſt bee confounded, and bee ſilent before the greate iudge, whome they ought to honour by their tongues, in pronouncing with diſcretion and modeſtie things worthy of ſubiectes and ſeruantes of God. And then they ſhal knowe that they were fooles and vnſhamefaſt, but it ſhal be too late: ſuch knowledge ſhal nothing profite them, but for greater torment. Wherefore, foraſmuch as it is needful to flye follie, and vnſhamefaſtneſſe, and that we ſhoulde feare to bee counted fooles and vnſhamefaſt, let vs not offer to ſpeake, before wee haue diligently hearde: let vs looke firſt to bee diſciples, before wee take in hande to teache. Let vs marke the Pſalme ſaying not, Come children and ſpeake: but Come, hearken vnto mee, I wil teache you the feare of the Lorde. *Pſal.34.11.* Wherein hee declareth that they which offer themſelues to ſpeake before they bee taught, haue not the feare of God, and that it is not poſsible that there ſhoulde come out of their mouthes any thing but euil. Let vs then take heede that wee offende not with our tongues, &c. *Pſal.39.2.* And becauſe that it is a greate perfection in man, to rule his tongue wel, and that wee cannot of our ſelues attaine theretoo, *Iam.1.19. & 3.2.* wee ought therefore to pray vnto the Lorde, Set a watche O Lorde before my mouth: and keepe the dore of my lips. *Pſal. 141.3.* It is the duetie of ſubiectes and of ignorant perſons chiefly to heare. Therfore let children, ſeruants, and maides learne heere to bee ſilent, and to hearken: but principally for to giue obedience vnto them which may commande them. As concerning the reſt, wee might heere apply that which hath beene ſaide before, chapter 17. ver.27. & 28.

14 *The ſpirit of a man wil ſuſtaine his infirmitie: but a wounded ſpirite, who can beare it?*

The afflictions are not only troubleſome to them which know not God, but alſo to the elect and faythful: as wee may ſee it by the fearefulneſſe and trembling that they haue had, and by the complaintes they haue made, and by the admonitions which are made to them: amongſt other we may alledge Abraham, Iacob, and Dauid, who were excellent men. But albeeit that the fleſhe is troubled and grieued and mourneth vnderneath his burthen, yet neuertheleſſe a man of a good ſpirite knowing indeede that al commeth to him from the hande of God taketh a good heart, and beareth patiently and ioyfully the euil he ſuffreth. Solomon doeth thus pronounce it, when he ſaith,

The ſpirit of a man,&c. Heere the ſpirite, can not be taken for the ſoule: for al men haue ſoules, and for the greateſt parte of them, they doe not patiently beare the euil that God doeth ſende them: but wee wil take the ſpirite for that which is contrary vnto the outwarde man: that is ſay, for the inwarde man. This ſpirit wee cannot haue of our ſelues: and therefore, let vs aſke, Make mee a cleane heart, O God: and renewe a right ſpirite within mee. This ſpirite is the meanes, the ſtrength and power which cauſeth our ſpirite ſtrongly and manfully to beare al afflictions and aduerſities, which happen in this life, and doe weaken and corrupt it, and cauſeth that wee bee not grieued for any defaute that wee haue of neceſſarie things appertayning to the ſtate of this life. It is the ſpirite that maketh vs not to bee effeminate, to bee afraide of our owne ſhadowe, for to make vs ſoroweful and to trouble vs with the leaſt hurte that might happen: but giueth vs a mans hearte for to reſiſt the temptations ſtrongly, to ſuffer patiently the miſeries, & ioyfully to beare the burthens that our outward man refuſeth and reiecteth for his weakeneſſe. Beholde, howe wee muſt vnderſtande the ſpirite *of a man wil ſuſtaine his infirmitie*, to wit of man. And alſo Solomon doeth giue it ſo to bee vnderſtood, when hee aſketh, *But a wounded ſpirit, who can beare it?* For againſt the ſpirit of man, hee ſetteth a wounded, ſorowful, and grieued, and which hath no might, the which is the ſpirite or courage of effeminate perſons, which are immediatly feared, and quake at the ſhaking of euery leafe, and weepe for the leaſt griefe, and faint and fal vnder the leaſt burthen that can be laide vpon them. It is vnpoſſible for man that hath ſuch a ſpirite or courage ſo weake, that he ſhoulde bee able to beare any thing: ſeeing that his heart faileth him: neither is it poſſible for the outwarde man euer to bee able to reſiſt. Let vs then vnderſtande howe Solomon doeth heere admoniſhe vs, that wee ſhoulde not bee afraide for the greatneſſe and heauineſſe of afflictions which happen vnto vs in this worlde: but that putting our truſt in God, wee ſhoulde reioyce euen in the moſt hardeſt and troubleſome time, being certaine that the Lorde wil giue vs a good ende.

15 *A wiſe hearte getteth knowledge, and the eare of the wiſe ſeeketh learning.*

It is commonly ſaide, that knowledge is a faire poſſeſſion: and therefore many doe aſpire vnto it and looke after it, as they thinke: but yet fewe people doe atteine it: for many in ſteade of folowing knowledge to be indewed therewith and to obteine it, goe backewarde, flying from it as from the peſtilence, enen as do the ſimple and idiots in Poperie, when they dare, or wil not reade the holy ſcriptures, nor heare the pure trueth, leſt they ſhould bee poyſoned therwith: and as doe the mockers and contemners, which wil not learne ſo much goodneſſe, leaſt they ſhould be too wiſe, and breake their wits. Theſe fellowes, what worldly knowledge ſoeuer they haue, yet are they ignorant: what carnal wiſdom ſoeuer they haue, yet are they fooles. And thus they get not knowledge: and ſo long as they remaine in ſuch fantaſies, neither can they nor wil they obteine her: for ſhe entreth not but into the hearte of the wiſe, as Solomon doth pronounce it, ſaying,

A wiſe heart getteth knowledge. Wee expounde this ſame of the pure trueth of the word of God, the which onely is worthy to be named knowledge. Notwithſtāding we do not refuſe the knowledge of men and liberal artes, which are giftes of God & ſerue this preſent life: but when wee haue learned them perfitly, yet are wee blinde and ignorant ſtil, except we haue the pure truth, and that we ſubmit and ſubiect al other ſciences, vnto the ſame. And therefore for to be partakers of this getting, we muſt not be like vnto brute beaſtes which haue no vnderſtanding, but we muſt haue an hart of vnderſtanding and knowledge. Solomon doeth teache vs what wee ſhal doe for to obteine this wiſedome and learning, when hee ſaith, *And the eare of the wiſe ſeeketh learning.* This is, that wee ſhoulde haue a true affection to know the wil of God by his word, and that for to attaine this knowledge we ſhould become the ſchollers and diſciples of God, and of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, reading the ſcriptures, and hearing them diligently which purely preache the trueth. And let vs note that he calleth not them wiſe, which neede not to be taught, but thoſe which haue a right affection to learne & to bee taught, otherwiſe they ſhoulde not neede to ſeeke for learning. Let vs alſo note that foraſmuch as Solomō calleth knowledge a getting, he teacheth vs that in the ſame is great profit: ſeeing alſo that it is gotten by the wiſe, and that he hath his deſire thereuppon: the which is ſignified by the *hart*. And alſo that we muſt not thinke a wiſe man wil ſet his heart vpon a thing of nothing and vnprofitable. And as touching the vtilitie and profit of this getting, wee haue ſeene it handled heere before in diuers places.

16 *A mans gift enlargeth him, and leadeth him before great men.*

Pro. 17. 8. 23. Solomon hath heeretofore rebuked the couetouſneſſe and vniuſtice of Magiſtrates, Iudges, and gouernours of the earth. And becauſe that ſuch wickedneſſes doe reigne and abounde in the worlde, and are rooted ſo deepe in mens heartes, that at al times and in al countries they haue ſpread forth their branches, and brought forth their wicked fruites: hee is not ſatiſfied with the foreſaide reprehenſions: but to make theſe couetous, vngodly & wicked theeues, which occupie the ſeate of God, the more vnexcuſable, hee doeth touche and reprooue them for this, that the poore which bring thē no giftes, are troden downe and oppreſſed, and as compelled, and not of free acceſſe, but onely they which bring giftes are beſt welcome, when hee ſaith, *A mans gift, &c.* Heere hee compareth the preſenter of giftes vnto a meſſenger that is thought to bring ſome good newes, or that commeth from ſome greate Lorde: they wil make thoſe ſtande backe which hinder him to paſſe and come neere, to doe his meſſage: they wil giue place vnto him, and bring him to the kings chamber, and ſhal be wel receiued, not only of the meane ſorte, but of the king himſelfe and of the greateſt nobles of his court. Euen ſo is it with him that bringeth giftes: he is wilcome towardes wicked iudges, they wil not let him tarrie and waite at the gate to catche colde, or for to be preaſſed and thruſt of with one & then with another, which come and waite at the gate: but the gate is opened ſo ſoone as hee commeth, and is brought in. Hee calleth heere the wicked iudges and magiſtrates *great men*, becauſe that God hath rayſed them vp into authoritie, and that they are in ſo excellent an eſtate, that others are ſubiect vnto them: or that themſelues doe praiſe themſelues, and eſteeme themſelues ſo much, that they thinke none ought to come neere vnto thẽ, except they pleaſe. Nowe after what ſorte ſoeuer he calleth them greate, yet doth hee put them in minde of their office, teaching them that they ought not to humble and abace themſelues ſo lowe, as to become ſlaues & bondmen to giftes and preſents: the which they bee, when they receiue them: for they do binde themſelues to doe that wherfore the gift was giuen them, and cannot doe otherwiſe.

Rom. 13. 1.

17 *He that is firſt in his owne cauſe, is iuſt: then commeth his neighbour, and maketh inquirie of him.*

It is a very dangerous matter to haue to doe with an ignorant iudge, and ſuch an one as either knoweth not his office, or is giuen lightly to beleeue one partie, and then careth not for that which may bee alledged on the other ſide, but wil condemne him howe good right ſoeuer hee hath: and hee that can get firſt to declare his matter, ſhal winne the day, though his right be not ſo good, & what complaint or requeſt ſoeuer the other partie can make, and that hee declare howe hee ought to conferre the ſayings and the allegations of both parties togither, for to knowe who hath the wrong caſe & who the right: yet ſhal it not bee hearde by a iudge that is light of beleefe and credit, or ignorant, or that wil bee corrupted by giftes, or by fauour of perſons: and after this ſorte, iudgement is violated and peruerted. Whereof Solomon complaineth, ſaying, *Hee that is firſt in his owne cauſe, is iuſt, &c.* It is not without cauſe that hee maketh this complaint: for the office of iudges requireth aſwel to heare the poore as the riche, the ſtranger as his owne father, and the laſt aſwel as the firſt: and to iudge euery man rightfully, and to haue an equal balance for al men: for they are in the ſeate of God: 2.Chro.19.6 & as King Ioſaphat ſaith, Take heed what ye do: for ye execute not the iudgements of man, but of the Lorde, &c. And this is according Deut.1.16 to that which is written in the lawe. But what commandement ſoeuer there is in the law, yet the Iudges haue made no count therof: as we haue prooued. Wherupon alſo with Solomō haue proceeded many complaints & threatnings that God made by his Prophets, againſt the iniquitie & wickednes of iudges: as hath bin alledged alreadie. Folowing this ſenſe then, wee wil take the *iuſt*, not for him which is ſo indeed, but for him that is iuſtified, & to whome right is giuen, & hath wonne his ſute. Moreouer we wil take *to make enquirie*, for to complain and make a declaration, in enquiring howe his aduerſarie hath gained his ſute, and how the iudge hath not bin more careful to examine rightly their cauſes: or howe it is poſſible for thē which ſit in the ſeate of God to iudge wickedly. Or, *to make requeſt*, may be taken, for to make purſute, that his matters may be hearde and looked ouer againe, and that it may be taken in hand againe vpon a newe ſentence, for to examine witneſſes and to bring forth letters and contracts, for to ſhewe that hee hath good cauſe. But Solomon ſheweth that ſuch inquiſitions ſhal nothing preuaile nor profite, when he ſaith, *Hee that is firſt in his owne cauſe, is iuſt, &c.* As ſome doe take it, Solomon would ſay, That hee which beginneth to pleade againſt his neighbour, thinketh he hath a good cauſe, and that he is iuſt, & therfore, that the iudge ſhould giue ſentence on his ſide: but when his aduerſarie is come, and the matter throughly examined, it ſhal be founde otherwiſe. According to this ſenſe, Solomon doth ſhewe vs that wee are to much affectionate to haue our cauſe founde good, and are blinded therewith. After the iudgement of others, this preſent ſentence ſignifieth. That the iuſt Mat.7.1. doeth firſt accuſe himſelfe, and then is iudged of others: as Ieſus Chriſt teacheth him. And after this opinion wee muſt adde, That the iuſt ſuffereth his neighbour to teach, to admoniſh, & to correct him: bycauſe he ſaith,

His neighbor commeth, & maketh inquirie of him. So we are admoniſhed not to take in hand to be maiſters, but rather to ſuffer Iam.3.1. as little diſciples and ſchollers to bee corrected, as Iames doeth exhort vs. Mat.18.15. Notwithſtanding it is not to ſay, that wee muſt not correct thoſe which erre, as Ieſus Chriſt commandeth.

18 *The lot cauſeth contentions to ceaſe, and maketh a partition among the mightie.*

Solomon hath taught vs before that the lot is gouerned by the Lord: the which is a very neceſſarie doctrine, that wee ſhoulde not attribute any thing vnto fortune, but that wee ſhould knowe howe things which ſeeme neuer ſo much caſual, or chaunceable, doe come to paſſe as God hath ordeined, and that wee ſhoulde bee contented with whatſoeuer hapneth, knowing that it is the portion that God giueth vs, and which is profitable for vs: and that we ſhould be certaine that if God did knowe any thing more profitable for vs, hee woulde ſurely giue it vs, as a good father doeth vnto his children. Now when he ſaith, *The lot cauſeth contentions to ceaſe, &c.* Hee doeth teache vs that if there bee any thing to be parted among vs, and for the which wee are in danger to goe to lawe, that rather we ſhoulde caſt lots who ſhould haue it, then to fight one againſt another with anger & malice, with hatred & enimitie. And heerin he ſomething ſheweth that it was not without cauſe that God did ordeine that the land of Canaan ſhould be parted & diuided by lot among the children of Iſrael: it was a very ſeditious people, & hard to bee ruled and contented: as Moyſes and the other gouernours did feele. But becauſe wee haue not lotterie much vſed nowe, let vs learne by this ſentence howe Solomon woulde not haue vs to bee at diſcorde togither, but that wee ſhoulde vſe the meanes which God giueth vs, for to auoide al ſtriſe, and that wee ſhoulde not followe our fantaſie, but ſhoulde ſubmitte our ſelues by agreement vnto the iudge, or other louing and friendly arbitratours: and that wee ſhoulde ſtande vnto their iudgement, without nouriſhing hatred and rancour betweene vs. Beholde what wee haue heere to learne. As touching the reſt, Solomon maketh mention of *making partition among the mightie*, to pacifie thoſe which are obſtinate and hardened to the lawe, or to fight one with another, by lot. And heerein hee teacheth vs that the woorde of the Lorde ought to haue more authoritie among vs to ſet vs at vnitie *Prou. 16. 33.*

and concorde, then the lotterie: and alſo that it is farre better that the mightie of the earth ſhoulde agree by lot, then by violence and ſtrife to obteine what they demande.

19 *A brother offended is harder to winne then a ſtrong citie: and their contentions are like the barre of a palace.*

If al men, howe ſtrange ſoeuer they bee one to the other, either in countrie, language, or linage ought to bee vnited in concorde, peace and friendſhip by lawe of nature, and by howe much as they are one like to the other, hauing beene created one like vnto the other, and hauing like affections: and albeit they haue diuers fathers & diuers mothers, yet are they al of one blood: by a ſtronger reaſon, brethrē which are of one fleſhe, of one father and of one mother, ought to be careful to keepe & hold togither. The which Iuda conſidering, ſaide, What ſhal this profit vs to kil our brother, and to hide his blood? for hee is our brother and our fleſhe. And ought rightly to feare to bee diuided and ſeparated through hatred and enimitie: for if betweene ſtrangers, which agree not, there are diſcords and combats very hardly to bee pacified, yet are they much more harder to be appeaſed betweene brethren. Solomon doth ſignifie the ſame, ſaying, *a brother offended is harder to winne thē a ſtrōg citie, &c.* For ſpeaking thus, he ſheweth that if a brother feeling himſelfe or thinking to bee offended with his brother, doeth reuolt from him, and proclaimeth to bee his enemie, that there is no leſſe, but more hardneſſe to winne and quiet him, then for an armie to take a ſtrong towne and wel fenced citie by aſſaulte, or to breake open the gates of a pallace, &c. And thus the brethren are admoniſhed heere to be very careful to keepe brotherlie vnitie together, and diligently to fly al occaſions of ſtrife: and chiefly not to bee like vnto Caine, who without any iniurie offred by Abel, conceiued a deadly hatred, not to folowe the children of Iacob, which coulde not ſuffer that their malice ſhoulde bee diſcouered by Ioſeph. Therefore let vs fly al hatred, anger, and rancour: for they that are intangled therewith, are of the number of murtherers. There are other literal expoſitions, but they al ſerue to ſhewe vnto the brethren howe profitable and ne-

Acts.17.26
Gen.37.26.27
Gene.4.8.
& 37.4.
Mat.5.22.
1.Iohn.3.15.

neceſſarie it is for thm to agree together, if they wil continue: for if they be wel ioyned together, they ſhalbe as it were iuincible. If it be thus amongeſt carnal bretheren, by a ſtronger reaſon, they that are brethren in Ieſus Chriſt, and holde ſpirituall vnitie, ſhalbe fortified againſt all worldly and helliſh power.

20 *With the fruite of a mans mouth ſhall his belly bee ſatisfied: and with the increaſe of his lippes ſhall he be filled.*

Not onely man in the Scripture is compared vnto a tree, but alſo almoſt euery member of his bodie, as nowe Solomon maketh the mouth and the lippes like vnto a tree, or to his branches, or alſo vnto a peece of land, whoſe fruites and reuenues we gather. For he ſaith, *With the fruite of a mans mouth, &c.* In the which compariſon he vſeth Repetition, ſaying twice al one thing, after the maner of the Scripture, for a greater confirmation, and to ſhewe, that that which is ſayde is very certaine, and ſhall out of al doubt come to paſſe. Wherevpon the faithful, which are wel inſtrcted to ſpeake wiſely and purely, ought to be rightly comforted, and the wicked which talke vanitie and lying, ought to be ſore affraide, if they vnderſtoode what Solomon pronounceth againſt them: for as touching the faithful which ſpeake holy and honeſt things, as praiers, Pſalmes, and ſpirtual ſongues, and al other woordes which ſerue too the glory and honour of God, and to the edifying of their neighbours, they haue a promiſe that their woorde ſhalbe profitable, and ſhalbe rewarded ſo abundantly, that they ſhal not want any thing, and ſhal not neede to deſire any more. Solomon ſignifieth this ſame when hee ſaieth,

His belly ſhal bee ſatiſfied. For as when the belly is filled with meates and with drinkes abundantly, he is full and deſireth no more: euen ſo the reward of the good ſpeaker, ſhalbe ſo liberal, that his deſire ſhalbe accompliſhed for euer. For as in ſpeaking trueth with his mouth, hee hath confeſſed God: euen ſo alſo hee ſhal bee confeſſed and knowne of God in the heauenly glorie, wherein there is fulneſſe of ioy, &c. Contrarily, the wicked which haue *Pſal. 16. 11. & 17. 15.*

euil mouthes,and venemous lippes, haue an horrible and feareful threatning,which is,that as they doe giue their mouths and lippes vnto euil, both againſt God and their neighbours: euen ſo alſo they ſhal haue al their fil of plagues for euer. By this ſame let vs knowe that it is no ſmal goodneſſe for a man to gouerne his mouth rightly,and alſo to talke wickedly is no ſmal euil. *Pſal.5.7.11.*

21 *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they that loue it,ſhal eate the fruite thereof.*

Euen as by violent ſmyting of the hands,we kil,euen ſo contrarily, in helping with them wee labour to preſerue a man in life: and as it ſeemeth right that the euil wee ſuffer,and alſo the good which wee poſſeſſe,doe proceede from the handes, and that they are the inſtrumentes ſeruing eyther to wel doing or euil, euen ſo we tranſferre it from the arme, attributing it vnto the profitable or hurteful member, of the handes: as when Solomon ſaith,

Death and life, &c. Hee giueth an hande to the tongue, becauſe it is a member that hurteth very much if it bee applied vnto euil: & contrarily it helpeth much,when it is wel vſed. This ſame is knowne, and is ſeene by experience: for in lying, flattering, ſlaundering and falſe witneſſe bearing againſt our neighbour, wee goe about to deſtroy him, and no thanke to vs which haue ſo venemous tongues that our neighbours of whome wee haue ſpoken euil,be not ſlaine. Contrarily, in ſpeaking trueth,and by the ſame excuſing our neighbours, which otherwayes were in danger of their perſons, we haue preſerued their life: as Ioſeph, Dauid, & Suſanna,and others haue prooued it. Alſo in hauing wordes of edification and wholeſome doctrine in our mouths,we lead our neighbours,who are wel edified, vnto eternal life. But though Solomon doeth attribute vnto the tongue,that it applyeth his hande vnto contrarie vſes, the ſame is not to ſay that hee alloweth that the tongue ſhoulde bee a murtherer,except it be by accident,& againſt the minde and wil of him that ruleth his tongue: for there is no tongue ſo wholeſome nor healthful that bringeth not death vnto the wicked, vnbeleeuing, obſtinate and indurate, mockers and contemners

temners of trueth. And he ſhal ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lippes ſhal he ſlay the wicked. S. Iames agreeing with Solomon woulde haue vs to apply our tongues, to nothing but to goodneſſe: for hauing made a complaint againſt the malice of the tongue, he doeth admoniſhe vs not to vſe it as the common ſorte of men doe. If we wil beleeue Saint Iames, wee ſhal haue a good rewarde: otherwiſe wee ſhal haue plagues our belly ful: as hath beene handled in this preſent ſentence: and as nowe Solomon doeth ſignifie it, when he ſaith.

Eſay.11.4.
2.Theſ.2.8.
2.Cor.2.14.
Ia.3.3.9.

And they that loue it, &c. For wee loue the tongue according as the affections are ordered. Hee that hath an euil minde, wil delight to haue a venemous tongue: hee himſelfe alſo ſhalbee poyſoned with his owne tale. Contrarily, hee that hath a good heart wil delight in wel gouerning his tongue, for the which, good ſhal come vnto him.

22 *Hee that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and draweth fauour from the Lorde.*

Wee ought to haue the eſtate of mariage in great reuerence, for diuers reaſons. Firſt of al, it is honorable. Secondly, it is not the deuice of man, but a worke and an ordinance of God. Thirdly, it is profitable. Solomon doth expreſſe this ſame in one woorde, when he ſaith, *Hee that findeth a wife, &c.* For there is nothing good which doeth not proceede from God, and whatſoeuer God doeth & ordeineth by his worde, for to bee obſerued amongſt men, is honorable. But hee expreſſeth, yet more plainly that mariage is profitable, and that it is the worke of God, when hee doeth attribute it vnto diuine grace, ſaying; *Hee that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and draweth fauour from the Lorde.* Wherein hee compareth the grace of God vnto a fountaine, pit or riuer, out of the which wee may drawe abundantly. And this is for to ſhewe howe God greatly fauoureth them which are ioyned togither by laweful mariage: for ſeeing that it is ſo, that he which findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, it foloweth thereof alſo, that the woman which findeth an huſbande, findeth alſo a good thing: conſidering that the man is the womans head, and the woman by the man.

Heb.13.4.
Gene.1.27.
& 2.24.
Mat.19.4.
Gene.2.18.
1.Cor.7.2.
1.Cor.11.3.8
Gene.2.18.

But Solomon calleth the wife the good thing of the huſbande, reſpecting the ende wherefore ſhee was created. And in this hee admoniſheth wiues priuily, of their duetie that they haue to giue vnto their huſbandes, the which is, to bee altogither at theyr commandement, and that they might vſe them with al holyneſſe and honeſtie at their pleaſure, as the good that properly belongeth vnto them. *Ephe.5.22.* Let the wiues therfore obey perfitly vnto theyr huſbands. *1.Pet.3.1.* And alſo Solomon admoniſheth heere the wiues to bee fruitefull and profitable vnto theyr huſbandes, to be of a ſweete and louing conuerſation. Wherefore the wiues muſt not heere bee delighted, as though Solomon ſang foorth their praiſes, and woulde giue them to vnderſtand, that their huſbandes were bound to them: but wee muſt vnderſtande that in prayſing good wiues, he reproueth, rebuketh and blameth thoſe wiues which doe not giue their duetie vnto their huſbands, and ſheweth that they are not worthy to bee called wiues, except their huſbandes doe finde in them the goodneſſe that ought to bee in them. The huſbands alſo are heere admoniſhed not to deſpiſe their wiues, but to haue them in good eſtimation, and to loue them: ſeing that no man deſpiſeth gladly the good thing that hee hath founde: and chiefly, when they which fauour and loue vs, doe offer and giue it vs. Let the huſbandes therefore loue their wiues as their good thing, and not onely ſo, but much *Ephe.5.25.* more effectuouſly, as they are taught. *1.Pet.3.7.* As touching the reſt, let them that are wel maried, not thinke that they haue gotten this benefite through their diligence: but let them confeſſe howe it was the only grace of God that brought them vnto it, and cauſed them to finde that good gift. And let thoſe which finde themſelues not wel maried, take heede that they blame not mariage, but acknowledging their fautes, pray vnto God to remedie the euil that is betweene them.

23 *The poore ſpeaketh with prayers: but the riche anſwereth roughly.*

When we thinke wee haue neede of any thing that our neighbour can giue vs, and that wee hope hee wil graunt it vntoo vs, wee ſpeake fayre and gently vnto him, and beſeeche

him with al humblenes, declaring our ſelues to bee his lowlie and
humble ſeruantes, readie to obey him in al things. Solomon doeth
expreſſe this humble maner, ſaying, The poore: he ſaith expreſly, the
poore, ſignifying firſt of al, that when man hath neede of any thing,
and can not come by it, except it be giuen him, in this reſpect he is
poore, howe riche ſoeuer he be in other thinges. Solomon then
doeth ſhewe vs, that pouertie doeth outwardly beate downe the
hornes of pride, the which is a vice naturally rooted in vs. Hee
doeth alſo ſhewe vs, that we al ought to ſpeake graciouſly one vnto
an other: for by our creation we are poore. And if wee be rayſed *Iob.1.21.*
to haue credite and authoritie, to haue power and riches, this commeth *1.Tim.6.7.*
not of our ſelues: al commeth from God. And hee enricheth *Pſa.24.1.*
whome hee wil: and the bleſſing of the Lorde maketh men *& 50.12.*
riche. And therefore let vs vnderſtande, that Solomon reprooueth *1.Sam.2.7.8*
the pride of worldly riche men, when he ſaith, *Pro.10.22.*

But the riche anſwereth roughly. I ſay expreſly of worldly rich
men, whoſe number hath alwayes bene verie great: and amongſt
other, wee may ſet Pharao, Nabal, Roboam, Sennacherib and Nabuchadnezer.
The riche which haue the feare of God, are not puffed
vp with their greatnes, neither doe they eſteeme them ſelues for
their riches ſake: and therefore they anſwere not roughly, but
are ſweete and gentle in their woordes: as were Abraham, and
the holie Patriarkes, and the good Kinges of Iſrael, and others,
which haue beene neuer the more puffed vp for the abundaunce of
worldly wealth: but truely knowing that al commeth from the
gift and grace of God, haue humbled them ſelues, folowing that
which Saint Paule teacheth vs. They are then the riche men of *1.Tim.6.17.*
this worlde, which anſwere roughly, not onely in woordes, but
alſo in deede and facte: as wee may ſee by the oppreſſions, violences
and wronges they doe. Now that wee may not be of the number *Iam.2.6.7.*
of ſuche riche men, which aunſwere roughly becauſe of their *& 5.4.5.6.*
greatneſſe and riches, according to that which Saint Paule teacheth *Rom.12.16.*
vs. And if wee muſt thus poorely behaue our ſelues towardes *Phi.2.2.*
men, by a more ſtrong reaſon muſt wee earneſtly beſeech
God, as poore men, deſtitute of al riches, but chiefly of ſuch as
are ſpiritual, and not to be puſt vp with bragging of our merites in

Luk. 18. 10 the preſence of the Lorde. Let vs truely make the confeſſion that the Publican did, and let vs deteſt the boaſting of the Phareſee. Thus
2. Cor. 8. 9. dooing, wee ſhal not long remaine poore, for Ieſus Chriſte wil inriche vs: As Saint Paule ſayeth, Yee knowe the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that hee beeing riche, for your ſakes became poore, that wee through his pouertie might be made riche.

24 *A man that hath friends, ought to ſhew him ſelfe friendlie: for a friend is nearer then a brother.*

We commonly ſay, it is a good thing to haue friendes, and that one ought to preferre thē before al worldly treaſure: for it is an eaſie thing, to recouer goods, but not ſo eaſie to obtaine friends. And therfore if one be careful to keepe his temporal riches, and to maintaine himſelfe thereby, by a farre greater reaſon ought he (when he hath friends) to keepe them wel, and maintaine himſelfe with them in amitie, being at their commandement, not in wordes onelie, but in deedes alſo, and trueth. Solomon ſpeaketh ſo when he ſaith, *The man that hath friends, &c.* Heerein he regardeth, that God in his lawe, hath not giuen his commandements for a ſmal time, by the which hee teacheth vs that which wee ought to doe to our neighbours, and howe wee ſhoulde maintaine our ſelues in amitie with them. Wherefore let vs not thinke, that Solomon ſpeaketh heere of tablefriends, of plaie fellowes, or other diſſolutions, and wicked conſpiracies. But hee ſpeaketh of the friendes which haue learned by the worde of God to loue, and for his loue doe loue. He ſheweth it when hee yeldeth a reaſon why one ſhoulde mainteine himſelfe in friendſhip, and that hee ſaieth,

There is a friend, &c. Table friendes are not ſo ſurely conioyned, but they may be eaſily ſeparated, by the leaſt occaſion that can be. But it is a harde thing to make thoſe friendes which loue together in God, and by his worde, to leaue one an other: for they are brought to loue together by the holie Ghoſt, which is a band indiſſoluble. And ſo, although carnal brothers fal out, and forſake one an other, yea, although they lift them ſelues vp one againſt an other euen to the death: notwithſtanding, they that loue in the trueth, although

though they be not naturall brethren, yet they haue a ſure and ſtedfaſt coniunction. Inſomuch that they loue as muche, or more in aduerſitie, then in proſperitie. And ſo it is ſaide, that in a matter of neede, one knoweth his friend. Our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath ſhewed vs by proofe, that thus we ought to loue.

The xix. Chapter.

1 *BEtter is the poore man walking in his integritie of life, then he that abuſeth his lippes, and is a foole.*

HEere Solomon hath no regarde to ſpeech, which is an eaſie thing, and wheretoo the wickedeſt wil accord in woorde, to the ende to get credite, and to be accounted wiſe: but if wee weigh more neerely the affections, thoughtes, opinions, and phantaſies of men, which are verie harde to rule and gouerne, wee ſhal knowe that Solomon ſaieth not ſo without great cauſe: for as it is daily ſeene, the poore man is in cōtempt, and out of fauour with al men: and be there neuer ſo much wiſedome, prudence or foreſight in him, yea, although it plainly appeareth, yet is he reiected as vnprofitable, and perſecuted as a wicked perſon. And they which doe this, wil perſuade them ſelues they doe wel, although the ordinarie talke goe quite contrarie. But men for the moſt part, ſpeake as birdes in a cage, not vnderſtanding what they ſay, nor receiuing fruite or benefite thereof. And thus while the lyers, deceiuers, flatterers, backbiters, ſowers of falſe doctrine, and falſe opinions, ſhal haue the vpper hande, and be reputed honeſt, eche one ſhal deſire to reſemble them, becauſe they are welcome, and muche accounted of. So ſee wee wel, that not without great cauſe Solomon ſaith, *The poore man in his, &c.*

Hee knewe wel that we had neede of ſuch aduertiſement, becauſe there are verie fewe which make account of pouertie, and muche leſſe of ſimplicitie, and pureneſſe. Pouertie alſo is a thing which of it ſelfe ought not to be eſteemed: it ought (to the ende it may bee of ſome value) to be ioyned with a good conſcience. For this cauſe Solomon hath wel foreſeene, not to ſay ſimply, *The poore man is better, &c.* but he addeth, *Walking in his integritie and purenes:* for it is that which maketh the poore man, being nothing worth of him ſelfe, to be founde profitable and good, without the which he that is poore, can not but annoy and hurt, offende and endamage: but when hee is accompanied with integritie, hee contenteth him ſelfe with his eſtate and calling, and wil bee right ſorie to offende any man, either in woorde or deede, ſtil deſiring to doe profit and pleaſure to his neighbours. And thus, *Hee is better then he that abuſeth his lippes, &c.* For hee that is ſuche a one, not onely is vnprofitable, but alſo noyſome and hurtful. As Solomon expreſſeth it, ſaying, *Hee is a foole.* For (as often it hath bene ſaid) he calleth him foole, which is giuen to doe hurt, and delighteth therin. And herein hee ſheweth, that the peruerſitie of the lippes proceedeth from the follie or wickedneſſe of the heart. And therfore ſhoulde wee laye away our wickednes, and walke in integritie: the which is ours onely, becauſe it is giuen vs from God, and therein let vs delight. Let no man builde vppon his owne goodneſſe, although Solomon ſay, *Walking in integritie.*

Beſides this let vs note, that when Solomon ſetteth the foole abuſing his lippes, a contrarie, to the poore man walking in his integritie: hee tasketh the riche worldlinges of follie, which is the wickedneſſe of the heart, whereby they depraue and abuſe their lippes, wherewith they ſpeake in pride and malice, and giue licence to their owne appetite to ſpeake againſt God and their neighbors. Then to the ende we merit not to be taſked with ſuch wicked and fooliſh perſons, let vs loue integritie, and walke in the ſame, procuring in all our woords and actions the honour and glory of God, and doing truely to our neighbours euery thing, as wee woulde they ſhoulde doe vnto vs: ſo that wee may ſay, I haue beene vncorrupt before God, and haue kept my ſelfe from offending him.

I haue lifted vp my heart to thee, In thee, my God, haue I truſted. If wee walke thus, what pouertie, or affliction ſoeuer wee haue, wee ſhal want nothing: for the Lorde God is our Sunne and Buckler. *The Lorde ſpareth no good from them which walke in innocencie.* Not becauſe our owne righteouſnes deſerueth it. For although Dauid (after recital how God aſſiſted him) ſaith, *The Lorde hath rewarded mee according to mine owne righteouſneſſe,&c.* *Pſal.18.24 & 26.1.* *Pſal.84.12.* *Pſal.18.17 21.*

Notwithſtanding, hee truſted not in his owne integritie, but in God onely, as hee ſheweth it. Note we alſo that according to the foreſaide expoſition: when Solomon ſaieth, That the poore man is better, &c. hee ſpeaketh of the goodneſſe of the conſcience, of maners, and behauiour, as wel in worde as in deed, and wil, that for this goodnes the poore man be eſteemed, and preferred before the foole, be hee neuer ſo riche and mightie: As alſo God preferreth him. But the opinion of ſome men is, that Solomon prayſeth more the condition of the poore man, then of the foole, and that hee eſteemeth the poore man walking in his integritie of life, to be more happie then the foole which abuſeth his lippes. This expoſition conteineth trueth, and dependeth of the former: for if the poore man be preferred by God, it foloweth, that he is in good eſtate, and more happie then the foole. *Pſal.18.3. 51.13.* *Pſal.34.11 Luk.1.51. & 6.20. Iam.2.5.*

2 *Deſire without diſcretion is not good: and he that haſteth with his feete, offendeth.*

Thoſe which are not inſtructed in the worde of God, but ledde by the ſenſe of their owne corrupt nature, and according to the appetite of the fleſhe, haue diuers and ſundrie deſires, and haſte, (as muche as in them lyeth) to attaine to the ende of them, and to enioye them. They thinke ſtil, it is no hurt to deſire that, which they haue in their phantaſie, although they knowe not what the ende wil bee, neither if it be profitable for them to obtaine it, according to their deſire. If the worlde reprooue and condemne not ſuche deſires, the holie Ghoſt ceaſeth not to blame and reiect them as vnprofitable and wicked, ſaying by Solomon, *Deſire is naught, &c.* And it is in folowing that which God forbiddeth.

Exo.20.17 Therefore ſeeing God hath giuen ſuche commaundement: it is not without cauſe that Solomon blameth it. For it is not lawful to make that good, and approoueable, which God forbiddeth, whoſe onely wil ſhould ſuffice vs, for the perfect rule of al iuſtice and equitie. Likewiſe naturally wee perceiue, that in deſiring we are prouoked to ſtrife and debate, if we obtaine not our deſires, and enioy *Iam.4.1.* them at our pleaſure. And therefore Saint Iames doeth worthily rebuke the couetous. But when we ſee, that the antient holie Fathers (as Abraham) haue had deſires, which haue not bene reprooued, *Gen.15.2. & 12.2.& 13.14.& 21.1.& 28.20.13.* naye rather haue obtained according vnto them, yea more then they could them ſelues deſire: Hee deſireth it according to diſcretion, as appeareth by the promiſes, and ſo hee obteineth it. Iacob deſireth that the Lorde God wil aſſiſt him, folowing heerein rhe promiſe made. Dauid deſireth often to be deliuered from his e- *Pſal.50.14.* nemies, for hee knewe that God woulde that hee ſhoulde raigne in *Mat.6.9.* Iſrael. Alſo ſeeing it is Gods wil that wee ſhoulde cal vpon him, *Pſal.145.18.* and that our Lorde God hath taught vs to praye, and that we haue *Rom.3.9.* the promiſe to bee hearde, wee ſhoulde and ought to vnderſtande that Solomon blameth not al deſires: for hee him ſelſe hath wiſhed and obtained. And in this place he ſheweth it alſo, when he ſaith not abſolutely, *Deſire is not good:* but hee addeth to it, *Without diſcretion*: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, That when wee wiſhe for any thing, whereof we haue not certaine teſtimonie in our conſciences, that the worde of God alloweth it, ſuche wiſhe is not good. It is without fayth, which is the foundation of al goodneſſe, yea the goodneſſe of our deſires, and without the ſame, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God. And by conſequence hee imputeth it a ſinne. And for *Hebr.11.6* this cauſe the infidels are fruſtrate of their deſires: as many haue *Rom.14.24.* prooued it, and principally the enemies of God, and his people. And the holie ſcripture yeldeth teſtimonie therof. The deſire of *Pſal.112.10* the wicked ſhal periſhe. Likewiſe, that it is not good to deſire without diſcretion. Solomon ſheweth it, when he calleth it ſinne, ſaying,

And he that haſteth. He ſaith the ſame that we haue expounded, but vnder other wordes, wherein hee ſpeaketh by ſimilitude. For euen as hee that runneth with his feete, without any other conſideration, but that hee come to the ende of his race, and atchieue his iourney,falleth and ſtumbleth againſt them that he meeteth,and ſo doeth them hurt:ſo he that is ardent in his deſires, and boyling in his affections to doe a thing,not knowing whether it be lawful for him or no,is not cleare without damage,.principally of his ſoule,& he troubleth & hurteth others,and ſo ſinneth. And to accompliſhe his deſires hee doeth that wrong to his neighbours, which he woulde ſhoulde not bee done vnto himſelfe,and he doth them not that good which he is bound to do,and which he would ſhould be done vnto him,if hee were in the place and eſtate of his neighbours. And (which worſe is) hee giueth not the honour to Gods prouidence : which is due theretoo , for hee diſtruſteth thereof, and hath al his whole endeuour on his enterpriſe and affections. Hee leaueth God behinde, and puts him backe, to the ende hee bee not letted to runne after his deſires, which he would renounce, and bee coye to atchieue,if hee had God in his thought, and deſired like the Pſalmiſt,and Eſay.

Pſal.38.10.
& 42.2.
& 119.20.131
Eſa.26.8.9.

3 *The fooliſhneſſe of man ſhal peruert his waye: And his hart ſhal fret againſt the Lorde.*

It ſeemeth that the wicked proſper and doe their buſines wel in this world:and therefore they are accompted honeſt,ſage, & wiſe, which thing they deſire and couet , and enforce themſelues to appeare ſo.Notwithſtanding in their buſineſſe, they neuer come to the ful ende of that they deſire.And therefore they ſtreine themſelues,bee it right or wrong to obtaine their owne wil, and by this meanes they marre al. Firſt,for them for they haue thoughtes and deliberations,which proceed from the malice of their conſciences, the which Solomon calleth follie: Eliphas,guile and ſutteltie: and Dauid,vanitie.Wherevpon enſeweth,that they can profit nothing, but muſt of neceſſitie be fruſtrate of their enterpriſes,& attemptes as one may ſee by the places afore alledged , and as Solomon pronounceth it ſaying, *The follie of man ſhall peruert his wayes: &c.* Secondarily, as much as in them lyeth , by their follie and wickedneſſe, they doe al manner euil,to their neighbours where-

Iob.4.12.13.
Pſal.94.11.

as they ſhoulde doe good and bee ſage to profite and helpe them. And ſo they peruert their way, practiſing and doing cleane contrarie to their office and duetie. Then as they are peruerſe, ſo God is to them peruerſe, not permitting them to come to the end of their enterpriſe as they woulde: And when they thinke ſure to haue an end of the ſame, God ouerturneth al, and maketh the wicked feele, that it is hee that is troubled: & diſturbeth them to diſpoſe their waies, according to the appetite of their follie. Yea for that cauſe, he handleth them ſo rudelie, that they knowe not in what taking they are, but they feele great reſiſtance, whereat they are angrie, agrieued, and diſpited. And although it ſeeme to bee againſt men onelie that they would deale: notwithſtanding inſomuch as they caſt their rage againſt innocents, whoſe defender God is: they fret and fume againſt him, not in wordes onelie, but they beare him a grudge alſo in heart. Solomon ſpeaketh ſo when hee ſaith, *Pſal. 18. 27.*

And his heart, &c. One may wel ſay alſo that fooliſh men feeling the iudgement of God to perſecute them (becauſe they cannot ſhunne it) in their hartes, doe accuſe God of ouermuch rigour, crueltie, and iniuſtice: and woulde that there were no God. And thus they chafe, & fret directly againſt the Lord. One may ſee theſe twoo kinde of frettings in Cain, he grudgeth againſt his iuſt brother Abel, and kils him: and then hee accuſeth God of iniuſtice, and diſpayreth. And Saul beareth hatred againſt Dauid, whome he knewe and confeſſe, to be innocent, and perſecuted him to the death: and finallie feeling that God had forſaken him, waxeth ſpyteful, and ſeeketh counſel at the Diuel. Iudas waxed ſpyteful againſt Ieſus Chriſt, the Lambe immaculate, and ſoulde him to be put to death. And afterwards through diſpaire waxed frantike, and hanged himſelfe. Solomon therefore ſheweth vs that follie is a great wickednes, & that we ought to be careful to roote it out of our hartes: otherwiſe wee ſhal be ſo vnaduiſed, that if our buſines proceede not according to our deſires, we ſhal fret againſt God to our owne confuſion. Therefore to roote out this follie, it behoueth vs to be attentiue to that ſapience which is taught vs by the woorde, and by the ſame to learne, howe to frame al our waies, and words, to the honour & glory of God, and to the edification and health of our neighbour. Thus dooing GOD wil proſper our proceedings according *Gen. 4. 5.* *1. Sam. 18. 8* as hee ſhal thinke expedient. And although wee attaine not wholy to the ende of our enterpriſes, yet wee ſhall take well in worth al that which ſhal happẽ to vs, bee it proſperitie, or aduerſitie, and not grudge againſt God: whome Solomon heere calleth *the Lorde*, or the eternal. Wherein he ſignifieth that al things are ſubiect to him: and that it is meete, that without murmure, contradiction, or deſpite, al ſubmit themſelues to his wil, as to the rule of perfect iuſtice, knowing that what reſiſtance ſoeuer we find or what affliction ſoeuer wee endure, al happeneth vnto vs by his wil and prouidence. And in the meane while hee ceaſſeth not to loue vs, aſſiſt vs, and keepe vs. And therefore in ſteede of grudging, it is meete that wee ſay with Dauid, That if hee ſay to mee, Thou pleaſeſt mee not, beholde mee, Let him deale with mee as it ſeemeth him good. And with Iob, Although he kil mee. &c. Beſides, let vs take heede of ſtriuing to exalt our ſelues by ambition and arrogancie, as our father Adam did, who willing to bee like to God, peruerted his way, and is fallen from his dignitie, & excellency into a miſerable eſtate: & feeling his miſery, hid him from God, but ſeeing that hee coulde not eſcape his ſight, hee laide al the fault vpon the woman, and the ſame vpon God, which is a ſpice of this murmuring and grudge.

2.Sa.15.26.
Pſa.23.4.& 119.137.
Iob.13.15.
Gen.3.

4 *Goods and riches gather freendes: but the poore man is ſeparated from his neighbour.*

Solomon ſaith nothing in ſubſtance heere, but that which he hath ſaide aboue: notwithſtanding hee ſeemeth at the firſt ſhewe both there and heere to haue differed from that which hee hath ſaid els where. But if we conſider theſe ſentences accordingly, we ſhal find that this preſent ſentence, is as it were a declaratiõ, by the which hee giueth to vnderſtande, that many are freends to the rich, and that is not in trueth: for they loue the goods and not the perſon, but onely becauſe hee is rich, hee ſaith not, Man aſſembleth many freendes: *But goods aſſemble, &c.* One makes many fetches, one hath many geſtures, one vſeth many woordes, too make a man beleeue hee loueth him: and this while hath hee his heart fixed on his riches, and goods: And al that which one ſayth,

and

and doth about the perſon, is no more but draw from it, that which he loueth: that is to witte, his goodes, his riches, his ſubſtance. One may knowe this by experience, for if the rich man become poore, they make no account of him, yea they ſtudie rather to doe him hurt, and hinderance, then to ayde and profit him, as alſo Solomon declareth it ſaying,

But the poore man is ſeparated from his neighbor or freende. Thoſe which ſhuld loue him, hate him: they which ſhold help him, hurt him: thoſe which ſhould aſſiſt him, abſent them ſelues from him: they which ſhould defend him, perſecute him: and ſo in verity the poore man hath no freende according to rhe ordinary courſe of this worlde. And therefore when Solomon ſpeaketh heere, of the po ore mans freende, he ſpeaketh not of him, that is ſo indeede, for hee is inſeparable, but of him that ſhoulde bee ſo, or that hath made ſemblant to be ſo. Wee ſee therefore that Solomon ſpeaketh not heere againſt that which is ſpoken of before in the ſeuenteenth chapter, and ſeuenteenth verſe, for there he ſpeaketh of the true charitie that one hath towardes his neighbour, which neuer changeth. And heere he ſpeaketh of the affection and loue, which men haue to the riches of the world, and ſheweth that man is too vnreſonable when he preferreth thinges corruptible and tranſitorie, inſenſible and deade, before that which is his fleſhe, to wit, the image of God which ſhineth in man. And not onely preferreth them before the image, but (which woorſe is) before God himſelfe whome he deſpiſeth and hateth, when hee ſetteth his affection on riches. And ſo hath God the poore man in recommendation, that whatſoeuer one doeth to him, he reputeth it done to himſelſe. Inſomuch therefore, that wee ought to loue God aboue all thinges: let vs take heed of deſpiſing the poore, and of ſeparating them from vs, to ſet our affections on earthly things, which when a man once loueth, he cannot eaſily withdraw himſelfe, but purſueth more and more. And ſo by this meanes it is ſomewhat practiſed that the freende loueth alwayes: for the auaritious loueth his riches at al times, and neuer ſeparateth them from him: but when by the grace of God hee is changed and made a newe creature, following hartily al holy admonitions of the Scripture which tende to turne vs from couetouſneſſe. Theſe thinges thus conſidered, wee may ſee

Eſay. 58.7.

Mat. 8.24. & 25.35

that Solomon rebuketh the worlde of auarice and crueltie: which cannot bee in a man without defiance and rebellion againſt God.

5 *The falſe witneſſe ſhall not be vnpuniſhed, & he that telleth lyes ſhall not eſcape.*

For our Lorde God is veritable, and loueth trueth, and that in the ſame hee doeth all his workes, and diſpoſeth al thinges, without any diſguiſing, colouring, or counterfeiting: hee will that wee which are created after his owne image, ſhoulde be his followers, making ſhine that image in vs, conducting to veritie. To the which to ſticke inſeparably, it behoueth vs to flie and deteſt the contrary, which is lying. And though wee knowe naturally that we ought not to lye, neither to God nor men (for wee cannot abide that an other lye to vs.) notwithſtanding in that wee are ſo negligent to do our duetie, and that we encline more rather to corrupt this image, and to deprave our nature by lying, then to continue, & preſerue it in trueth. For this cauſe to waken vs, and admoniſhe vs of our duetie, the Lorde God hath giuen vs his lawe by writing, in the which by two commandements hee forbiddeth vs lying, neither to his diſhonour, nor to the detriment of our neighbour. Thou ſhalt not take the name of thy Lord God in vaine: Thou ſhalt not beare falſe witneſſe. &c. To the firſt he addeth a threatening, and he ordeineth a temporal puniſhment to the falſe witneſſes, by the which he ought to vnderſtande, that perpetual tormentes are prepared for him, if hee acknowledge not his fault and amende. *For thou ſhalt deſtroy al them that ſpeake lyes.* Theſe commandementes, manacing and threatning puniſhment, ought to ſuffice to conuert vs from al lying: but our nature is ſo wicked, that it weyeth not one warning. Exo.20.7.16 Deut.19.16 Pſal.5.7.

And therefore, after God had once giuen his lawe to Moyſes: his wil was, that hee ſhoulde write the Deuteronomium, which is a repetition or declaration of the lawe. And not content herewith, he hath rayſed vp diuers wiſe men, and Prophetes, who ſeeing the obſtinacie of the worlde, and the ſtubborneneſſe of it, haue inculced the Lawe and threateninges by voyce, and by wryting: as is ſeene in the olde Teſtamente. And amongeſt others, Solomon hath doone ſo, as one may ſee in many of his Prouerbes, and preſently in this ſaying, *The falſe witneſſe, &c.* In the which *Pſal.5.7.* hee ſaith nothing, which hath not beene ſaide, and written before him in the lawe, as wee haue ſeene. Neuertheleſſe we iudge not this ſentence ſuperfluous, ſeeing the world is ſo wicked, that it maketh no account of fearing God, when it is ſo throughly warned. Wee ſhal learne therefore in this manace, that the falſe witneſſe, backbiter, and flatterer, that thoſe which ſwere vainely, forſwere, and blaſpheme, if they eſcape for a while the handes of men, and bee ſupported and mainteined, yet they cannot eſcape the fury and renenge of God. Alſo the iudges, and gouernours of the earth, are warned to bee carefull to puniſhe ſuche people according to the lawe of God. Wee may comprehende vnder this manace, al falſe teachers. For their doctrine is but lyes to deceiue the ſoules, and falſe witneſſe againſt God, in that they attribute not the honour to him which is his, but ſtudie to haue it to them ſelues, and ſo tranſport it to other creatures.

6 *Many hang vpon the face of the Prince, and euerie one is a friend to him that gineth.*

When wee thinke wee haue neede of any thing, or that wee couet more then wee haue, in that our natural couetouſnes is corrupted, and of it ſelfe inſatiable, wee looke who they bee, that haue power to doe vs good, and who are moſt inclined to ſhewe themſelues magnificent, and vſe liberalitie. Towards ſuch men wee play the poore, and humble, we reioyce them, and flatter them, ſubmitting our ſelues by wordes and exteriour geſture, wholy to their commandement. And becauſe Princes, and greate Lordes are they which haue greateſt authoritie, and which ſhew themſelues ordinarilie moſt liberal, there is preaſſe to come to them, and many preſent themſelues to doe them ſeruice, proteſting that they are their hūble ſeruitours. Solomon expreſſeth this ſaying. *Many hang vpō the face of the prince, &c.* This is not to ſay, that *Rom.13.1.* he teacheth vs ſo to doe, for although it is meete wee bee ſubiect *1.Pet.2.13.* and vnder Lordes and ſuperiours: notwithſtanding wee ought not to hang on their faces,for heerein is naught but hypocriſie,and diſſimulation. And ſuch a one hangeth on the Princes face, as diſpraiſeth him, and mocketh him in his hearte, who hateth him and woulde haue him put downe,for to bee in his place,if it were poſſible.For,to hang vpon the Prince,is not to do him honour and reuerence, and to humble himſelſe to him with free courage as one ought: But it is in conſidering his hautineſſe and great power, his credite and authoritie,his goods and riches,his promptitude and liberalitie which are the face of the Prince, to play the wanton before him,to ſeeme to loue him,and to beare him good and humble affection,to the ende to bee ſupported by him, and drawe from him his riches,and bee in credite with him, Solomon expreſſeth this diſsimulation and faire ſhewe,ſaying:

And euery one is a freende,&c. For hee ſpeaketh not of him that is a freend indeede,and loueth at al ſeaſons. Hee that is ſuch a one,regardeth not if one giue him,and affecteth it not, but hee is rather readie to giue, if neceſsitie require,then to take. He deſireth giftes, but when great neede is, hee ſpeaketh not(I ſay)of ſuch a freende,but of them whome he hath treated of. Such freends loue not the perſon, but rather hate him,for if one giue not them as they deſire,they are ſo actiue to take, that they imagine and regarde,howe they may get into their handes any thing. They are therefore freendes to the giftes, &not the to perſon. Although Solomon ſay that euery one is a freende to the man that giueth: and ſaith not a freende to the gift: notwithſtanding,in that which wee haue ſaide, wee haue not gaineſaide Solomon. For he ſpeaketh not of that which is ſo indeed before God,but of that which appeareth outwardly to the eies, and of the opinion that they woulde one ſhoulde haue of them,which haunt the riche onely to get ſome of their ſubſtance: and ſo hee taxeth the hypocrites, flatterers and auaricious,with whome the worlde is repleniſhed. As alſo he giueth
to vnderſtande by theſe two wordes, *Many*, and *euery one*. Hee *Eſa.9.9.17.*
maketh therefore ſtilly the complaintes which are elſwhere. Al are *Pſa.12.2.3.*
hypocrites and wicked,and eche mouth ſpeaketh lauiſhly, and ſtill *Iere.6.13.*
alſo hee warneth vs,that wee walke in veritie towardes our neigh- *Rom.12.9.*
bours, And that wee loue without diſsimulation, as Saint Paule *Ephe.4.25.*
admoniſheth vs openly. Alſo thoſe Princes which haue the power *Phi.4.8.*

to helpe the neceſſitie of the poore more then others, are warned not to bee ſo giuen to couetouſneſſe, that they turne the deaffe eare to thoſe that haue need of their ſuccor & aide: But according to the title which Solomõ giueth thẽ heere (the which in his tongue ſignifieth liberal & free willed) they ought franckly, & in a ioyful wiſe to diſtribute largely of their goods, not to minſtrelles, Mirthmakers, flatterers, fooles, baudes and Ruffians, as the common vſe of princes is to exalt and eleuate them to riches and honour that are nothing worth: but to the indigent and needie, which are commonly reiected and diſpiſed, yea pilled and polled if they haue any thing at al. Princes & great Lords ought to be fathers to ſuch poore afflicted, and to comforte them, deliuering them frõ aduerſitie & oppreſſion. *Iob.29.12.* to the ende they may truely ſay with Iob, I haue deliuered the poore when hee cried, and the Orphan that had no aide. So euery one in his degre, according as God hath giuen him power, ought to folowe this which is ſaide of the Prince. For as naturally wee haue euery one the courage of a fooliſhe and ouerhardy prince: ſo it is meete that correcting our corrupt nature, wee followe in al righteouſneſſe that which a Prince ought to doe according vnto God.

Moreouer if they which loue their particular profite vſe them ſelues ſo, that they ſhew themſelues as friends to them that giue: by a farre more reaſon, if one helpe vs in our neceſſitie, wee ought truely to bee freende to them that haue pitie on vs, and to pleaſe them, and to ſhewe our ſelues bounde vnto them. For if wee ought too loue our enimies, by a farre more reaſon ſhoulde wee loue them that loue vs and declare the ſame loue towardes vs, in *Mat.5.44.* communicating to vs, the goods wherewith God hath endowed them. If one loue a toole or inſtrument which hee findeth fit for his buſineſſe, which cannot mooue nor ſtirre but when it is mooued, becauſe it is inſenſible: by a farre more reaſon, ought one to like of the inſtrumentes of GOD which deſire to bee handeled and conducted by the holy Ghoſte, and take pleaſure in doing good. If God (as it is true in deede) loue ſuch perſons, to whom hee is no way bounde, by a farre more reaſon ought wee too loue them, and do them ſeruice in that they haue neede of vs, & that we may ſtand them in ſteede either with counſel, or with the worke of our handes according to the ſtate whereto God hath called vs, otherwiſe we ſhoulde bee vngrateful.

Moreouer when wee couet to haue freendes rather then enmies, let vs be enclined to giue, ſeeing that as Saint Paule ſaith, It is meete wee remember the wordes of the Lorde, who hath ſaide, *Act.20.35.* That it is a more bleſſed thing to giue then to take. And if the worldlinges by vaine glory, which is a thing of no endurance bee prouoked to giue and bee liberall, not looking for any rewarde againe: by a farre more reaſon, Chriſtians ought to bee mooued too liberalitie, conſidering the promiſe of the Lorde. *Luke.16.9* If wee doe otherwiſe, wee are infidels, and cannot worthily receiue the Supper of the Lorde.

7 *All the brethren of the poore doe hate him, and his freendes and fellowes withdrawe them ſelues from him: Hee giueth credite to wordes, and getteth nothing.*

According to the common experience of the worlde, it is a miſerable thing to be a poore man: for what neceſſitie ſoeuer hee hath, he ſhall ſcarſe finde one which will haue pitie or compaſſion vpon him, and helpe his indigence, but rather flee him and hate his companie. Solomon following the ſame experience, pronounceth it thus. It is a very lamentable thing to ſee the poore man ſo vncurteouſly and cruelly handled. But it is farre woorſe, according to common proofe, when thoſe which are of his owne fleſhe and blood, not onely, haue no pitie on him, but alſo hate him. If it bee ſo (as dayly experience ſheweth it) we ought not to maruell if thoſe which thinke themſelues nothing bounde but by neighbourhood and familiaritie, deſpiſe him and withdrawe themſelues from him. Solomon expreſſeth this great crueltie, when hee ſaith, *All the brethren of the poore, &c.* When the brethren are faithfull, and haue the feare of God before them, they are careful to obey his lawe and commaundementes. And ſo Solomon ſpeaketh heere of carnall brothers and infidelles, which haue their hearte on their profite altogether. If they haue brethren in neceſsitie, naked of aide and ſuccour, they cannot ſee them: for they think that they let them, to come to their purpoſe: & therfore they hate thē & cannot giue them a good worde, nor heare any requeſt or complaint that they make, nor bee their interceſſours in any matter of waight which wil doe them good: for they are ſo attentiue to doe their owne buſineſſe, that they thinke if they ſhould giue a good worde to their poore brethren, or heare their requeſtes, or complaintes, or beare any burden for them, it would hinder them greatly. Solomon expreſſeth this beaſtly barbarouſneſſe, and ſaith, *Hee giueth credite to wordes, &c.* Ioſeph the ſonne of Iacob hath prooued the like beaſtlineſſe and crueltie, as his owne brothers confeſſe. But although *Gen.42.21.* it bee ſo, and that Solomon rightly reproue the barbarouſneſſe and crueltie that one vſeth towardes another: neuertheleſſe what affliction and miſerie ſoeuer the poore endure, to the death, yea, yet let them not diſpaire, but conſider there is a God in heauen, which hath care ouer the poore that truſt in him. Then ſeeing it is ſo, that God (who is father of vs all) hath ſuche care ouer the poore: let vs take heede that wee bee not of thoſe brethren *Deut.15.4.* which hate the poore, nor of thoſe felowes which withdrawe them *Pſa.22.25.* ſelues from them. If the poore man vtter wordes, requiring vs to *& 34.7.&* aſsiſt him, yet let vs not deſpiſe his requeſt, as vaine or enuious, but *69.34.7.&* giue him a ſpeedie anſwere, not of the mouth, but of aide and ſuc- *42.9.* cour, according as hee hath neede.

Furthermore, let vs note, that where hee ſaith, *All the brethren of the poore hate him.* This hate is very ordinary, and ſo commonly practiſed, that it is made a cuſtome. And men way not whether they doe wel or il, and many hate the poore, which thinke it not. But they ſhal not therefore bee excuſed: for their owne conſcience accuſeth them, that they are not ſo wel affectioned towardes the poore, as they would one ſhould be vnto them, if they were in that eſtate. And thus they beare not that good wil to the poore, that they thinke they doe. Wherupon enſueth, that they hate them, for betweene loue and hate cannot be any good meane. Beſides this, let vs note that although Solomon willeth vs to anſwere in words, or giue words to them which pray and ſpeake to vs: yet notwithſtanding hee woulde not haue vs to feede the poore with wordes onely: but hee ſheweth vs, that if wee refraine them in ſpeache, & ſpare our tongue, by a farre greater reaſon we wil grutch to aide them with our goods, which wee eſteeme farre more then our words. Let vs not therefore be niggards of profitable ſpeaches, but let vs loue principally in deedes and trueth.

Iam.2.15.
1.Ioh.3.18.

8 *Hee that hath a hart, loueth his ſoule, and keepeth prudence to finde riches.*

There is nothing that wee loue ſo naturally as this preſente life, and al that we thinke, ſay, or doe, tendeth onely to get wherewithal to mainteine vs in the ſame, and keepe vs in good health, and heartes eaſe: yet although this care bee naturall in vs, notwithſtanding wee proſper not, if wee haue not the hearte in good plight (as they ſay) indewed with natural vnderſtanding, and that wee bee of a quicke wit, and foreſight. For the fooliſhe and braineleſſe ſort, oft put their life in great hazarde, and in ſteede of finding goods, looſe the ſame, and marre al they goe about: and if wee loue ſo much this brief and tranſitorie life, and the fraile and brickle goods, for the maintenance of the ſame: wee ought farre more to loue the heauenly life, and felicitie which is eternal: but of our ſelues we cánot come to this loue, for we are fooles, wicked, negligent, & ſlouthful: and ſo we are looſe of courage and faint hearted: wherupon enſueth the deſtruction of our ſoules, and way to death: and to loue our ſoules wel, and to enriche them, it behoueth vs to bee prudent in heart, as Solomon ſaith,

He that hath a heart, loueth his ſoule, and keepeth prudence to finde riches. But when wee haue naturally a lacke of hearte, wee cannot haue it of our ſelues, becauſe wee cannot or will not change our nature. That is the worke of GOD: as wee ought to vnderſtande by his promiſes wherefore we ought to pray, O God, create in mee a pure hearte, and renewe in mee the ſpirite of righteouſneſſe. And alſo by that which hath bin oftentimes touched, of him that wanteth heart, and is looſe of courage. And by that which hath beene touched in the 15. Chapter, and the 31. 32. wee may and ought to vnderſtande, that hee poſſeſſeth hearte, which is ſo inſtructed by the worde of GOD that by the ſame he hath ſound iudgement, and good aduiſe to conduct him ſelfe, in the feare and reuerence of the Lorde, and hath a good will, and right

Deut.30.6
Iere.24.7.
Ezech.11.19
&.36.26.

affection to yeelde himſelfe obedient to God,and helpeful too his neighbours. He that is ſuch a one, loueth his ſoule, and not as worldlinges doe,and Epicures,which ſtudie to liue at heartes eaſe, and haue the fauour and ſupport of the worlde without any contradiction,or reſiſtance. Such men are much deceiued,as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte ſheweth vs. But the man that hath a hearte,loueth *Mat.16.24* *Iohn.12.25.* his ſoule in ſuch maner,that he hath a care to gouern it according to the wil of God,preſt to endure with pacience al maner afflictions which it ſhal pleaſe the Lorde to ſende. In this manner hee keepeth prudence which leadeth him to thoſe goods, which are proper to preſerue his ſoule whom he loueth.

Now the goods which he getteth,is the fauour acceptable to the Lorde,by the which hee obteineth, that his ſinnes bee not imputed to him,but is made partaker of the iuſtice of Ieſus Chriſte, by the which he commeth to euerlaſting life. Let vs note in the reſt that although there bee none but God, which prouideth of his owne meere grace and good wil, al that which is neceſſary for vs for the time preſent,and the time to come,aſwel for our bodies, as our ſoules.Notwithſtāding this letteth not,but with ſound iudgement,prudence and good aduiſe,wee may followe thoſe meanes by the which wee prouide for this life,and doe that which is good and neceſſary for our health. For it is no inconuenience that GOD doeth al,and wee bee his inſtruments by the which hee worketh. What heart then ſoeuer wee profeſſe,what prudence or vnderſtanding wee haue: let vs reknowledge in veritie, that it is onely God which willeth and accompliſheth: and to him let vs giue all praiſe and glorie in al thinges.

9 *The falſe witneſſe ſhall not eſcape vnpuniſhed: and hee that ſpeaketh lyes, ſhal periſh.*

Beteweene the fiſt ſentence of this Chapter,and this,is no difference,ſauing in the ende of the fiſt ſentence,there is *Shall not eſcape*,and in this *Shall periſhe*,which is the expoſition of *ſhall not eſcape*. And ſo this is here a repetition not vnprofitable to the wel diſpoſed: for they are againe warned, that God greatly deteſteth falſe witneſſe bearers and lyars,and therefore they to bee careful to thinke and ſay, the trueth, and flee all lying. This repetition alſo ſerueth to make the falſe witneſſe bearers and lyers more blamewoorthy, when they haue once deſpiſed ſo many warninges, and not taken heede to amend.

10 *Pleaſures are not ſeemely for a foole: much leſſe for a bound man to haue rule ouer Princes.*

Although the wicked which deſpiſe true ſapience, and are therefore called fooles, haue commonly good ſtore of goodes, eyther by ſucceſſion, or giftes, or by their owne induſtry, and that they enioy them in delight and heartes eaſe, at theyr owne pleaſure: and that becauſe they ſpende the time gallantly and make good cheere: they are therefore accompted worthy to liue, and haue abundance of riches: notwithſtanding becauſe they haue not the feare of God with them, and be not his children, it were more fit for them to haue no riches at all. And that which they haue, they vſurpe it wrongfully by what title ſoeuer they poſſeſſe it. Wherevpon enſueth, that they cannot vſe it, nor rightfully enioy it, at their eaſe and pleaſure. Solomon pronounceth it, ſaying: *Pleaſures are not ſeemely, &c.* As when we know any one to be a thiefe, & liue by robbery, we cannot, nor ought not to allowe his wickedneſſe, nor affirme his life good and honeſt, but rather iudge it diſordinate, and deteſtable. So before God, who knoweth the fooliſh, it is not found fit, that they liue at their pleaſure and eaſe of theyr fleſhe although hee permit them as is ſeene: For there is none in the world, according to outward apparance that haue more their pleaſures then the fooliſh and wicked. And as God which knoweth all, alloweth not that the fooliſh haue their pleaſures to the damage of the miſerable & afflicted: Euen ſo, when God hath opened the eyes of his ſeruantes and principally thoſe which he hath lifted vp in preheminence, and geuen too vnderſtande the wickedneſſe of the fooliſhe, they ought too deteſt and hate thoſe fooles whome they ſee ſo at theyr eaſe. For they cannot enioy the delightes of this worlde without greate diſorder. And although a man cannot perceaue it alwayes, yet it ceaſſeth not to boe a greate hinderaunce to the feeble, ſimple, and innocent of whome the foole makes no accompt, but rather ſtudieth to afflict & vex them, pilling, and polling them, or refuſing to pleaſure them to enioy the better his owne eaſe and pleaſure. Then if pleaſures are not ſeemely for fooles, who notwithſtãding ſeeme fit to enioy them, becauſe they are rich or of noble parentage, and in authoritie, or becauſe afore time they haue taken paynes, to liue laſtly at their eaſe: If to ſuch people (I ſay) pleaſures are not ſeemely, by a farre more reaſon it is not fitting, that inferiours ſhoulde enterpriſe ought, againſt or aboue their ſuperiours, to put themſelues in their eaſe, or haue their pleaſures, to the preiudice of their ſuperiours. Solomon ſheweth this, ſaying,

Much leſſe for a bounde man, &c. By the name of bondman hee meaneth al inferiours, as children, houſholde ſeruants, wayting men, Chamberlaines, ſubiects and vaſſailes, which are bounde to obay, feare, & honor them that are in power by Gods appointment, and whome they ought to ſerue without grudge, or contradiction, and as much as in them lyeth, worke their delightes, which are principally in bearing rule, without reſiſtance, or rebellion. For great mẽ of the earth, & al thoſe that haue preheminẽce as kings, princes, magiſtrates, gouernours, fathers, mothers, maiſters, & rulers, although they haue many cares, and great trauaile to maintaine themſelues in their principalitie, notwithſtanding they haue no greater pleaſure, then when their ſubiects and Inferiours worke no ſedition againſt them, but endure in al humilitie, their rule and gouernement: which to enioy, they take thought and deliberate, they payne and trauel themſelues, and ſpare for no coſt, eſteeming this as nothing, ſo they may beare rule: for they knowe, that in gouerning, they may doe as pleaſe them, and obtaine al their deſires, euery one beeing at their commandement: and thus they ſhal enioy their pleaſures. The fooliſhe thirſt after ſuch pleaſure. But of what power, or calling ſoeuer they bee, it is not ſeemely for them, but rather requiſite that the wiſe beare rule ouer them and tame them. Wherevppon enſeweth that which Solomon ſaieth, That *much leſſe* ſeruantes which are ſlaues, and of the moſt vile and abiect condition of the world, are meete to gouerne & beare rule ouer princes:

But they and all inferiours ought to humble themſelues, and by their obedience reioyce their ſuperiours, for they ought of free will to ſubmit themſelues: as Saint Paule teacheth them in many places. One may alſo ſay that if the foole be in proſperitie and haue his eaſe and delightes, yet can he not vſe them as he ought: Much leſſe can a ſlaue of ſeruile condition, beare rule ouer princes, and order them as he ought. Let vs note firſt of all, that pleaſures are not forbidden if we vſe them ſoberly, and without exceſſe: for God hath not giuen riches vnto man onely for to vſe them, but alſo to reioyce and take his pleaſure in them.

And ſo haue the Saintes, not onely vſed them for neceſſitie, but alſo for delight, and yet ſoberly, to the ende the diſſolute and ouerlauiſh, ſhould not take occaſion thereby to woorke exceſſe. Secondarily let vs note, that to inoye our pleaſures wel, and to be capable thereof. We ought to deteſt and hate folly, and aſpire to wiſedome, giuing our ſelues to the ſame. For we cannot haue the true vſe of pleaſure, if by wiſedome wee bee not taught how to vſe it. Alſo there is no true ioy, nor delight but in wiſedome, who alone maketh vs to inioy it, as is aboue ſeene. Thirdly, let vs note that ſeruantes ought to be content with their ſtate, vntil ſuch time as they may lawfully ſet free themſelues: and whiles they bee in ſeruice, to thinke their maiſters worthie of al honour. Fourthly, let vs note that ſith the pleaſure of princes is in bearing rule, they ought to exerciſe no tyranny.

Leu.23.40.
Deut.16.12
1.Cor.7.20.
1.Tim.6.1.

11 *The foreſight of a man maketh him defer his anger: and it is his honour to let faultes paſſe.*

Seeing wee are al the children of one father, wee ought therefore al to deſire to reſemble him: and as hee is to vs gentle, gracious and pitiful, ſo ought wee to bee one to another: as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte admoniſheth vs, and the Apoſtle Saint Paule. But wee cannot ſo followe our heauenly father, if wee bee not indued with prudence and foreſight, as Solomon ſheweth wel, when he ſaith not a man doeth defferre his anger, but *the foreſight of a man, &c.* Hee ſheweth alſo that it is God which leadeth man to bee courteous and gentle: For foreſight, or wiſdome or vnderſtanding, is of God.

Luk.6.36,
Ephe.4.1.& 5.1.
Col.3.8.12.

Pſal.94.8. Pro.2.6. Hee ſheweth thirdly, that he which is ſoone mooued to anger, hath no foreſight, but is frantike and fooliſhe as hee ſheweth it by folly indeede. Solomon expreſſeth this more plainely els where, and when hee addeth,

And it is his honour, &c. Hee ſheweth that the man well Pro. 12.16. & .14.29. grounded in vnderſtanding and foreſight, excelleth in charitie towardes his neighbours, who haue offended him, when not onely hee eaſily pardoneth them, and putteth in obliuion al their faultes and offences, but alſo hath great ioy, and eſteemeth himſelfe happy, to bee in good concorde, and vnion with them, that haue wrought Exo.34.6 offence towards him. In this hee is a right follower of his heauen- Luke.15.4 ly father, who is ſaide to be a pitiful God, merciful, ſlow to anger, ful of mercie and trueth, &c. Beſides this, note we that Solomon vſeth here a ſimilitude, takē of thē which haue any voyage to make in haſt. As they that take no care to breake down hedges, or fil vp brookes & ditches that lye in their way, but leape or paſſe ouer thē: ſo if we will worke by good aduiſe, and make our voyage to the heauenly kingdome, let vs not ſtande to examine to the vttermoſt, euery iniury that is doone to vs, thereby to incurre hate, debate and ſtrife, and to take vengeance on them that offende vs: otherwiſe we cannot come where we woulde or ſhoulde come. For if wee pardon Mat.6.14 15.20 not men their faultes, our heauenly father wil not pardon vs ours. Where one may ſay, hee vſeth a ſimilitude taken of perſons puiſant and valiant, to whom it is an eaſie thing to ouercome their enimies, and ouerunne them. It is fit wee reſemble them, as Saint Paule ex- Rom.12.19. horteth vs. One might bring in heere that which is ſaide aboue, Chapter 10. & verſe 12. & Chap. 14 ver. 29. & Chap. 15. ver. 18. & Chap 16. ver. 32. & Chap. 17. ver. 9.

12 *The kings diſpleaſure is like the roaring of a Lion: but his fauour is like the deawe vpon the graſſe?*

Solomon teacheth heere two things principally. The one that ſubiects and inferiours ſhoulde take heede leaſt with their wickedneſſe of life, they doe prouoke their princes iuſt indignation againſt them, and that by holy conuerſation, and true obedience, they ſtudie to winne their fauour, and make that they be to them, helpeful and profitable, as the deawe profiteth the graſſe, making it waxe greene, encreaſe, and multiplie, and keeping it from the heate of the Sunne, which otherwiſe woulde burne and drie it vp. Neuertheleſſe, this is not to ſay that wee ſhould flatter kings and princes, and make them drunke with their owne greatneſſe and glory: as the common tricke and practiſe of them is, which wil creepe in credite with the Lordes of the earth, and make their owne profite by them, in putting back and detracting their neighbours. But it behoooueth vs onely to humble our ſelues to our ſuperiours, and yeeld them that obedience which is due to them by Gods appointment. Thus doeing, if they bee not tyrants, wee ſhal profite by them: and although they bee tyrants, yet God wil not let our obedience to bee in vaine, and altogether vnprofitable, but wil make that what inhumanity or crueltie ſoeuer they execute againſt vs, yet ſhal they not deuoure vs as the Lion doth the pray which hee holdeth in his pawes, and wil make vs proſper, and liue at our pleaſure as hee ſhal ſee expedient. One may ſee this in Pharao king of Egypt, and the children of Iſrael, in the wicked kings of Iuda and Iſrael, & in the Prophets. The ſecond is, that Kings, Princes, and Superiours are aduertiſed of their duetties, which is, That they ought to be mooued to wrath and anger, and rore like Lions in threatninges condemnations, and puniſhments towards the wicked, which liue diſorderly in diſpraiſing and blaſpheming God and his worde, and in iniuring and offending their neighbours. Contrariwiſe they are aduertiſed, that they ought to be pleaſant, gracious, & courteous towards the good, & to keep them from iniuries, and outrages of the oppreſsions, and violences of the wicked, as the deawe keepeth the graſſe from the heate of the Sunne. And as the deawe maketh the graſſe to grow and augment: ſo kings and ſuperiours of the earth ought to bee careful to make the ſimple, iuſt, and the innocent proſper, and principally according to the ſoule, in rooting out of their countrie al reprochful perſons, and being careful to cauſe that GOD haue audience by preaching of his woorde, and that good order bee kept without exception of perſons, and true religion obſerued. Moreouer, let vs conſider, that if God woulde that wee ſhoulde bee ſuche towards our ſuperiours, it behoueth vs to bee farre more humble, and reuerent towardes him: for hee is king of kinges. And if hee appoint vs ſuperiours, and commaunde them to bee rigorous, or gentle, according as occaſions ſerue: wee ought to vnderſtande by farre more reaſon, that he is ſuch a one towards men as hee declareth to vs, in his worde. Who deſireth a more ample declaration, then hee hath ſet downe, in the ſixteenth Chapter, verſe 10. vntil the ende of the 15. verſe?

13 *The fooliſh childe is the fathers ſorowe: and a brawling wife is a continuall dropping.*

It liketh not many fathers to watche and warde their children, and to keepe them vnder, to learne them to bee wiſe. They haue this fooliſhe opinion, that they ſhoulde let them doe as pleaſeth them: becauſe being younge, they may ſpende the time merily, and liue without melancholie. They thinke that if one ſhould preſſe them to vnderſtande wiſedome ſo ſoone, they woulde bee leane, and penſiue, dul, and blockiſhe, and not haue a quicke wit, to thinke, ſay, or doe any thing pleaſantly, nor ſhewe them ſelues luſtie gallants, or mery companions, as they ought. And therefore ſuch fathers deſpiſe God & his word, and are alſo the cauſe that their children are mockers and contemners of al iuſtice and holineſſe, and ſo they ſinne againſt the holy Ghoſt. For this cauſe they receiue their paymēt of care which they haue had to entertaine their children in folly, and wickedneſſe: whereat they bee greeued and much vexed as they wel deſerue. They haue graffed the tree with euil graffes, and therefore they eate the fruite of anguiſhe and ſorow. Solomon expreſſeth it wel, ſaying:

The fooliſh childe is the fathers ſorowe. Hely hath proued this: notwithſtanding it is not to ſay, that if fathers be afflicted & receiue griefe by their children, who are not wiſe, that it proceedeth alwaies of the fathers negligence: for behold Iſaac who hath beene grieued with the follie of his ſonne Eſau. Beholde alſo Dauid afflicted by his ſonne Abſolom.

1 Sam.2.& 3.& 4. Gen.26.34. 35.& 28.8. 9.

Solomon reproueth not here only the fathers, which do not their duties to teach, admoniſhe, correct, and chaſtice, their children in time, to make them renounce follie, and giue them ſelues to wiſdome: but hee ſheweth alſo to the fooliſhe children, that they are diſobedient, and rebellious to the commandement of God, which wil, that the childe honour the father and mother, which is not only to make them ſome ſigne of reuerence, by geſture of the bodie, or by woordes of the mouth, but that they be indeede humble and obedient to their fathers, and mothers, doing them honour and reuerence without faining, aſſiſting them carefully, and being wholy at their commandement in the Lorde, as they are bounde, and as the holie Scripture teacheth them in many places: and as it hath bene treated of heretofore in diuers pointes. But the fooliſh childe in ſteede of dooing this good and honour to his father and mother, doeth diſpleaſe them, woorke their woe, and hinder and endamage them, as Solomon ſheweth, when hee ſaieth, *The fooliſhe childe, &c.* And heerein hee giueth to vnderſtande, that the childe that is ſuche a one, is to be holden vnwoorthie to liue vpon the earth: and that Magiſtrates according as the lawe commaundeth, ought to put too their hands and puniſh him, yea with death. And although men doe not their duetie therein, yet God which is iuſt, wil not leaue ſuche iniquitie vnpuniſhed, but wil worke his horrible vengeance, and moſt terrible iudgement vpon ſuche a childe. Wherefore, inſomuche as wee loue our children, let vs chaſtiſe them betimes, and that it be not long of vs, that they ſhunne not that ruine. Solomon alſo ſheweth, that fathers and mothers ought not to eſteeme it a thing of ſmal value or litle importãce, that their children are fooles: but to account it a great misfortune and greefe: Not ſo muche for the damage and diſhonour they haue thereby, as for the zeale of the glorie of God, and edification, and ſaluation of their children: for they ought to preferre this aboue al temporal riches. Of fooliſhe children hath bene ſpoken heeretofore. Solomon addeth,

And a brawling wiſe, &c. Although brawling and contentious wiues, and which liſt vp their voice on high, to iniurie and offende their husbandes and neighbours, thinke not that they doe il, becauſe they haue this as a cuſtome, which they haue incurred either by lightneſſe or pride, not regarding to render due honour and obedience to their husbandes, and humblenes and humanitie

Pro 10.1.
& 13.1.15.
& 1.5.20.
& 17.21.25.

(as they ought) to their neighbours, neuertheles their brawlinges are moſt hurtful,and cauſe of great ruine and deſtruction.Although one prooue it but too muche, yet Solomon leaueth not to ſhewe it, when hee compareth the brawlinges of a woman, to the couer of a houſe, which is ſo broken, that when it raineth, the water droppeth in, on the planckes and walles, and rotteth them: ſo that the houſe is readie to fal, and maketh great ruine and deſtruction. So when women are giuen to contention and brawling, they are cauſe of great euil, as is daily prooued: but beſides this proofe, one may ſee it in Iezabel.

1.Rom.18.& 19.& 21.
2.Rom.9.
1.Pet.3.4.
3.Cor.14.34
1.Tim.2.11.
Ephe.5.22.

In this example wee ſee, that brawlinges light not on them onelie whome they are meant too, but on them alſo, which make them. Wherefore wee may vnderſtande, that it is not without cauſe, that women are warned to be peaceable of ſpirite, and Saint Paule wil haue them to holde their peace, Therefore to bee in ſilence and ſubiection, let them folowe the admonition of Saint Paule. Women, be yee ſubiect to your husbandes,as to the Lorde. Wee may ſee by this that hath bene heere handeled, that it is verie requiſite for a father of an houſholde to bee watchful, both ouer his wife and children, to the ende,to keepe them in wiſedome and modeſtie.For if his children bee fooles,and his wife a brawler, hee is double miſerable.

14 *Houſe and riches are the inheritance of ones elders:but a diſcreete woman is the gift of the Lord.*

Dan.2.21.
& 4.14.
Gen.13.15
& 15.7.

Although God is the Creator, diſpoſer, and gouernour of al thinges, yea, of countries and regions, and that hee giueth kingdomes to whome it pleaſeth him: and although God had giuen to Abraham the lande of Canaan, and that the children of Iſrael were the heires of Abraham: neuertheles, after the death of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, God ſuffered not to bee ſaide, that hee gaue, or woulde giue to the children of Iſrael, the ſaide lande for inheritance. I ſay this, becauſe it might ſeeme at the firſt ſhew, that Solomon transferred to creatures,that which is proper to the Creator,when he ſaith, *The houſe, &c.* But the reſoluing thereof is eaſie: for one may ſay that Solomon ſpeaketh according to the phraſe of ſpeeche of children, which ſucceede their parents in the goods which they haue poſſeſſed and left them. Or that hee ſpeaketh according to the lawe of nature, which is, that children ſhal ſucceede in the wealth of their fathers. But this lawe is not ſo natural but that it proceedeth from God, who is authour of that nature, which is good and reaſonable. Likewiſe the order of ſucceſſion is of his ordinaunce, as wee finde written in many places. Although therefore God giue al thinges both to the fathers and to the children: notwithſtanding, in that hee hath ordained, that the children ſhoulde inherite the goods that their fathers haue poſſeſſed, for this cauſe the houſes, and riches which they leaue to their children are called, *The heritage of the fathers.*

Gen.12.7. & 15.15. & 15.4. & 21 10.11.12. Leu.25.44 Num.27.8

And heerein one transferreth not to the creature, that which is proper to the Creator, ſeeing hee him ſelfe calleth it ſo. And ſo it happeneth often, that fathers trauel and take payne, to aſſemble and get goods together. And for this onely, becauſe they haue children whome they couet to prouide for. And therefore one may ſay, that Solomon ſpeaking ſo, hath ſomewhat admoniſhed children not to waxe proude, for the goods which they poſſeſſe, and wherewith they are enriched, not hauing trauelled for them: but that they knowe that they haue them by the care and diligence of their fathers, vnto whome God, and none but God gaue them. And that afterwardes by their meanes, hee hath put them into their handes, to diſpoſe and ſpende with ſobrietie, and aide therewith them that taſte neceſſitie. But although God wil, or permit that children acknowledge their riches to bee the heritage of their fathers: yet hee wil not that the principal temporal good of this worlde be reknowledged of any other but of him alone. Solomon ſheweth it, when he ſaith,

But a diſcreete woman, &c. That a woman is the principall temporall riches that a man can haue, GOD giueth to vnderſtande, when hee ſaide, that it was not good for man to bee alone, when hee called her the aide of man, and when hee made her of one of his ribbes.

Gen.2.18

Saint Paule alſo ſheweth it, willing that men ſhoulde loue their wiues, as Ieſus loued the Churche. And wee our ſelues ought to knowe it, when by the woman, man obteineth iſſue, and is made a father which is no ſmal bleſſing, as may bee ſeene by the deſire that the holie fathers had to haue progenie, and the promiſes that God made them therof, which could not haue bene accompliſhed without a woman. By theſe reaſons wee may alſo vnderſtande, that a woman, and principally the diſcreete, is not the inheritance of the father, but the excellent gift of God. For firſt, it is not in fathers to giue wiſedome to their daughters, although their office be to inſtruct and teach them in the feare of the Lorde, which is the principal wiſedome, and vnderſtanding prudence proceedeth of the only grace and liberalitie of the Lord.

Ephe.5.25.

Deut.28.4. 11.

Pſal.28.3.

Secondarily, for the moſt part, fathers are not ſo careful to finde wiues for their ſonnes, for feare of forgoing any portion of goods which they poſſeſſe. Or if they doe, they ſearche them out riche wiues, not thoſe that are diſcreete. Although therefore, when one wil marrie him ſelfe, it behoooueth him with care and diligence, and with great diſcretion to regarde with whome hee match him, and that hee ought not to proceede at randon, nor as one careleſſe and without foreſight, yet when we haue found a good and honeſt partie, it is fit wee acknowledge that ſhee is come intierlie by the grace and mercie of our God, which giueth vs foreſight and aduiſement to conduct vs rightly, and to ſeeke that which is good and profitable for vs. And in the meane while, hee maketh vs meete with that which he thinketh good. Abraham knew wel this ſame, as he ſheweth it, when hee ſendeth his ſeruant to take a wife for his ſonne Iſaac. And ſith it is meete we haue ſuche reknowledging, thoſe which haue diſcreete wiues, ought to preferre them before al goods of the worlde, otherwiſe they deſpiſe not onely the creature, but the Creator, whoſe gift they eſteeme not as they ought. On the other ſide, if the wife be diſcreete, ſhe wil reproch her husbande in nothing, but in al humilitie and modeſtie, wil acknowledge firſt, that ſhe hath no diſcreetnes of her ſelfe, but of the gift of God. Secondly, although it be by her conſent that ſhe is maried: notwithſtanding, it is God that hath ioyned her to her husbande, to the ende that by her prudencie, ſhee bee his aide and conſolation, taking

Gen.24.7.

king the care of the houſe vpon her.

15 *Slouthfulnes maketh one fal a ſleepe: and a ſoule accuſtomed to craft, ſhal ſuffer hunger.*

It may ſeeme at the firſt view,that this ſentence ſauoureth them that loue ſleeping: teaching them howe they ſhal prouoke ſleepe, and enioy that which they loue: but ſeeing that ſlouth is vaine,vnprofitable, hurtful, diſhoneſt & wicked, (as one may perceiue heretofore) and that it is not good to be giuen to ſleepe: wee ought to knowe that Solomon argueth heere thē ſluggiſhe, ſhewing them whereto they ſerue, to wit, to nothing but to occupie a place, and bee as it were a let, and domage. Alſo hee threateneth them pouertie and want, whereof they bee wel woorthie: as hath bene aforeſaide. And Solomon partly pronounceth it heeretoo, when he ioyneth the ſlouthful to him that is giuen to fraude,ſaying,

Pro.6.6.&
4.5.26.& 12
11.24.27.&
13.4.& 15.
19.

And a ſoule accuſtomed to craft, ſhal ſuffer hunger. It might ſeeme at the firſt viewe, that this coniunction is not agreeable,and that Solomon might haue made an Antitheſis, putting the ſlouthful, which ceaſeth and wil doe nothing, a contrarie to him that is accuſtomed to craft: for he that goeth about to deceiue his neighbour,and make his owne profite by the hurt of an other man,is not aſleepe, nor yet giuen to reſt, but is ful vigilant, and taketh great paynes. I anſwere. True it is, that herein the ſlouthful and the craftie, are contraries: but they ſticke not to agree in ſome pointes: for as the craftie by taking payne, getteth and ſnatcheth away other mens ſubſtance. So the ſlouthful, by taking his reſt, depriueth his neighbour of that ſuccour and aide hee ought to ſhewe him. And as the ſlouthful coueteth much, and hath nothing but pouertie and want, and ſuffereth much,as he wel deſerueth: ſo although the craftie man get goods abundantly: neuertheleſſe, his fraudes and rapines, wil not ſerue him, but he ſhal ſuffer hunger, partly becauſe hee ſhal neuer haue enough, partly becauſe God wil not ſuffer him to enioye his deſires at ful. And yet although in this life hee had his deſires to the vttermoſt, yet finally, hee ſhal be in extreeme indigencie, as is written of the riche man.

Let

Luk.16.24. Let vs not therefore learne to ſleepe heere, but rather to watche: nor to take our reſt, but rather to labour: nor to deceiue, but rather to folowe fayth and loialtie: and thus dooing, wee ſhal not ſuffer hunger, but ſhal haue ſuche ſuffiſance as wee ſhalbee content withal.

16 *Who ſo keepeth the Commandementes, keepeth his owne ſoule: but hee that regardeth not his wayes, ſhall dye.*

If wee take, (to keepe the commaundement,) to fulfil al that which God hath commaunded vs in his lawe, there is none which can keepe his ſoule: for there is none that can ſo keepe the commaundement. Saint Paule ſheweth it wel in diuers places. If therefore wee wil knowe howe it behoooueth vs to keepe our ſoules, it is neceſſarie wee knowe, howe wee ſhoulde gouerne our ſelues to keepe the commaundement. Solomon ſheweth it when he ſaith, *Hee that regardeth not his wayes, ſhal die.* To the keeping of the commaundements hee putteth the deſpiſing of his wayes, a contrarie. Whereby we may gather, that to keepe the commandementes is, to haue a firme affection to ſerue God firſt of al: and next his neighbour, according as God hath taught vs by his word: to haue care to renounce al vnbeliefe, and to aſſure our ſelues of the bountie and loue of our heauenly father towardes vs, by the meane of Ieſus Chriſte, to be careful to forgoe al wickednes, and to giue our ſelues with al our power to doe wel, according as God hath commaunded in his lawe. Whoſoeuer keepeth ſo the commaundement, although ſinne dwel in him, and that hee be in great fault, as wel in his fayth, as in his affections, thoughts, & works, yet neuertheles his faultes ſhal not bee imputed to him, to ſuffer thereby any detriment: but he keepeth his ſoule to euerlaſting life. For dooing ſo, hee loueth God, and God loueth him, hee dwelleth with God, and God with him. Meanewhile, let vs not thinke that ſuche keeping of the commaundement, is the cauſe of keeping of the ſoule, and that by ſuche keeping of the commaundement, wee deſerue the conſeruation of the ſoule: but onely that it is the

Rom.7.14. & 8.3. Gal.5.17.

Ioh.14.23.

meane to keepe the ſoule to life euerlaſting, the which we obtaine becauſe God loueth vs in Ieſus Chriſte. The loue of God is the onely cauſe of our ſaluation. Although then, that in keeping the commaundement, one keepeth his ſoule: that is not to ſay, that for any dignitie there is in vs, or for any thing that wee thinke or doe, wee may merite with God to be reſerued in life. Now therefore, ſith wee vnderſtande what it is to keepe the commandement, it muſt needes bee eaſie vnto vs to vnderſtande *the neglecting of the way,* which is contrarie to this: and not to make account of al that which God hath appointed vs by his worde, which teacheth vs euerie thing what wee ought to thinke, wil, beleeue, ſaye, or doe: which thinges are the wayes of God, inſomuch as hee hath ordeined them: and conducteth vs in them: and they are our waies becauſe we ought to walke in them, and be aſſured not to periſhe, when wee perſeuer in the ſame. *Pſal.91.11.* And becauſe that of our ſelues, wee doe nothing but erre and goe out of rhe way, wee ought to pray, Lorde, make mee vnderſtande thy way, and teache mee thy footepathes. *Pſal.25.4.* And to acknowledge in all humilitie. Lorde, I knowe that the way of man is not in himſelfe, *Iere.10.23.* if wee doe otherwiſe, wee regarde not our wayes: and ſo wee cannot aſſure our ſelues that our life ſhalbe ſaued, but we muſt looke for death. For he that regardeth not his wayes ſhal die.

One may alſo applie this ſentence to life and death temporal, for if wee bee obedient to our rulers and gouernours, they are bounde to preſerue vs from the violence of the wicked. Contrariwiſe, if not making count of doing our duety, wee liue diſſolutely, theyr office is to vſe the ſworde agaynſt vs, For hee is the Miniſter of GOD for thy wealth: but if thou doe euill, feare: For hee beareth not the ſworde for naught, for hee is the miniſter of God too take vengeance on him that doth euill. *Rom.13.4.*

Note we, that although it behoooueth one to renounce himſelfe, too keepe his ſoule, notwithſtanding hee muſt not renounce his wayes, *Mat.16.24.* but thoſe which hee hath followed, obeying the corruption of the fleſhe. Suche wayes are diſpleaſaunt vnto GOD, and becauſe of them, the Sonne of God hath ſuffered death. And ſeeing it was needefull and neceſſary that the Lambe immaculate, ſhould be ſo cruelly handled to deliuer vs from the eternal perdition, which wee had deſerued by our corrupt wayes, it is good reaſon that wee hate and abhorre them, and that wee retyre our ſelues from them, making our wayes good. Thus doing, we ſhal not deſpiſe our owne wayes, we ſhal not go aſtray from that which God demaundeth of vs. And ſo wee ſhal not dye, but be bleſſed and happie.

Gen.6.5.
Iſa.53.4.
Iere.7.3.
&.18.11.
Eze.18.23
& 33.12.
Pſ.1.1.&119.1.

17 *Hee that hath pittie vppon the poore, lendeth vnto the Lorde: and looke what he layeth out, it ſhalbe paide him againe.*

Our good God beareth great loue and fauour towardes them that are poore and needie: as the holy Scripture teſtifieth, & as hath beene alledged in the law in the Prophetes & Apoſtles of foretime. But men make no account of their aduertiſements and admonitions, neither doe they feare their complaintes and threatnings, as is ſeene by the ſmal account that they make of the poore, by the oppreſſion, outrage, and violence, that the poore ſtrangers, orphans, and widdowes indure. And that which is cauſe, why theſe poore are ſo deſpiſed, reiected, and miſuſed, is the malice, ingratitude, and crueltie of men, who are ſo readie to their particular profite and ſo greedie of gain, that they think if they pill not thē, which cānot defende themſelues, they make not their market halfe wel: and if they ſhoulde ayde the weaker ſort any whit at al, or giue any almeſſe to the needie, who haue not wherewithal to requyte it againe, they ſhoulde ſuſteine great loſſe and neuer be able to recouer it. Thus by their diſordinate deſires, they tende ſtil to augmentation, at leaſt wiſe they cannot ſuffer any apparance of diminition or loſſe. But ſuch people are abuſed, as Solomon ſheweth ſaying, *He that hath pity vpon the poore, &c.* When one lendeth to an honeſt man, hee feareth no loſſe, but hopeth, and is as it were aſſured that hee wil not be vngrateful, but wil acknowledge and confeſſe the pleaſure which he hath done him, and reſtore willingly that which hee hath len thim, yea with profit, & wil yeld ſome recompence for the pleaſure

ſure which hee hath done him: By a farre more reaſon ought wee to be aſſured, that when wee haue done any good to the poore, we ſhal not looſe it, but it ſhalbe reſtored, and wee ſhal haue a verie good recompence: for wee haue not done it vnto a man, but to God, who taketh it not on this condition, neuer to reſtore it againe: but as pure and loyal, readie to yelde it againe, which he wil doe certeinly, yea with vſurie, by a maner of ſpeeche: as Solomon expreſſeth it by *Retribution*. For this cauſe wee ought to bee readie and moſt willing to benefite the poore, as Solomon ſtriueth to teach vs heere. And therewithal declareth vnto vs, firſt the honour which God doth to them, which haue pitie on the poore, and doe them good, giuing them the title of pitiful, which is properly to him alone: for he alone doeth benefit vs, not being bound therto: & we can doe no good but what wee are bounde to doe, and ſhould not once think to receiue any recompence for the ſame again: but rather ſhould acknowledge that wee are vnprofitable ſeruantes, to thinke that any one is boũd to vs. Our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth this wel. *Luk. 17. 7.* But our good God giueth vs ſuche titles to aduertiſe vs, that wee bee his folowers, and as wee woulde that hee ſhoulde doe vnto vs, ſo wee ſhoulde doe to others, beeing certaine that hee wil recompence vs wel. Hee declareth ſecondly, that God requireth not of vs with rigour that which is his, but hee taketh it by borowing, to the end to reſtore it, as though hee were bound therto, *Mat. 5. 7. Luk. 6. 36.* although to him al thinges appertaine. And ſo to ſpeake properlie, it is God which lendeth, or rather giueth vs al thinges to vſe and diſpoſe, and diſtribute to his familie, and wee can neither giue nor lende to him. *Pſal. 24. & 50.* Notwithſtanding, this is not to ſay, that Solomon ſpeaketh not wel, when he ſaith,

One lendeth to the Lorde. For one may ſay, that hee ieſteth with vs, becauſe of our rudeneſſe and ignorance, as a mother doth with her children: to giue vs more eaſily to vnderſtande, how readie the Lorde is to benefite vs, when hee reputeth that which is his owne, to bee lent him by vs, and wil reſtore it to vs as though hee were bounde theretoo, and as though hee had ſome thing of ours in his handes.

A man may alſo ſay, that hee ſpeaketh after our maner of ſpeeche.

For when wee haue giuen any thing to any one which is not baſe conditioned, and that wee hope hee wil acknowledge it, and render vs againe the like or better, wee ſay, that wee haue lent him it. Or if one haue giuen vs any thing, and that wee bee willing to requite it againe, wee ſay, that wee haue but borowed it.

Thirdly, hee declareth vnto vs the liberalitie of our God, when hee ſayeth, *That hee wil reſtore*, the retribution to him that ſhal haue lent. For of his grace, hee maketh him ſelfe as detter, when it is ſaid, *That hee wil reſtore.* It is meete to vnderſtand and ſay, that it is of his grace, ſeeing hee can be in dette to no bodie, and al are in det to him, and there is none that can paie that det. And as if one had done him ſome great pleaſure, and had merited to be recompenced therefore, hee promiſeth retribution, declaring that hee wil not onely render that which hath bene lent him, but alſo wil giue hyre, and profite to him which hath lent it him. Retribution is made firſt in this worlde, when God doeth giue ſuffiſance and contentment to them that are pitiful to the poore, although it ſeeme often, that they haue but litle.

Pſal.37.9. *16.17.* *Mat.25.34.*

Secondly, it is made in the laſt reſurrection. For the reſt, becauſe mention is made heere, of reſtoring, and retribution: the arrogant dreamers, which demaund recompence of their good deeds, woulde heere founde their merites, and ſay, that in dooing good, they gaine the kingdome of heauen. But it is an eaſie thing to ſhew them that they are abuſed: for ſeeing the heauenly kingdome is the retribution, and inheritaunce of our father, which hee hath prepared for his children before the foundation of the worlde, it foloweth, that one can not merite it: for wee were not before the foundation of the worlde, and ſo children cannot merite the inheritance of their father, what ſeruice or duetie ſoeuer they doe to him. For they neither doe, nor can doe any good to their father, which they are not bounde to doe. If it bee ſo with men, which can leaue their children but temporal thinges, and of ſmal enduraunce. It is not fit that wee ſhoulde bee ſo arrogant, as thinke to come to the heauenly kingdome by our merites, and binde God to vs, to giue it. But the kingdome of heauen is called hyre, rewarde, or retribution, becauſe it foloweth our paynes and labours, our workes, and good deedes: not that they are worthie thereof, but that it pleaſeth God ſo to accept them, and that hee him ſelfe maketh them, For it is God that woorketh in vs both the wil and deede, according to his good pleaſure. *Phil. 2. 13.*

Heereby wee haue a good argument to knowe, that retribution commeth not by our merites, but by pure grace, and liberalitie. Alſo it woulde bee no inconuenience to ſay, that the ſcripture ſpeaketh of God according as one ſpeaketh of Kinges and Princes, which vſe great liberalitie, and giue great giftes and preſentes for their pleaſure, to thoſe which haue done them but a ſmal ſeruice. One may ſay of ſuche Lordes, that they haue wel rewarded them, but one can not ſay, that they haue deſerued it. If therefore it pleaſe our God to vſe great liberalitie towardes vs, and to cal it, rewarde, let vs acknowledge, that wee haue not deſerued it, but that it is his good pleaſure to deale ſo with vs.

18 *Chaſtiſe thy ſonne, while there is hope: and let not thy ſoule ſpare for his crying.*

Solomon hath alreadie often warned children to receiue the inſtruction and correction of their fathers and mothers: and hath ſhewed fathers and mothers, that they ought to inſtruct and chaſtiſe their children betimes, if they loue them: for otherwiſe they hate them, which is a thing againſt nature. For one loueth naturally his owne blood, and principally him that is ſprong of his entrailes.

Nowe although it be a thing verie harde, and almoſt impoſſible that a father ſhould not loue his childe: notwithſtanding, ſome ſticke not to fayle often in this loue, in making themſelues beleeue they loue their children, and in the meane while by flatteries, and pardons, or by great libertie and licence, they let them bee loſt: which is a good argument that they loue them not as they ought to doe. And becauſe this thing is ſo vſual, Solomon is not content to haue ſaide:

Hee that ſpareth the rodde hateth the childe; but he that loueth him, chaſteneth him betime; *Pro. 13. 24.*

but to teache fathers, what they ought to do with their children whome they loue, hee commandeth them expreſly, *Chaſtiſe thy ſonne*. How one ought to chaſtiſe, hath bene treated off in the place afore alledged. It reſteth to know when one ſhould chaſtiſe. Solomon ſheweth it, ſaying, *When there is hope*, to wit, that the childe by chaſtiſement, may come to amendment: which is, when the childe is yet tender of age, and not accuſtomed nor hardened to yl dooing, nor hath not learned to deſpiſe his parentes, nor mock at their admonitions, corrections, menacinges, and ſcourgings. This is the time whereof Solomon ſpeaketh in the place aforeſaid. And to the ende that the childe become not a mocker and contemner, obſtinate and ſtifnecked, and that al hope of amendment paſſe not: Solomon wil not that one ſuffer them to rage, exclaime, make noyſe and murmure, in rebelling either in high wordes, or outragious and violent deedes, but that without delaye, they bee reprehended aſſoone as the fault is ſpied, be it neuer ſo little: wee ſhoulde vnderſtande this, when Solomon ſaieth, *And let not thy ſoule ſpare for his crying*. Some ſay, *Haue no regarde of his crying*. Ceaſe not to chaſtiſe him although hee crye. Some, And let it not enter into thy thought to kil him. For Magiſtrates are ordeined to take reuenge on the childe that wil not bee ruled. Becauſe the Hebrewe tongue endureth ſuche diuerſitie of ſenſes, which neuertheles are not contraries, it is free for euerie one to followe which hee wil. And this while, let vs not bee of the opinion of them, which ſaye, that one ought not to chaſtiſe children with roddes, for that is inhumanitie. Then if ſuche chaſtiſement bee inhumanitie: wee may ſay by farre more reaſon, that God hath taught fathers and mothers to bee cruel. When hee wil haue children that wil not bee ruled, to bee put in the handes of Iuſtices, to bee puniſhed with death: and by conſequent, one ſhoulde accuſe God of crueltie, which is no way lawful. They that wil not haue them chaſtiſed with roddes, builde vppon this paſſage of Saint Paule (If at leaſtwiſe they reade the Scriptures,) to wit, And you fathers, prouoke not your children to anger, but bring them vp in inſtruction, and information of the Lord.

Heere the Apoſtle forbiddeth not the rodde, but hee wil that the correction be moderate, and that fathers bee not cruel, nor furious towardes their children: for too great rigour is cauſe that children hate their parentes, and that they rebel againſt them, and retyre them ſelues from their yoke and ſubiection, that they looſe their courage, and haue afterwarde no heart to doe wel. Ephe.6.4. Col.3.21.

19 *A man of great wrath ſhal ſuffer puniſhment: although thou once deliuer him, yet his anger wil come againe.*

Many thinke they cannot do their buſineſſe halfe wel, nor come halfe ſo ſoone to the ende of their enterpriſes, if they be not angrie bitterlie againſt them, which reſiſt them, or let them to doe as they wil: and take no heede if they haue iuſt cauſe or no, to be ſo angrie, but they fret and fume, as though they were madde. Of the which number one may firſt put Caine, who hath wel ſhewed to his brother Abel, that hee was a man of great anger, when hee ſlewe him. Hee thought by this meanes to doe as hee would him ſelfe, and to liue at his heartes eaſe, thenceforwarde: but hee hath had the paine, and torment therof as appeareth. In the ſecond place one may put the brethren of Ioſeph. They haue felte the payne of the great anger which they bare againſt the ſaide Ioſeph, as they them ſelues confeſſe. Wee wil ſet downe Pharao King of Egypt in whome this ſentence hath bene more and manifeſtly verified, as is ſeene from the beginning of Exodus, to the ende of the 14. Chapter. One may ſee that hee hath borne great anger againſt the children of Iſrael, for the which cauſe he hath receiued great woundes, from the which hee hath bene deliuered by the prayers of Moyſes: but hee hath not ceaſed to returne to his ire and furie, vntil ſuch time as hee was drowned in the ſea. Alſo one may ſet downe heere al theeues and murtherers, which thirſt after mans blood, who ought to bee puniſhed by Kinges, Princes and Magiſtrates: for if one pardon them, they ceaſe not to doe ſo againe, as is commonlie ſeene to come to paſſe. Gen.4.8.11.

Let vs vnderſtande therefore that wee are warned to eſchue anger, if wee wil bee free from paine, puniſhment and torment. Alſo

Kinges and Magiſtrates are aduertized, that they profite nothing when they giue pardon to the wicked : and therefore they ſhould let them ſuffer puniſhment. Some ioyne this preſent ſentence, to that going before, according to the thirde expoſition, ſaying, That if the fathers anger bee ſo great towardes his ſonne, that he thinketh to kil him : this anger or furie, is gready hurtful to him, but hee ought to ſpare him, in hope he wil amende. And indeed it is not good, that a father of an houſholde, ſhoulde yeelde him ſelfe to anger for euerie matter or trifle, either againſt his children or his ſeruauntes or neighbours. For the anger of man fulfilleth not Gods iuſtice. So in what ſenſe ſoeuer wee take this preſent ſentence, wee are admoniſhed to bee gentle, meeke, and tractable. Yea, when by our meekeneſſe and gentleneſſe, wee omit nothing of that which is our office, but ſerue to the glorie of GOD, and edification of his Churche: and in as muche as wee can, conuert ſoules to God, and ſerue to the augmentation of the kingdome of Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde.

Iam.1.30.

20 *Giue eare vnto counſel, and take correction : that thou mayeſt bee wiſe in thy later dayes.*

Wee are all by nature not onely ignoraunt, and brutiſhe, but alſo fooliſh, and wicked, and neither wil, nor can of our ſelues chaunge and amende our ſelues, nor better our eſtate.

Notwithſtanding, wee haue not ſuche opinion of our ſelues, nor take it not in good parte, that others ſhoulde account vs ſo, but ſtriue and ſtudie to make vs bee thought good and wiſe, and couet that our neighbours ſhoulde eſteeme vs ſo. Whereby wee are verie muche abuſed: but the abuſe is not ſuche, but it may eaſily be remedied, as Solomon ſheweth vs, ſaying,

Giue eare vnto counſel, and take correction: that thou maiſt be wiſe in thy later dayes.

Hee teacheth vs what wee haue to doe to diſpoile our ſelues of ignoraunce and brutiſhneſſe, to flye from ſollie and wickednes, to the ende that at leaſtwiſe wee become wiſe in the latter dayes. And to doe the ſame, hee proceedeth by degrees. Firſt, hee giueth vs remedie againſt ignorance and brutiſhnes, when hee admoniſheth vs to giue eare to counſel. For the counſel whereof hee ſpeaketh, is the woorde of God, which (as hath beene diuers times ſpoken of) is our wiſedome and vnderſtanding, of the which wee participate not but by the holie Scriptures. Wherevppon enſueth, that Solomon inuiteth vs to the reading and hearing of Sermons, wherein the holie Scriptures are declared vs: this is the firſt degree: as wee ought to vnderſtande by Moyſes and the Prophetes, when they inuite vs ſo often to heare the woorde of the Lorde, yea, afore al other thinges. It is the right entrie, to come to true wiſedome. Secondly, hee giueth remedie for follie and wickednes, when hee woulde haue vs *to take correction*: which is to ſay, That we hearken to the word of God ſo attentiuely, and with ſuche affection, that the threatenings therin pronounced againſt vs, make vs to tremble: that we haue feare and horrour at the iudgementes which they ſhewe vs to haue bene executed againſt the wicked, and of that they ſhal ſuſteine in the time to come. And that the admonitions, exhortations and warnings, make vs aſhamed of our life paſſed, and to beare a ſpecial hate to wickednes, whereto wee haue not onely bene enclined, but alſo giuen and addicted, and that we take pleaſure to amende our life, in walking in al honeſtie, holines, and iuſtice.

Beholde what it is, *to take correction*, as may bee gathered by many places of theſe Prouerbes. But one may ſay, that they which walke by theſe two degrees, are wiſe, as hath beene ſeene heeretoſore in diuers pointes of this booke. The anſwere heereto is, that Solomon meaneth, that one hereby aduaunceth him ſelfe further in wiſedome, and encreaſeth therein ſucceſſiuely, and is in waye to giue certaine proofe thereof, and to bring foorth fruites. There is alſo an other difficultie, which is, that Solomon ſeemeth to be content, if we *be wiſe in our later dayes*. Wherunto we anſwer, that indeed it is better we be wiſe late thē neuer, as may be ſeene by the theefe: but we are not promiſed, that when we haue ſpēt al our

Luk.23.40.

life in pleaſures of follie, and naughtineſſe, God wil afterwardes giue vs the grace to amende, and folowe true wiſedome. And Solomon giueth vs hope of nothing which hath not his foundation on the promiſes of God, And therefore when he ſaith,

In thy later dayes, &c. Let vs take it for al that time wherein wee are called to fayth and repentance, wee may wel cal it, *The later dayes*: for firſt, after being once called, it is not meete wee returne to our firſt eſtate of follie and wickedneſſe.

Secondarily, the dayes of man are ſhort, and hee liueth (by his wil) longer, in follie and wickedneſſe, then in wiſedome and goodneſſe. Wherefore one may wel cal his later dayes, the time which hee applieth in wiſedome and wel doing. Let vs note finally, that it is not to bee maruelled at, if in the world there be many fooles, and fewe wiſe men: ſeeing they wil not folowe the counſell of Solomon.

21 *There are many thoughtes in the heart of man: but the counſel of the Lorde ſhal ſtand faſt.*

There is none of vs which deſireth not to bee in good eſtate, and haue proſperitie of long endurance, but man of him ſelfe cannot attaine to it in this world: alſo there is nothing vnder the Sun which is not ſubiect to chaunge, as is daily prooued: yea Kinges them ſelues which are puiſant and mightie, haue not their eſtate permanent.

Dan.2.21. Notwithſtanding, man thinketh not ſo, but he deemeth himſelfe not of ſo ſmal value, as to take vpon him an eſtate of no endurance, rather al they which are come to any degree of proſperitie, ſay naturally in their hearts, that they wil neuer ſtirre nor moue, and al becauſe they haue taſted no aduerſitie: but it happeneth often, that they are fruſtrate of their opinion: which is cauſe that they thinke, and rethinke, they take newe counſels and make many deliberations, as Solomon expreſſeth, ſaying,

There are many thoughts in the heart of man: when he ſpeaketh ſo, it is not to ſay, that hee alloweth ſo many thoughtes to be in the hart of man, but rather blameth them, and ſheweth that they are vaine, when hee ſetteth againſt them the counſel of God, ſaying,

The counſel of the Lorde ſhall ſtande faſt. Hee argueth and reproo ueth thoſe, which of themſelues wil gouerne themſelues, & place them in eſtate, ſtable, and permanent: and to come to the end thereof they thinke, conſult, & determine often, and in many ſorts: and this without asking at the mouth of the Lorde, without crauing counſel at him, and reſting themſelues at his worde. It ſeemeth to them that they are but too wiſe, to knowe howe to ſet in order and ſure eſtate their buſineſſe. Such raſhe headed and arrogant fooles ought wel to be reprehended, whereon they eſteeme themſelues ſo much, & deſpiſe ſo boldly the eternal wiſdome, without the which we cannot but goe aſtray, ſtumble, and fall. There are alſo in the ſcripture many complaintes and threateninges againſt
ſuch arrogant fellowes. Contrariwiſe, hee promiſeth a ſure eſtate *Iob.12.13.*
to them, which renounſing themſelues and al their owne counſel, *Iob.5.12.*
take the counſel which God hath ordeined them by his worde, *Pſa.33.10.*
which teacheth them to yeelde a voluntary obedience to the Lord, *Iſa.8.9.*
and to cleaue to his goodneſſe and mercy, not any thing doubting *Iere.11.7.*
of his fatherly loue towardes them. Hee maketh not this promiſe *Leuit.26.3.*
of himſelfe, but following the holy Scripture, hee hath alſo re- *Deut.28.1.*
garde to that which is ſaide, The counſel of the Lorde ſhal ſtande *Pſa.33.11.*
for euer. And ſo, wee take not heere the counſel of the Lorde for his eternal wiſedome: by the which afore the foundation of the world he hath ordeined al things. This counſel is ſecrete, and to vs incomprehenſible. Neuertheleſſe wee ſhoulde not ſticke to confeſſe
that ſuch counſel is, and ſhalbe firme, as Eſay confeſſeth it. Alſo of *Eſa.40.12.*
the firmeneſſe of this counſell dependeth the firmeneſſe of that *Rom.11.33.*
which is giuen vs dayly by the worde: for when the worde is pro- *Eſay.25.1.*
nounced to vs, it is becauſe God hath ſo ordeined it before the be- *Rom.16.25.*
ginning of the worlde. By the reuelation of this ſecret, the elect of *Ephe.1.9.*
God are deliuered from vanitie, and made firme and ſtable.

22 *That which is deſirable in a man, is his vpright dealing: inſomuch that the poore man is more profitable then the lyar.*

Although wee be wicked of nature, and many perſeuer obſtinately in their malice and naughtineſſe, taking delight to profite themſelues by the hurt of others, in deceauing, polling and robbing, and deſpiſe to order themſelues by vpright dealing, notwithſtanding if they haue any thing to barter or vſe traffique with their neighbours, that which they moſt deſire in them is, vpright dealing, and that they wil not ſeeme to deceaue them: for although they be worth nothing, yet they haue a certaine feare to deale with couſoners, lyars, hypocrites, and diſſemblers, bee they neuer ſo rich, and diligent in doing their buſineſſe: yea they loue better to haue to doe with a poore man naked of all goods: with whome they thinke to profite more then with the lyar, diſſembler and deceiuer bee hee neuer ſo rich. Solomon expreſſeth wel this ſame, ſaying,

That which is deſirable in a man is his vpright dealing. If this ſentence be practized and verified any whit by the wicked, that is not ſay, that it ſhoulde not bee practiſed in al thinges, and principally in thinges of weight, and excellency. As if there bee a queſtion to choſe, or make a King, Lorde, Magiſtrate, or gouernour in a countrie, it is meete to deſire vpright dealing, as Iethro ſheweth: alſo we may gather it out of many places of the Pſalmiſt. It behooueth vs not to be ſcrupulous about the pooreneſſe of the perſon as GOD ſheweth wel to Samuel, when hee appointeth him to annoint Dauid King ouer Iſrael: we ought alſo to vnderſtande it by that which is ſaide els where. It is not fit therefore to haue regarde to nobilitie or riches, nor auncientneſſe of race, and family, but to deſire vpright dealing. Likewiſe if there bee queſtion to chooſe Miniſters of the worde of God, it is right neceſſary to deſire vpright dealing becauſe they haue the gouernment of ſoules, which haue bin bought ſo dearely and preciouſly. Alſo one can giue no iudgment of a mans vpright dealing, but by his former conuerſation, whereof one hath certaine proofe. This firſt part of this ſentence may be expounded diuerſly, becauſe of one worde which hath diuers ſignifications in the Hebrue tongue, to wit, mercy, ſhame, religion, reproche, and defame: but leauing the diuerſitie of expoſitions aparte, let vs learne heerein, that as wee woulde our neighbours ſhoulde vſe

Exo. 18.21.
Pſal. 2.10 & 72.1.12 & 82.1. & 101.1.
1 Sam. 16.1 12
Eccl. 4.13 & 9.13

vpright dealing towards vs, and not diſguiſe them ſelues any way: So wee ſhoulde doe the like towardes all men.

23 *The feare of the Lorde bringeth a man to life: And hee that it is filled with the ſame, lodgeth where no plague ſhall viſit him.*

God greatly recommendeth vnto vs his feare: as is ſeene in the Lawe, the Pſalmes, and Prophetes. of whom we are often admoniſhed to this feare. *Deut.4.10. Pſal.22.24.*

Nowe although the feare that hee demaundeth, ſerue to his glory: notwithſtanding hee demandeth it not, for any profite that hee ſhal reape thereby: for hee hath no neede of vs, neither can we profite him any way. But hee demandeth it to the ende, we be aduanced in goods, and honour, not onely fraile and tranſitory, but chiefly, heauenly, and eternal. Solomon ſignifieth it by this worde *Life*, when hee ſaith, The feare of the Lord bringeth a man to life. True it is, that Superiours ought to keepe from al wrong and violence, thoſe which feare God, to the ende they may liue in peace, & tranquilitie ſeruing God. And Moſes in many places, promiſeth long life vppon earth, to them which keepe the commandements of God.

Wherevpon the Apoſtle Saint Paule building, ſaith, That the feare of God is profitable in al thinges hauing promiſe of life preſent, and alſo of life to come. Neuertheleſſe, ſeeing that the life preſent is common to men with beaſts, & that the wicked oftentimes liue in this worlde, more happily according to the outwarde apparance then the good and faithful which haue the feare of the Lorde before their face: for this cauſe when wee haue promiſe of life, wee vnderſtande that the life preſent is not but as it were a ſhewe of the life to come, and that wee ought not to ſtay therein, to make our dwelling heere belowe, as in our heritage: but wee muſt aſpire on hie to heauen, where their life is, that feare god, folowing the faith of the good fathers. And that with firme aſſurāce wee ſay with Saint Paule. We are not weeried: but although.&c. Heb.11.13. 2.Cor.4.16. Aſo wee knowe that if our earthly houſe of this lodging be deſtroied, we haue an euerlaſting houſe in heauē, which is not made with handes. Saint Paule inuiteth vs to aſpire to this life. Sith therfore Col.3.1. it is aboue, which wee ought to aſpire to, knowe wee, and bee wee aſſured, that when life is promiſed them which feare the Lord, it is meant chiefly eternall life. Contrariwiſe when we ſee the threateninges which are ſpoken againſt them, which are without the Pſa.55.20.24. feare of God, knowe wee, that they ſhal not liue, but death ſhall ſwalowe them eternally, with that, that from now many begin their hel, partly becauſe their owne conſciences reprooue them: & they cannot reſt therefore, partly becauſe they are afraide of the iudgements of God. Whereby they diſpaire, not ſeeing any way howe they ſhal eſcape them: and partly becauſe they haue often great miſeries and afflictions, wherewith they are tormented greatly, not Gen.4. knowing that hee is God which afflicteth them iuſtly. Caine was the captaine of ſuche people, alſo hee began his hel in this worlde: as may bee ſeene by that which is written of him. Pharao may well come next after, as is ſeene in Exodus, by the plagues which GOD ſent him, and by the acknowledgement which hee made of his wickedneſſe, in the which notwithſtanding hee remained indurate and hardened. Let vs put Saule in the thirde place, who purſued Da- 1.Sam.24.18.& 28.7.& 31.4. uid vniuſtly againſt his conſcience, as is alſo ſeene by his owne confeſſions. Alſo God hath ſent him great miſeries and afflictions, frō the which, ſeeing hee coulde not eſcape, hee had recourſe to the Diuel, and diſpaired and ſlue himſelfe: wee ſee therefore what a miſerable thing it is to reiect the feare of the Lorde, for to giue ones ſelfe to wickedneſſe: and contrariwiſe, that there is great felicitie for them which through the feare of the Lorde doe hate and deteſt iniquitie, and couet to render true obedience to God, according as he demandeth by his worde, and to be alſo at their neighbors commandemēt, aſſwel for the edification & helth of their ſoules, as for the commoditie of this life. Solomon expreſſeth alſo in other words this felicitie, ſaying, *And hee that hath the ſame, lodgeth, &c.* In the which hee ſheweth vs, that to bee happy by the feare of the Lord, is not enough to feare him in any one part of our conuerſation, and in the reſt to bee giuen to followe our owne fantaſies: as thoſe which feared the Lorde, ſeruing likewiſe their gods: and as the Papiſts doe, which are followers of this foreſaide kinde of men: for they make a ſhewe of fearing of God, in that they folowe his worde ſomewhat, and principally in this that they haue obſerued baptiſme, and that they vſe ſome loyaltie one towardes another: for the reſt, they are abhominable in their Ceremonies and ſeruices which they call diuine, beeing indeede diuelliſhe: and they are alſo abhominable in their wicked traffiques, fraudes, and couſonages, in their othes and blaſphemies. Therefore they obteine felicitie by the feare of God, it is not enough to vſe ſome faire apparãce of holyneſſe, in contemning al the abuſe, and abhomination of ſuperſtitions and Idolatries, of Painims, Papiſts, and other infidelles, frequenting ſermons of the woorde, and communicating the Sacramentes: and in the reſt to bee Athieſtes in our heartes, and our mouthes repleniſhed with euil talkings, our affections burning with auarice, wee embraſed with hate and rancour, and wholy giuen to fraudes, coſonages, and other abhominations. *2.Rom.17.*

But it is meete, that as a man which deſireth to bee whole and ſounde of body, followeth willingly the counſel of a good Phiſition, and to fil and ſatiſfie himſelfe, eateth not but good meates conuenient & proper to ingender blood, and reiecteth al others which are not proper to mingle with the good. Euen ſo wee ſhoulde entirely followe the counſel of God, who is our ſoueraigne Phiſition and fil and ſatiſfie our ſelues with his feare, folowing orderly that which hee teacheth vs by his woorde, and reiecting al other feare which our ſoueraigne Phiſition reprooued. Solomon vſeth the ſame ſimilitude here, as may bee ſeene by the woorde *filling*, which ſignifieth in his language ſatisfiyng or appeaſing of hunger, and promiſeth to him that ſhal ſatiſfie himſelfe with the feare of the Lord, great aſſurance, when he ſaith,

That hee ſhall lodge where no plague ſhall viſit him. Hee vſeth a ſimilitude taken by a traueller or ſtranger who arriueth in a lodging or Inne, which is out of the danger of theeues, & hath good gates and walles very ſtrong, and thoſe of the houſe are honeſt folkes and are careful to ſhut their doores, and vſe a traueller or *Iſay.8.12.& 29.3.& 41.8.& 43.1.& 44.2.*

passenger *1.Pet.3.14.*

paſſenger gently, and ſee that hee be not offended, nor ſuffer no wrong in their houſe, Enen as ſuch a traueller is in great ſuretie, according to humane ſenſe: ſo hee that feareth the Lorde, findeth good lodging, & ſure entertainement, and there is no man that can doe him any harme. This is it which God hath promiſed to his people by Moſes, and afterwarde by Dauid and his holy Prophetes. But one may ſay: there is none in the worlde, that ſuffer more outrages, iniuries, & violences, nor that are perſecuted more cruelly, then they that feare GOD. Abel hath prooued it, Dauid, the Prophetes, Ieſus Chriſte and his Apoſtles, whome hee hath foretold their afflictions. To this I anſwere, That to bee viſited with euill in this place, is to bee vanquiſhed therewith, ſo that one is not able to recouer himſelfe: as it is taken in diuers places of the Scriptures.

Leu.25. & 16.2.
Deut.8.6.
Pſal.22.24.25.& 34.8.
Eſay.33.14.
Exo.25.5.

24 *The ſlouthfull man hath ſhut his handes into his boſome: and will not take paine to put it to his mouth.*

Solomon hath often tolde vs alreadie the nature, geſtes, and qualities of the ſlouthful, & the miſery and pouertie which of force they muſt indure by their ſlouth & negligence: notwithſtāding, becauſe the number of them encreaſeth dayly, and continueth, and that wee are al of ſo wicked a nature, that wee wil bee content too liue at our owne pleaſure without doing any thing, but to ſporte and play, and to enioy the delights and pleaſures of this worlde, and wil not thinke on the hyre of ſlouth, nor heare ſpeake of euil, which ſhal followe after, which wee muſt of force ſuffer, will we or nil we, if wee bee ſlouthful: for this cauſe hee contenteth not him ſelfe with ſo many aduertiſements which he hath alreadie giuen vs: but to the end we may take more heede, or at leaſt wiſe be more inexcuſable, and iudged worthie of miſerie, hee repeateth heere againe vnder contrary wordes, the negligence, and little care of the ſlouthful, by the geſture of a man, who becauſe of the great colde he endureth cannot put his hande to worke, but is conſtrained to ſhut it into his boſome to keepe it warme, when he ſaith, *The ſlouthfull man hath ſhut his hande into his boſome: and will not take paine to put it to his mouth.*

And by good reaſon ſpeaketh hee ſoo : for the ſlouthfull wil not warme himſelfe with his buſineſſe, but is ſtill as it were very chilly & cold. Whervpon enſueth that of force the great indigence which taketh and aſſaileth him, muſt make him ſuffer hunger, as Solomon expreſſeth, ſaying,

And hee will not take paine to put it to his mouth. In ſo ſaying hee ſheweth the long abiding of the hande in the boſome, and the continuall and obſtinate negligence of the ſlouthful, which if he woulde forſake, hee might ſoone remooue his hande from his boſome, and ſet it a worke, whereby hee might haue wherewith to returne to his mouth and ſuſteine himſelfe. But ſeeing hee maketh no account thereof, he muſt of force periſh with want, and be poore and miſerable. And if one put a contrary to this, that there is a great number of ſluggardes, which put well their handes to their mouth, eate and drinke, & make good cheere, and their goods neuer faile them: as is ſeene in the Clergie & monkery of the Papiſts. Anſwere First. Solomō ſheweth what the ſlouthful are worthie of, and what it is they deſerue : as alſo the Apoſtle Saint Paule ſheweth, when hee forbiddeth giuing meate to the ſlouthful. Secondly, ſeeing they are not worthie to liue : and that they vſurpe that which they haue, as theeues and robbers that lyue by rapine, yea by what title ſoeuer they poſſeſſe their goods.

2.The.3.10.

Thirdly, if the ſlouthful for a time liue at their eaſe, they come at laſt vnto great pouertie : as is dayly ſeene in many who inherite richly their fathers patrimonies, and afterwardes liuing in delightes, without doing any thing, haue not had wherewithal too put their hande to their mouth, but by begging, filching, robbing or deceiuing.

Fourthly, if God ſpare the ſlouthful for a time, hee knoweth howe to viſite them afterwardes : and if it bee not in this worlde, it will bee in death euerlaſting, as may bee ſeene by the wicked riche man, Luke 16.

25 *Smite the ſcornefull perſon, and the ignorant will take better heede: for if one reprooue the wiſe man, hee hath vnderſtanding to knowledge.*

One ſaith commonly that it is beſt to beate the dogge before the Lion: whereby is ſignified that to warne and feare the hautie, proud, & arrogant, ſtiffnecked, and obſtinate, it is beſt to chaſtice the feeble, although they haue ſinned in little, or nothing. And as one ſaith, who without al right or reaſon, ſo one doeth wickedly in doing ſo: and the ſentence is practiſed, which ſaith: Cenſours torment and afflict the Doues, and ſpare the rauens and pardon them. For one ſhal ſee (as the common vſe is) that Kings, Princes, and magiſtrates and iudges wil ſooner and more ſharpely puniſhe the ſimple perſon which hath not much offended. They are not ſo taught by God, who reſiſteth ſtoutly the proude, and giueth grace to the humble: as he hath wel ſhewed at the Deluge, at the ſubuerſion of Sodom, the deſtruction of Pharao, and other deſolations where as hee hath ſmitten the ſcorneful, and ſpared the lowly, to the end that the ignorant and ſimple which are not yet wel aduiſed, may feare and learne to walke wiſely. Therefore ſith the ſuperiours of the earth are in the ſeate of God, they ought to bee his followers in puniſhing them that haue no feare of God, nor reuerence of his woorde, and that by their diſſolute life and inſolencie, worke great ſcandalles, and offende their neighbours, with wronges and outrages, and violences, to the end that the reſt may be afraide to giue them ſelues to ſuch wickedneſſe, Solomon warneth them hereof, ſaying,

Smite the ſcornefull perſon, and the ignorant will the better take heed: for if one reprooue the wiſe man, hee hath vnderſtanding, &c. Hee ſaith not, admoniſhe freendly the mocker, and reprehende him in ſecrete: for he knewe wel that one ſhoulde profite nothing that way, as hee hath aboue ſaide: But hee will that one ſmite him, and puniſhe him, according to his demerites, to the ende hee may bee an example, and that others may come to repentance and amendment of life, and that they be not ſo harly to giue themſelues to wickedneſſe, but hate it as abomination, and flee from it intierely. See heere the heede which Solomon ſpeaketh of when hee ſaith; *That the ignorant wil take better heede.* Hee wil not that by his heede, he hurte his neighbours, but that he flee from mockerie. For the reſt, when hee putteth the wiſeman a contrary to the ſcorneful, ſaying. *If one reproue the wiſe, hee wil haue vnderſtanding to knowledge.* And that hee ſaith not. Smyte him: but reproue him: hee ſheweth principally two thinges. Firſt, that one calleth not him wiſe which hath no faute (for ſuch a one is not any way to bee founde, or if hee bee founde, yet hee is not to bee reprooued, but praiſed, and extolled) but hee which by infirmitie beeing falne, relieueth himſelfe by repentance, and taketh in good parte, to bee argued, blamed and reprooued: for hee knoweth that ſuch admonitions, and corrections, ſerue him for a ſchoole to beecome yet more wiſe, and better aduiſed. As Solomon expreſſeth it, ſaying,

Hee hath vnderſtanding to knowledge. For hee vnderſtandeth not at the beginning but by augmentation, wherof hath beene ſpoken heeretofore. Secondly, That they which are tractable and of good capacitie, ought not to bee handled rigorouſly, as the vncorrigible, ſcorneful, and contemptuous: although one may wel vſe ſharpe woordes, and ſeuere ſpeeches: as is to bee vnderſtoode by this woorde reprehending: for if a man haue wit of himſelfe, hee ought therefore, to bee better aduyſed, and to guide himſelfe wel that hee fal not, and it ought to bee a greate ſhame to him, to commit a fault worthy reprehenſion, bee it neuer ſo little.

26 *Hee that hurteth his father, or ſhutteth out his mother, is a ſhameful and an vnworthy ſonne.*

There are ſome children which thinke it is laweful for them to ſpende their fathers goods at their owne pleaſure, and ſo they make greate waſt of the ſame, and put their fathers in pouertie, and want: and deſpyſe their mothers, becauſe they are women, who doe nothing but trouble the houſe, as they thinke, and therefore they moleſt, and offende them, and ſeeke to chace them out, principally when their fathers bee dead: And in thus doing, they thinke themſelues couragious champions, honeſt men, good companions, and men of accompt, and light on table fellowes, and playepheers, who knowe howe to flatter them, and make them beleeue that they are worthy to haue goods, becauſe they knowe howe to ſpende them pleaſantly and in good felowſhip. But becauſe the woorde of God ought to bee preferred before al humane wiſedome, and ſo by conſequence before al fooliſh phantaſies: and that ſuch children, conſumers of ſubſtance, and contemners of their parents, not only deſpiſe humane wiſedom which teacheth children to be ſober, modeſt, temperate, and humble to their parents, but alſo are diſobedient and rebellious againſt God, who commandeth that one honor father and mother: for this cauſe Solomon calleth them ſhameful and vnworthy, ſaying,

The ſonne is ſhameful and vnworthy, &c. Solomon ſpeaketh not heere obſcurely: for he ſpeaketh according to our maner, which is, to cal a perſon ſhameful and vnworthy, which leadeth ſo wicked, filthy & abhominable life, and in ſuch inhumanitie ingratitude and crueltie, that not only he ought to be aſhamed thereof, but alſo deſerueth to bee opprobrious & deſpiſed. Which thing thoſe children wel deſerue, which hurte or vndoe their fathers, and chace, or ſhut out their mothers. The law ought ſo to handle them, that they bee an example to others. But becauſe it pleaſeth vs not that our children ſhould come to ſuch reproch and ſhame, as to be puniſhed openly, for offendors, & that we our ſelues ſhoulde be abaſhed, grieued, & vexed thereat, it is meete aforehande that fathers and mothers be careful to order their life according to the worde of God, and according to the ſame word to watch ouer their children, bringing them vp in the feare & knowledge of the Lord. And that mothers take heed of being too much doted ouer their children, but that they ſhew themſelues graue and make them feare them. For it hapneth oftentimes, that children, which are cockered, and brought vp tenderly, worke moſt woe to their mothers. And principally, whē they haue moſt neede of ſuccour, which is after the diſceaſe of their huſbands when they are widdowes, or ſick, or aged: It is then ſay I, that children ill brought vp, deſpyſe them, offend them, & do them wrong, & ſeeke in this ſort, to ſhut them out far from them, where by right they ſhould enterteine them carefully, in al humanitie & gentleneſſe, with feare, humilitie, and reuerence. Such children are ſhameful and vnworthy principally before God, which knoweth wel howe to deſtroy them, and put them backe from him with the Diuel, vnder whome they ſerue.

27 *My ſonne heare no more the doctrine that leadeth thee vnto errours, from the words of vnderſtandinge.*

Seeing that Solomon admoniſheth his *ſonne*, that is to ſaie, him that is minded to obay his commandements, and beleeue his doctrine, and hath already a good beginning, or yeeldeth himſelfe attentiue, to learne good doctrine: ſeeing (I ſay) that it is to ſuch a *ſonne*, that hee ſpeaketh, and admoniſheth him to heare no more any falſe *inſtruction:* let vs vnderſtande that he ſpeaketh not of the inſtructions of the Prieſtes and Doctors of the Gentils, which led them to abhominable obſeruations, & who fought directly againſt the lawe, in ſo much that the moſt rude amongſt the children of wiſedome, amongſt the people of Iſrael might knowe them, and eaſilie keepe themſelues from them, if they woulde not worke againſt their owne conſciences, and deſpyſe God willingly. It was eaſie for them to take heede thereof: for in the lawe they were often warned, both by expreſſe wordes and by ſharpe threatnings: But hee talketh of the inſtructiōns of them who vnder ſhadowe of beeing Iewes, and magnifying with their mouth, the lawe of God, ſhewing themſelues very zelous of the glory of God, and profite of their neighbours, deceyued the people, bringing in ſectes, and practiſing ſuperſtitions, which had ſome ſpyce of holineſſe and religion. And ſo they peruerted the ſtate of the Churche, which was wel ordeyned and diſpoſed: as Core and his companions. As alſo thoſe againſt whome the true Prophetes cryed, and amongſt the reſt Ieremie and Ezechiel.

*Rom.*16.1
*Ier.*4.14.
*Ezech.*13.1.

Of ſuch Prophetes the number hath beene great, as may bee ſeene in the 1. Kings, chap. 18. verſ. 19. And not onely then but alſo in the tyme of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and his Apoſtles: the Scribes, and Phariſees, and others were of that number: as our Sauiour ſheweth it, when hee willeth men to take heede of their leauen, and when hee pronounceth them euil lucke. Saint Paule alſo ſheweth it, and Saint Iohn. Such fellowes are very dangerous, becauſe of their doctrine which beare a fayre ſhewe, are in the meane whyle turned from the obedience of the lawe which is the true knowledge as there are many aduertiſementes thereof. Saint Paule alſo ſheweth the danger wel. Solomon therefore admoniſheth his ſonnes, to wit, eche faythful Chriſtē man, not to giue eare to conſent to the inſtruction of ſuch falſe Prophetes, which make the true preaching of the woorde to bee deſpyſed, which is the true knowledge, without the which wee are blinde, and of force muſt goe aſtray, ſtumble, fall, and periſhe. This preſent admonition is nowe as neceſſarie for vs, as it was at the tyme of Solomon. As wee ought to vnderſtande by that which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte hath foretolde vs, and Saint Paule and Saint Peter. Let vs note therefore that wee are admoniſhed diligently to reade the ſcriptures and frequent ſermons of the woorde of trueth. For it is there that wee heare the woordes of knowledge. Not to goe aſtray therefore, wee haue to pray with Dauid: Lorde make me to knowe thy wayes: direct mee in thy trueth, and inſtruct mee.

Math.16.6 & 23.13.
Phil.3.18.
Ioh.2.18.& 4.1.
Deut.13.1.
Eſa.9.15.
Iere.23.& 18.15.
Rom.16.17.
2.Tim.2.14.
Oſe.4.5.
Mat.24.4. 11.23.
Act.20.29 30.
1.Tim.1.4.
2.Tim.3.1
2.Pet.2.1
Pſa.25.4.& 119.33.& 143.8.10.

28 *The falſe witneſſe ſcorneth iudgement: And the mouth of the wicked deuoureth iniquitie.*

Many weigh it not much to beare falſe witneſſe againſt their neighbours, although their owne conſciences reprooue them, and this may bee, becauſe they thinke, or elſe ſeeke to make themſelues beleeue, that they do no hurt but to them againſt whome they witneſſe falſly, who are men as they are, and that they abuſe none by theyr falſe witneſſing but earthly iudges: but heere Solomon doeth ſhewe them that this is not ſo light a matter as they make it and that they open their mouthes euen vp into heauen and ſpeake againſt God: for they ſcorne againſt iudgement, the which although men exerciſe it, notwithſtanding it is not their iudgement but of God, of whome iudges are but miniſters, and as it were inſtrumentes. And hee alone is iudge of al the worlde, and ſo the wrongful witneſſe, not onelie ſtryueth to ſet diſorder, trouble, and confuſion in worldly affayres in doing their neighbours dammage, and abuſing the iudges to make them erre from the right, but alſo hee deſpyſeth God, and aſmuch as in him lyeth, depriueth him of his trueth, and righteouſneſſe, and conſequently of his diuinitie, for hee cannot bee God, but hee muſt bee veritable, and iuſt, which is a mockery ſo deteſtable, that God wil not leaue it vnpuniſhed, as Solomon hath ſaide before in this chapter, ver. 5. and 9. But the falſe witneſſes are ſo affectionate to yl ſpeaking, and finde ſo much ſweeteneſſe therein, that they thinke not of that which wil folowe, but onelie to ſpeake euil with greate deſire, and proneneſſe. As gluttons and drunkardes doe which deuoure meate, and ſwallowe vp drinke with the greate deſire that they haue to fil their bellyes, and ceaſe not to put in their mouths: for al their paſtime is to eate, and drinke. Euen ſo falſe witneſſes apply al their ſtudie to ſpeake wickedly. Solomon ſignifieth the ſame ſaying.

Gen. 18. 25.
Rom. 3. 7. 8. 9.
Pſal. 7. 9. & 9. 8. 9. & 75. 6. 7. 8.

And the mouth of the wicked deuoureth iniquitie. Wherein alſo hee ſignifieth the ruyne of the wicked, which giue their mouthes to euil ſpeaking: for as the gluttons, and drunkardes kil and choke themſelues with too much exceſſe, euen ſo the wicked ſhalbe condemned for the words of their mouths. And wheras the holy ſcripture applyeth it ſelf often to our maner of ſpeaking, it muſt not be thought ſtrange of that which we haue ſaid: for when we ſee any one deſirous to tel a tale, we ſay he byteth vpon it, as vppon an apple: and ſo wee ſay of gluttons and drunkardes, that they kil themſelues, becauſe they neuer ceaſe as it were, to drinke and eate abundantly. Neuertheleſſe, becauſe the woorde *deuoure* doeth ſignifie alſo, *to hyde*, ſome expounde it that the wicked diſſemble iniquitie, becauſe in bearing falſe witneſſe they would bee thought to ſpeake trueth.

29 *Iudgementes are prepared for the ſcorneful, and ſtripes for fooles backes.*

There are diuers ſcorneſull perſons in the worlde and in diuers ſortes, as experience ſheweth it, and Solomon hath witneſſed it heretofore ſpeaking of the ſcorneful in ſundry manners. Nowe although it cannot be but their conſciences muſt reprooue them oftentimes, and mauger their heartes they muſt be afrayde of the iudgementes of God, neuertheleſſe they cannot truely vnderſtand that there is a God, a iudge iuſt and ſeuere, who ought to iudge and puniſh them in ire and fury. As it appeareth, when for any remorce of conſcience that they haue, yet they reuert not at al from their ſcornfulnes but are rather obſtinate and hardened therein, as if they had made *Iſaack.28. 14.15.* aliance with death and hell, and as though they had power to reſiſt God, and to command him to deſiſt from that which he hath prepared for them, and renounce that which he hath enterpriſed againſt them. But euen as all ſuche preſumption is vaine, arrogant and wicked, ſo the holy Ghoſt laugheth at it, and ſheweth that it ſhalbe put downe, made nothing, puniſhed, and deſtroyed, Solomon declareth it in this preſent ſentence. *Iudgementes are prepared &c.* For ſeing that God is not variable, and that he hath prepared iudgementes for the ſcorneful, it followeth wel that he wil make them feele them puniſhing them horribly, and without appeale, yea afore they them ſelues ſhal know of it, as Solomon ſignifieth by the word of iudgementes: the which ſignifieth not here any areſtes of the mouth, or *Exod.6.6.& 7.4.& 12.12.* any deliberations or ſentences verball, but the horrible, and fearfull execution, of the eternal decree of God agaynſt the wicked as it is *Iſay.3.14.* taken in other places, where God manaceth the wicked to puniſh & *Iere.1.16.* deſtroy them. Solomon alſo ſheweth it when he ioyneth ſtripes to iudgementes, ſaying, *And ſtripes for fooles backes.* For this is but an expoſition or repetition of the wordes precedent, as the manner of Scripture is to reſay one thing twiſe or thriſe, and to call it by diuers names. That therfore which Solomon hath called iudgements, he calleth ſtripes: and the ſcorneſull, fooliſh, threatning them greeuous puniſhment, not in their goodes, but on their owne perſon:

for he ſayth that ſtripes are prepared for their backes, which is to ſay that God hath determined, and appoynted to afflict and puniſh the perſons of fooles by diuers and ſundry afflictions and puniſhments, as the Egyptians haue proued, and alſo the obſtinate and rebellious amongſt the people of Iſrael and others. Solomon ſignifieth wel the diuerſity of puniſhmentes, when he ſaith not *ſtripes* in the ſingular number, but in the plurall. And that the backe or body is taken for the perſon, it is manifeſt, for God afflicteth not the wicked onely in their outward members, but alſo in their ſoules and mindes as they well feele it. And in other places the backe or body is taken for the perſon. In our common language we call the garde of the body of any one, him which kepeth him to the end none doe hurt to perſon. And although many ſcorneful and fooliſh perſons feele not in this world theſe iudgementes and ſtripes, neuertheleſſe that which is ordeyned for them, ſhal not fayle. For hauing abuſed the wiſedome of God, they ſhal receaue at laſt their merites, and deſertes. One may alſo ſay that Magiſtrates and iudges are warned of their office: for they are ordeyned of God to doe iudgement and iuſtice, in puniſhing the wicked, and deliuering the good from all iniuries, and violences. True it is that ſcorneſulneſſe, and folly haue their principall ſeate, and reſidence in the heart, whereof men cannot be a fit iudge, there is none but God which ſoundeth and proueth the hearts. But as a liuely ſpring and ful of water muſt needes emptie himſelfe; or as a draught ful of filth and doung breaketh and caſteth his ſmell abroade, and infecteth al them which are about it: So the ſcorneſull and fooliſh ſpil their wickedneſſe, in committing great ſcandals, or doyng great outrages, or violences to their neighboures. Of ſuche thinges men are iudges, and ought to puniſh them.

Rom. 24.

Rom. 13.

The xx. Chapter.

1 *Wine is ſcornefull, and ſtrong drinke troubleſome: and who ſo erreth in the ſame, is not wiſe.*

Pro.3.10.
Pſa.104.15.
Gene.9.21.
& 19.33.

ALthough God hath created wine and other drinkes, which haue greate ſtrength and ſauour, and giueth vs them not onely to ſuſteine and fortifie vs, but alſo to reioyce and delight vs, (as may bee ſeene in Moſes as hath beene alledged:) notwithſtanding this is not to ſay, that one ſhuld take ſuch abundance thereof as to be drunk, as Noe, & Lot did. And alſo it is not lawful to delight in taking too much thereof, when chiefly for the abundance thereof one ſhall not be drunke, as the forenamed were. For the exceſſiue abundance maketh not one drunke alwaies, inſomuch that by the ſame one cōmitteth only one fault or two: But it chaunceth to many, that when they haue exceeded one tyme, and that the drink pleaſeth, they return therto twiſe or thriſe, and afterwardes continue and perſeuer therin, as long as the occupation agreeth with them, and there is nothing that pleaſeth them more, then to intunne the wine into their throtes. And ſo they abuſe greatly the good creatures of GOD, againſt whome they are verie vngrateful, not acknowledging that God giueth vs meat and drinke, for to vſe in all ſobrietie and temperance. Alſo hee rendereth them the hire, that they deſerue, deliuering them vp in a reprooued ſenſe: As Solomon ſheweth it in three woordes. The firſt when he ſayth, *wine is ſkornefull*. Heere wine is not taken for the licour that GOD bringeth vs foorth of the vines: but for him that is adicted to the ſame, and hath therein ſo greate delight. For as one calleth man by the vertue and grace wherewith he is indued and adorned: So doeth hee alſo by the vice whereto hee is adicted and wherein he is greatly enwrapped. Example: the man is called fleſh, becauſe he is giuen to fleſhly luſtes, the faithfull are called light. You were of late darkeneſſe, but now you are light to the Lorde. Solomon therefore calleth wine, him that abuſeth himſelfe therein, and by the ſame is corrupted: and ſayth that ſuch a drunkarde is ſkorneful: wherein he ſignifieth wel that hee is deliuered vp into a reprobate ſenſe. As one may vnderſtand by that which hath beene treated of heretofore of the ſkorneful. And although we had no paſſage of the Scripture, which taught vs that we might ſay, that wine is taken for him which is giuen thereto, yet we might ſay, that Solomon ſpeaketh ſo, applying himſelf to our manner, which is to attribute vnto wine, that which drunkardes doe, and ſay. Wherein drunkardes ought to haue great ſhame, and find themſelues very culpable, when it muſt bee, that for their vice, the creature of God which is good, be ſo reproched. Alſo the Lord can holde them culpable in that they abuſe ſo his good gift, and defile it by intemperance: And finally wil declare againſt them his iudgementes and ſtripes, which he hath ordeined for them. The ſecond, is when he ſayth, *Strong drinke troubleth or is troubleſome.* By ſtrong drinke the Scripture intendeth ordinarily the drinke, which hath force to make a man drunke. But heere we take for the perſon which is ſo much giuen thereto, and taketh ſo great abundance thereof, that by the ſame he is mooued to ſtrife, debate, and mutuny inſomuch that one can haue no peace with him, nor reconciliatiō at al. And ſo he that is giuen to take abundance of drink, which maketh drinke is deliuered vp into a reprobate ſenſe, alſo he is vnreconciliable. As one may ſee where Saint Paule ſayth, that they which are abandoned in a reprobate ſenſe amongſt other vices are full of ſtrife, and that they bee without naturall affection, people.

Gen.6.3.
2.Cor.5.21.

Pro.1.22.& 9.7.8.& 13.1.& 14.6.& 15.12.

The third is, when hee ſayth, that *who ſoeuer erreth in the ſame is not wiſe,* When either by ignorance, or aſtoniſhment, or wandering of the ſpirite, he putteth himſelfe out of the right way and goeth not where he ſhould, or by obſtinacie, or his owne opiniate minde, leaueth his way, and afterwarde cannot finde it againe nor knoweth not where he goeth. Therefore drunkardes doe ſo abuſe wine and ſtrong drinkes, that they looſe thereby al memory, ſenſe, and vnderſtanding. And what rebukinges ſoeuer one giue them thereof, they make but a ieſt of it as Solomon pronounceth, ſaying, *wine is ſkornefull*. And mooue ſtrife and debate agaynſt them, which ſeeke to leade them in the right way, ſooner then they will geue them thankes for their friendly warninges, as Solomon pronounceth it, ſaying: Strong drinke is troubleſome, or ſtirreth ſtrife. And ſo drunkardes by their ſcornfulneſſe and ſtrife doe goe aſtray, and by ignorance, aſtoniſhment and wandering of their wits, and by obſtinacie and malice deliberate. Wherefore one may conclude with Solomon that they are not wiſe, and alſo that they ſhall not be: as Solomon ſignifieth, vſing the future tenſe. And alſo one may well ſay, that they are abandoned into a reprobate ſenſe: for as experince ſheweth vs, they geue themſelues to doe thinges which are not lawfull. Thus doyng, they goe aſtray in ſuche ſorte, that they neuer finde the kingdome of GOD. *Rom.1.29.* For firſt they haue in this life neyther fayth, nor repentaunce, without the which one cannot ſerue GOD, and geue him the honour and homage which he oweth him, acknowledging him for ſoueraigne king and gouernour. But rather by incredulity and wickednes they ſerue the Diuell.

Secondly, they ſhall not enter into the kingdome of *1.Cor.6.10.* Heauen, to enioy the ſame with the wiſe, iuſt, and ſober. Let vs vnderſtande therefore that Solomon aduertiſeth vs couertly of that which the holye Scripture in diuers places admoniſheth vs. Let vs obey theſe holie and neceſſary admonitions: otherwiſe wee ſhalbee without hearte, and of force muſt die. For wee ſhalbee without wiſedome, in the which there is life. Some tranſlate in the ſteede of, *to goe aſtray*, *too delight*: both the two agree well with drunkardes: and in as muche as they delight too bee drunke, they looſe their ſenſe, wherevppon of neceſſity they muſt goe aſtray.

2 *The feare of the king is as the roaring of a Lyon: he that prouoketh him to anger, offendeth agaynſt his owne ſoule.*

If the ſimple, and feeble beaſtes which haue neyther teeth nor nayles ſufficient to defende themſelues withall ; or likewiſe little children , and they which feele not themſelues ſtrong ynough, and well defended, are afrayde, when they heare the Lyon roare and approche : it is right neceſſaty that ſubiectes bee carefull too keepe themſelues from committing any thing, whereby they may merite to be threatned by theyr Lordes, and ſuperiours, as Solomon hath ſhewed vs. And becauſe euery one of vs hath the hearte of a king, and that naturally wee couet libertie , or rather ruſe and Lordſhippe, and will not ſubmitte our ſelues as ſubiects, but rather riſe vp and make rebellions : for this cauſe Solomon warneth vs agayne of the power, ſeuerity and rigour, of the yre and reuenge of kinges and ſuperiours of the earth, when hee ſayeth, *The feare of the king, &c.* Hee ſheweth vs that as the Lion being hungry, ſpareth, not his pray, when he hath it betweene his pawes, ſo if wee bee apprehended, hauing offended our ſuperiours, wee haue too knowe that our life dependeth thereuppon. As alſo he ſayeth conſequently vnder other woordes, ſaying : *That he which prouoketh the king to anger, offendeth agaynſt his owne ſoule* . That is to ſay, that he putteth his life in danger, that he deſerueth to bee executed and put to death by iuſtice, or endure other paynes very grieuous . For hee that is diſobedient to the king, and prouoketh him to anger , not fulfilling his will by humble ſubiection, is the kings pray, and not they which liue honeſtly, humbly, and religiouſly. Alſo kinges, princes, magiſtrates and gouernours doe not affray with threatninges ſuch perſonages. Much leſſe ſeeke they to teare them in peeces and deuour them, but they vſe beneuolence towardes them, which is as the deawe vpon the graſſe. When therfore Solomon ſaith :

Pro19.12

Pro.9.12.

> *The feare of the king is as the roaring of a Lyon, he that prouoketh him to anger, offendeth againſt his owne ſoule.*

It is not to harten proude and cruel Tyrantes agaynſt theyr Subiectes and inferiours, to the ende too vexe, torment, and deſtroy them : But it is too aduertiſe kinges which will raygne truely as they ought , of that ſeueritie and rigour, which they ought to vſe againſt the diſobedient, and rebellious, the obſtinate, and ſtiffenecked in their wickedneſſe, diſſolutions, and inſolencies. Such perſons are the pray of kings and not the ſimple and innocent, which ſeeke to render due obedience. But as the vſe is nowe, the wolues eate the ſheepe, they ſpare the wicked, and afray the good, doing to them outrage and violence vnder the colour of iuſtice. It is ſecondly to ſhewe Subiectes and inferiours that they ought to walke in feare vnder their Lords and ſuperiours. Otherwiſe to looke to proue their fury like the hungry lyons. Alſo when Solomon ſaith, *And he that prouoketh him to anger, offendeth agaynſt his owne ſoule:* he teacheth vs not that we ſhould ſpare kinges in their vices, neyther that we ſhoulde feare to rebuke them for feare of their anger, and incurring their diſpleaſure. Thus doing wee ſhoulde bee hypocrites, diſſemblers, flatterers, traytoures to God, and to them which wee ſpare in their vices. Which wickedneſſe to eſchew, let vs follow the conſtancy of the Prophets and Apoſtles, who haue ſpoken frankly and couragiouſly to kings, aud Princes, & haue not feared their euill graces, as the holy Scripture witneſſeth . Alſo they haue beene towardes ſuch kings and Princes, as the pray betweene the pawes, and iawes of the Lyon. And according to the opinion of the world, they haue offended againſt their ſoules in not ſpeaking and doyng as pleaſed thoſe kinges, and haue beene worthy of death in the opinion of carnal men becauſe the Princes were angry at their conſtancie and magnanimity, which they haue reputed obſtinacie, and reſiſtance or rebellion, as yet at this preſent, they vſe to doe againſt the poore faithfull ſorte. Hee teacheth vs not I ſay, that wee ſhoulde ſpare ſuch tyrantes: But that wee keepe our ſelues, leaſt by our wicked conuerſation, and reprochful manners diſſolute and vnruly, and our deedes outragious and violent, we prouoke to anger our Princes & ſuperiours, which are ordeined ouer vs. This ſhould be to reſiſt the ſuperiour power: And ſo we ſhould offend agaynſt our ſoules putting them in danger of damnation, not onely temporall, but alſo eternall. Therefore if it behoueth vs to bee carefull to *Rom. 13. 2.* keepe our ſelues from prouoking mundane princes to anger, which are but Lions whelpes: by a farre more reaſon wee ought carefully to regarde that we feare the great Lion, who not onely teareth in peeces the fleſh and bones of them which reſiſt him, but deſtroyeth them for euer. This greate Lyon is our God eternal and almightie, into whoſe handes it is a feareful thing to fal. It is hee of whome it is ſaide. His roaring is as it were the Lyon hee wil roare and hantche vp his pray, and there ſhal be none which ſhal recouer it. wee haue to doe alſo with another Lyon which is the Diuel, whom wee ought ſtil to prouoke to anger and wrath, in reſiſting him. Hee is not lyke to kings of the worlde, which haue the power from God, to puniſhe in their anger them which reſiſt them, and to take reuenge vpon them: but the more one reſiſtes him, the more, one is aſſured that hee wil doe no hurte. And as a people that wil reſiſt ſome tyrant, munite, and arme themſelues with al armour and munitions neceſſarie: Euen ſo to reſiſt the Diuell, who is the murtherer of our ſoules, and to make him flee, it behoooueth vs to arme and defende our ſelues, as Saint Paule admoniſheth vs. Epheſ. 6. verſ. 10.

Heb. 10. 31.
Eſa. 5. 29. 30 & 31. 4.
Oſe. 11. 10. & 13. 7
1. Pet. 5. 8. 9.
Iam. 4. 7.

3 *It is a mans honour to keepe himſelfe from ſtrife: but euery foole will be medling.*

When wee are al created to the Image and lykeneſſe of our God; it is good reaſon that we be his followers, and that we thinke it greate honour if wee folowe him wel. As when a childe hath a good father, it is honour to him to ſeeke diligently to repreſent the manners of his father in his life and conuerſation. Such a childe is greatly praiſed and eſteemed amongſt them that haue any little ſenſe at all. And alſo the deſire of fathers is commonly that theyr children at the leaſt wiſe reſemble them, if they cannot come to a greater perfection. Nowe our God and father is the God of peace and loue: as hee hath manifeſtly ſhewed vnto vs, for when wee were his enimies and aduerſaries by our ſinnes, by the which wee fought againſt him, prouoking and ſtirring him vp to anger againſt vs, hee hath loued vs ſo much that hee hath deigned to make peace with vs, and reconciled vs to him by the death of his ſonne. Hee hath not made ſuch peace and reconciliation with vs, for the

loue that wee had towardes him : neyther hath hee done it againſt
Rom.5.8 his wil,fearing to bee diſhonoured thereby, as the fleſhly men and
Ephe.2,1 worldlings,proude and arrogant, would eſteeme themſelues to bee
Col.1.21.22 diſhonoured as of a bace minde and courage,if they ſhoulde ſeeke
Ioh.3.14 their enemies,to reconcile themſelues and make peace with them.
1.Ioh.49 But he hath eſteemed ſuch peace and reconciliation glory and ho-
Luk.2.13. nour. And ſeeing that for this peace and reconciliation hee wil
14. bee glorified : it foloweth wel that he eſteemeth it a glory, and as
Eph.1.5 he eſteemeth it a glorie, ſo hath hee done it cheerefully, without
Col.1.21,22 forethinking the good which hee hath done to vs vngrate and per-
Pſa.29.8 uerſe. Thus doing,our good God and father hath thought it glory
Eſa.62.5.& and honour to ceaſe from ſtrife. And ſeeing it is glory and honour
65.19. to children to followe the gentlenes, benignitie, and humanitie
Mat.18.11 of their fathers, it behoooueth vs to followe our heauenly fathe
Luke.15.34 ceaſing from ſtrife.

And to doe this ſame wel,it behoooueth vs to take away al e-
nimities,hate and rankour, wherof debate and ſtrife,diſſentions and
Pro.10.12 mutunies proceede,and to make peace with al men. It is not there-
Rom.12.17. fore onely towardes our freendes that wee ſhoulde ceaſe our ſtrife,
Mat.5.44 but alſo towardes our enemies,who aſke but our deſtruction. And
& 23.23. it is not meete wee thinke, that wee are diſhonoured if wee humble
ſelues,ſo farre as to ſeeke our neighbours to make peace and recon-
ciliation with them.

It is not meete that this bee done vnwillingly : as they that
wil ſay they wiſhe no harme to their neighbours,and in the meane
Mat.18.35 while, wil neither ſee them nor meete them, nor doe them
any pleaſure at all. It behoooueth that it be of francke courage, and
free will that we reconcile our ſelues one to another, forgetting in-
iuries paſt,as if we neuer had been wronged : our Sauiour ſheweth
Pſa.25.6 & vs that we muſt ſo doe. And ſeeing we craue of God whome wee
79.8 haue greeuouſly offended,that he wil haue no remembrance of our
faultes, &c: It is good reaſon that we doe the lyke to our neigh-
bours,for it is vnpoſsible that they ſhoulde ſo much offende vs, as
we haue offended our heauenly father.

Ephe.4.31 This is ſhewed vs by the parable which is in S. Mathew chap.
23.& 5.1.2 18.ver.23.Let vs ceaſe therefore from ſtrife(as it is ſaide) and folow

that which is taught vs by S. Paule: In ſo dooing, our glorie ſhal not bee tranſitorie, but eternal, for wee ſhalbee the children of God. Col.3.8 Mat.5.9

Contrariwiſe, if wee bee giuen to ſtryfes, this ſhalbe obiected againſt vs, for although the worlde make accompt of the vertuous, and ſtout, and thoſe, which can reuenge themſelues, & iniurie their enemies: notwithſtanding the holy Ghoſte pronounceth them fooles, ſaying by Solomon that *Euery foole wil bee medling*. This is no ſmal reproche to be called foole by the holy Ghoſt.

4 *The ſlouthful body wil not labour, becauſe of winter: therfore ſhall he begge in harueſt, and haue nothing.*

It is a great paine and trauel to plow, till, and labour the ground in winter, becauſe of the froſt, ſnowe, and rayne: as they prooue it which medle therewith. But for the difficultie which they finde therein, they ceaſe not to apply their labour: Some through hope of gaine, ſome for feare of pouertie, and other ſome becauſe they knowe that one ſhoulde apply his woorke at al times and ſeaſons, according to the ſtate wheretoo hee is called: and that they ſhould with al diligence ſeeke to ouercome al difficulties, to the ende they neither put themſelues nor their familie in danger to begge their bread, and for the moſt parte not to finde one which wil giue any thing. As the ſlouthful deſerue wel, and alſo Solomon threateneth them therewith, ſaying,

The ſlouthful body wil not labour, &c. As for the manace of pouertie, it hath beene amplie treated of. But wee muſt note firſt of al, that there are many which thinke themſelues not ſlouthful, & neuertheleſſe if they meete with any little winter, that is to ſay, any let, which ſeemeth to them harde to ouercome: they are ſo deintie, that they thinke one ſhoulde excuſe them of the woorke.

Such perſons (after Solomon,) ought to bee eſteemed ſlouthful: for they labour not in the winter. Heere vnder *Winter* hee comprehendeth al the ſeaſons that ſeeme difficile to them that woulde liue at their eaſe, and would eate their bread and doe nothing, but that which ſeemeth to them good, according to the ſenſe of their fleſhe. As alſo vnder the name of labouring, wee ought to vnderſtande al dooings wherein men ought to apply themſelues. Secondly it is to bee noted, when hee ſaieth, that the ſlouthful ſhal *begge or craue in Harueſt*, that idle perſons will thinke thereby that one ought to giue them their demande, when hee hath gathered goods ynough, and that hee ought not to ſpare from them, ſeeing they are in pouertie, and knowe wel how to ſpend it. There is a great number of ſuch ſluggardes in the Papacie, were it but amongſt the Monkes and Prieſtes. And in euery country whatſoeuer, there are many idle perſons which followe plaies and paſtymes, after the which they make great cheere, and ſearch out the tables of them whome they thinke are riche, or haue made a good harueſt, and are liberal. Thirdly, let vs note that when hee ſaieth. *That the ſlouthful ſhal haue nothing:* Hee ſpeaketh principally of that which the ſlouthful deſerue, and alſo of that which cannot fayle them. For although ydle bellies bee for a tyme filled, notwithſtanding it is not wholy to their contentement: for they haue neuer ſo much as they would haue, & yet at laſt they come to a miſerable indigence, and are naked of al goods: As they finde, which are in hel. The riche alſo are warned not to communicate their goods to ſuch ſlouthful perſons.

5 *Counſell in the heart of man is like deepe water: and a man of vnderſtanding will drawe it out.*

There is none but God alone which can know, and bring to light, that which lyeth hid in the heart of man: as hath bin ſhewed heretofore by the ſcripture in diuers places. And although we think very profoundly without any outward motiō, yet our thoughts ſtick not to be preſent with him, as wel as if we ſhould expres thē by words or works: the 136. Pſalme ſheweth this wel, and foorthwith declareth what it is, inſomuch as GOD hath formed vs as wee are.

But al though it appertaine to him alone to haue ſuch knowledge, and that none other can haue it, neuertheleſſe wee are ſo curious, that we wil know that which we cannot know, as appeareth by that which hath been already ſaide: for ſeeing it aperteineth to God, the creature can do nothing in it, and ought not once to preſume to attaine thereto. Solomon alſo ſheweth it wel, when he compareth the cogitations deliberations, enterpriſes, and willes of the heart of man, to deepe waters, ſaying,

Counſell in the heart of man, &c. This is not to ſay, that the heart of man is not more hidden, and harde to ſounde, then the bottome of the deepeſt waters in the worlde: But Solomon maketh ſuch a compariſon, to ſhewe that if a man finde it harde, yea vnpoſſible to pearce the depth of the great Sea: then he ought not to preſume to knowe that which man cōſulteth & decreeth in his hart: for it is yet more hiddē thē the depth of Sea: & alſo it diſguiſeth it ſelfe in diuers faſhions, as euery one of vs may knowe, if wee conſider it more neerely, according as he is ſenſual, and giuen to his natural corruption. Likewiſe there is none of vs, which knoweth intirely the counſels of his hearte: for then wee ſhould haue no ſinnes which ſhoulde bee hidden from vs, for the which Dauid prayeth, ſaying, Who is hee that knoweth his offences? Deliuer me, therefore from my hidden faultes. Neuertheleſſe this argueth not, but one may ſomewhat knowe what a man is in hearte: for if wee haue the patience to conſider according to the woorde of the Lorde (the which onely is our wiſedome and vnderſtanding) the wordes, behauiour, and doinges of them which ſeeke to hide and diſguiſe themſelues, at laſt their heartes wil not bee diſcouered too vs, and wee ſhall knowe their counſels, deliberations, and enterpriſes: For God by his woorde will giue vs ſuch wiſedome, that it wil bee as eaſie to vs to diſcouer and ſee that which is in their heartes, as it is to draw water out of a wel or riuer which is at euery ones commaundement. Solomon ſheweth vs this, ſaying, *Pſal. 19. 13.*

And a man of vnderſtanding will drawe it out. It is not without cauſe that hee ſayth, *A man of vnderſtanding*, for it is very needefull that one haue a neere regarde too drawe out ſuch counſell. Our Lorde and Sauiour ſheweth it vs: and the *Math. 7. 15. Act. 20. 28. Rom. 16. 17.*

Apoſtle Saint Paule. True it is that the Lorde to giue vs the more occaſion to watch, permitteth for a time that wee bee ſomewhat deceiued by hypocrites, to the ende alſo that afterwardes, hauing our eies opened, we may knowe, that it is hee alone, who giueth vs the vnderſtanding howe to drawe out that which lay too deepe for vs before.

6 *The mightie man is named a well doer: but who ſhal finde a faithfull man?*

It is the manner of worldly men, which ſeeke to get ſome of the ſubſtance of the riche, to flatter them, and curry fauour with them, calling them wel doers. It is al one to them if they lye, making them beleeue that if in times paſt they haue receiued nothing of their benefites, yet by ſuch flatteries in time to come they wil induce them to be beneficial to them. Solomon expreſſeth this in briefe, ſaying,

The mightie man is named a well doer. Nowe as hee is called a man beneficial, or wel doer, hee ought alſo to bee ſo: for the Scripture giueth not ſuch a name in vaine, neither heere, nor
Luke.22.25 els where: and this is not to aduance flatterers and encrochers, but
Rom.13.3. to mainteine the good and iuſt. But it is a thing very rare to finde a Prince or great Lorde, which anſwereth to the titles that are attributed vnto him, as experience doeth wel ſhewe, whereto Solomon hath regarde ſaying,

But who ſhall finde a faithfull man? Although it bee vniuerſally true, and without exception, that God alone is faithful, and that al men are vntrue: notwithſtanding in this place (as the ſenſe requireth it, and becauſe he hath ſpoken in the beginning of the ſentence of a mightie man) wee wil take the man for him which is in preheminence and authoritie, and wil vnderſtand that Solomon accuſeth
Eſa.1.21.& heere the mightie of diſloyaltie, oppreſſion, and violence, becauſe
3.13.& 5.23 they doe not anſwere to their title of well doing, but in ſteede of
Amos.2.6. being men of benificence, they are theeues, robbers, murderers, and homicides, as is laide againſt them in the ſcriptures.

7 *Hee that walketh in his integritie, is iuſt: and his children ſhalbe happy after him.*

We deſire naturally to be reputed iuſt, and that al goe well in our family, not onely during our life, but alſo after our deceaſe.

Nowe to the ende wee haue no vaine reputation, but bee iuſt in deede, yea before God, and that wee our ſelues haue witneſſe thereof in our owne conſciences: Solomon ſheweth vs the way that wee ought to walke in, when hee ſaith,

He that walketh in his integritie, is iuſt: and his children ſhall bee happy, &c. Hee ſaith not, hee which referreth himſelfe to bountie and vertue of his neighbour, and attendeth to his merites: to the ende wee doe not as the Papiſtes doe, which recommend themſelues to the merites of Saints which are departed, and attende on the ſuffrages and workes of ſupererogation of fat bellied Monkes. It is not meete that wee bee fainte hearted, to reſt and take breath, nor that wee eaſe and repoſe our ſelues, as if our legges were a weary, or our feete chafed: but wee ought too walke being conuerſant with our neighbours in ſounde and pure conſcience, without malice, fraude, or any diſguiſement: and doing frankely to our neighbours, as wee woulde they ſhoulde doe vnto vs, keeping loyaltie to them, and loue vnfained, being ready rather to endure damage, then to hurt another man. This is the integritie in the which al faithful men ought to walk, to deale purely and iuſtly in the houſe of the Lorde, which is his Church. This is wel taught vs in the ſcriptures. If wee walke in ſuche integritie, wee are of the number of them which haue place in the houſe of the Lorde: *Pſa.15.& 24* wherevpon enſueth that hee accepteth vs as iuſt: For the woorde *Pſa.33.4.15.* of the Lorde is righteous, and al his workes are faithful. Hee *Pſa.3.5.* loueth righteouſneſſe and iudgement: the earth is full of the goodneſſe of the Lorde. For thou art a God which loueſt not wickednes. The wicked ſhal not dwel before thee. It foloweth alſo that we walke according to his lawe: for there is no integritie but that which is taught vs by the woorde of God. One may ſee this clearely in the Pſalme 119.1. and in many places of the ſame Pſalme, And ſeeing it is ſo that our integritie, lyeth in keeping of the Lawe of God, the which is not in our power, it followeth that of our ſelues wee cannot walke in our integritie. And therfore although it bee called ours, and that it is the way of iuſtice : yet neuertheleſſe let vs take heede to glorifie our ſelues in our owne way, as if of our ſelues wee did walke ſo : but let vs aske the guiding and gouernment of our God. Otherwiſe wee cannot walke according

Pſal,25.4
119.33.

to his commandements, as is ſhewed vs in many places by his promiſes, wherewith wee ſhoulde not haue to doe, if of our ſelues wee had the power to doe that which hee promiſeth. Wherfore alſo although it be ſaid, *that who ſo walketh in his integritie, is iuſt:* let vs not imagine that our integritie maketh vs iuſt. But when wee walke rightly and roundly, without diſſimulation or fraude in that which God hath taught vs by his worde, wee haue a certaine argument that wee are iuſt : for wee bring foorth the fruites therof, the which make vs not iuſt, but becauſe God iuſtifieth , and

1.Ioh.37.

ſanctifieth vs by his ſpirite, we bring foorth the fruits of iuſtice: and ſo walking in integritie wee haue witneſſe that we are iuſt. Alſo we are certaine of our election to eternal life : for them that he hath predeſtinated, he hath alſo called: & thẽ that he hath called, he hath

Rom.8.30.

alſo iuſtified: and them that hee hath iuſtified, hee hath alſo glorified. And ſo wee haue teſtimonie of being bleſſed, not onely for our ſelues, but alſo for our children after vs : as Solomon pronounceth ſaying,

And his children ſhalbe happy or bleſſed after him. Not that the father deſerueth it, nor yet the children, but it is by the meere mercy of GOD according to his promiſe. Wherefore wee ought to vnderſtande the promiſe that Solomon maketh here,

Gen.17.7
Exo.20.6
Rom.9.6.

according as the Apoſtle Saint Paule expoundeth it. All they which are borne after the fleſhe, of iuſt people, are not iuſt, nor bleſſed for the ſame : and contrariwiſe, they which proceede of the wicked, are not vnhappy therefore : as it is ſhewed to vs very well in Ezechiel, Chapter 18.

8 *A king which ſitteth in throne of iudgement, chaſeth away all euill with his looke.*

Kings,

Kinges, Princes, Magiſtrates, and Superiours of the earth are ſo much doted ouer their owne greatneſſe, and preheminence, that they thinke one ought to tremble vnder them, when in the meane time they paſſe their dayes in pleaſure, and make good cheere, ſleeping, and reſting at their eaſe, without taking care to miniſter iuſtice, and regarde to roote out the wicked reprochful, and inſolent. Whereby it commeth to paſſe that il deedes increaſe and indure, and it is an hard thing to remedie it: for this cauſe Solomon being willing to amende ſuch diſorder, and looſeneſſe, admoniſheth kings of their duetie, ſaying,

The king, &c. Hee wil firſt of al that Magiſtrates bee not as them, whome God complaineth of by his Prophet Eſay: but that they bee ſet in the throne, not of pride, pompe, and vaine magnificence, nor of oppreſſion, outrage, and violence (as the moſt parte of them which haue the title of adminiſtratours of iuſtice, come to poſſeſſe the ſeate, for to make their own profite by wrõging others) but that they be ſet in ſeate of iudgment, that is, in what part ſoeuer they bee, their affections and ſtudies tend, to do right to euery one, to puniſh the wicked, mainteine the good, and deliuer the feble and oppreſſed from the violence, tyranny, and crueltie of the wicked. Secondly, as God, (whoſe liefetenants they are) beholdeth with his eies al things: ſo he wil that kings haue eies, that is to ſay, care and diligence, to watch ouer them which are giuen them in charge, and of whome they haue the gouernment, to the ende they may baniſh and chace away al wickedneſſe, and that trueth, iuſtice, holineſſe, & innocency may raigne: and becauſe what heede or diligence ſoeuer kinges and princes vſe, yet they are neuer of themſelues ſufficient to chace away al euil: but they haue neede too haue honeſt mẽ to beare charge vnder them, as Iethro admoniſheth Moſes thereof: *Exo.18.14.* alſo king Ioſaphat conſtituted Iudges. *2.Chro.19.5* For this cauſe the kings eies may bee taken alſo for them which helpe him to adminiſter iuſtice. This while it is not meete to ſay that it is lawful, to referre him ſelfe to them wholy, without taking heede there to himſelf: for if he make no account to looke with his owne eies, and his officers doe any vniuſtice, the fault ſhal bee imputed to him. It is meete meete therefore that ſuperiours which appoint officers vnder them regarde neerely what men they bee that they appoint. For the reſt, although euery one ought to helpe his neighbour, and defend him, ſo much as is poſsible, from al oppreſsion, and violence, yet is it not lawful for particular perſons which are not in office, to place them ſelues vpon the throne of iudgement, for to chaſe away euil. Solomon ſheweth it wel, when hee attributeth this ſame to kinges. So doeth our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte when hee reprehendeth the Apoſtle Peter, for the cut eare. Matth. 26. 52.

9 *Who ſhall ſay, I haue cleanſed my hearte: I am cleane from my ſinne?*

Gen. 1. 27.
Eccle. 7. 30.

It is written that God created man to his owne image and likeneſſe: whereto Eccleſiaſtes hauing regarde, ſaith: That GOD hath made man iuſt and right, but by vnthankefulneſſe, and miſknowledge, by arrogancy and rebellion, he hath ſoone defaced and aboliſhed this image, and is fallen from his righteouſneſſe: as is ſeene in Gen. 3. and Eccleſiaſtes ſignifieth it, when in this place afore alleadged, hee ſayeth that men haue ſought out many inuentions. Now man by his fal is ſomuch corrupted and made ſeruant to ſinne and death, that all his poſterity is infected therewith. Inſomuch that none is exempt from ſinne, but all are ſo hardly bound therto that they cannot free themſelues. And this is not in the outwarde partes onely that hee is ſuche a one, but principally in the inwarde partes, which ſoyle, and corrupt the other members. And therefore Solomon demandeth not, who hath waſhed his handes or feete? or, who hath cleanſed his body? for the outwarde waſhinges or bodily purginges, although ordeined in the lawe, ſerued to no ende, but rather were hurtful, but that they were inſtruments to conduct the perſon to ſearch his ſpirituall purgation in the blood of Ieſus Chriſt, and to knowe that he had neede to bee clenſed inwardely, but he aſketh:

Who will ſay, I haue purged my hearte, I am cleane from my ſinne?

Wherein weee ought to learne that the filth and infection which ſoileth and corrupteth the perſon,is of the heart,and that the prrincipal care that wee ought to haue of our ſelues,is that wee be pure and neate in our heartes and conſciences,which thing we cannot attaine to by faith and repentance. Let vs beware of reſembling the Scribes and Phariſees,to whome Ieſus Chriſt obiecteth their hypocriſie . Neuertheleſſe the principal meaning of Solomon (when hee maketh ſuch interrogation)is to ſhew vs,that man, be hee neuer ſo iuſt and holy,ought not,nor cannot truely vaunt him ſelfe,that hee is pure and cleane from ſinne. This hath been ſhewed by the figures and ſhadowes of the lawe, when it behooued vs ſo oft to renewe the ſacrifices,oblations,and waſhings : and before Solomon,Dauid wel ſhewed it,when hee was ſo heedeful, to aske ſtil pardon for his ſinnes. It behoooueth vs alſo to learne ſo of our Sauiour, when hee wil, that one pray without ceaſe, and hee teacheth vs to demaund pardon for our ſinnes:And when he ſheweth by the ſimilitude of the Phariſee, & the Scribe,that man ought not to truſt in him ſelfe.It is meete we learne it alſo of Saint Iohn. Knowe wee therefore, that wee ought not to vaunt of our cleanneſſe, but in al humilitie and miſtruſt of our ſelues, ſay with Eſay, We are al as filth and doung,and al our righteouſnes is,as a ſpotted peece of cloth,&c. And therefore wee ſhoulde pray with the ſame Prophet, Nowe goe too Lorde, thou art our Father, we are the claye, and thou art hee which formeſt vs, and we are al the workes of thy handes. Lord be not ſo angrie againſt vs,neither remember our iniquities any more. And with Dauid. Lorde enter not into iudgement with thy ſeruant, &c. And that wee perceiue clearelie (as Saint Paule did) that there is no goodneſſe in vs. Thus dooing wee ſhal not proudly vaunt our ſelues to haue purged our heartes, but wee ſhalbee humbled, and then GOD will exalt vs.

Mat.23.25.

1.Kin.8.46.
Eccle.7.21.
Pſa.19.13
14.& 25.6.7
11.& 51.3.
4.5
Luk.18.1.
Mat.6.12.
Luk.18.9.
1.Ioh.1.8.9.
10.
Eſai.64.6.8.
Pſa.143.2.
Rom 7.

10 *Twoo manner of weighies,or twoo manner of meaſures, both theſe are abhomination vnto the Lorde.*

When Marchants which ſeeke to enrich themſelues by the hurt of others, vſe wicked and vnlawful ſetches which they cal ſubtiltie, to the end to diſguiſe the commodie and ſet it foorth to make it appeare better then it is, or of more meaſure and weight, or ſelling it dearer to the ſimple, then to the ſkilful, they thinke not that God regardeth it, much leſſe that hee taketh ill the iniquitie which they commit in deceauing their neighbours, ſelling them as deere as they can, either with diſceite, or with leſſe weight or meaſure then is lawful: they perſwade them ſelues that God hath other thinges to doe, then to to ſettle themſelfe to ſee if there be true dealing amongeſt merchantes or no, for they thinke, that it is but aduenture or fortune, or ſuttletie, or diligence, which is the cauſe of making a man riche. This while, although in crauing their trade of fraude, and trumperie, of theft and robberie, they acknowledge not God as they ought to doe: neuertheles they are greatly to blame becauſe they doe againſt their owne conſciences. For they woulde be loath to haue one vſe them ſo, and woulde ſoone condemne as wicked, al ſuche as vſe ſuche traffickes, were it not that they were of the ſame trade, and ſtudie to get profite thereby. But when God hath a care ouer hearbes, and litle birdes, yea, ouer the heares of our heades, which wee eſteeme no great matter, it is good to vnderſtande that hee regardeth wel howe men vſe vs, and taketh it not in good parte, if one beguile vs, or pil and powle vs: but hath in hate and abhomination, them which vſe fraude and diſceite. Solomon ſheweth it, ſaying,

Mat.9.26. & 10.29.

Twoo manner of weights, &c. Heere wee ſee howe for the iniquitie of the diſceitful, things without ſenſe, & dead, which can do neither good nor harme, are abhominable before God, much more they which ſo abuſe them. Which thing Solomon alſo wil that we ſhould vnderſtande by this preſent ſentence. Alſo it is good reaſon, that ſuch diſceiuers be abhorred of the Lord. For, aſmuch as in them lyeth they falſifie them: for weights, and meaſures are the woorke of the Lorde. There is none but hee feeleth himſelfe greatly offended, if one ſeeke to make falſe his worke: wee ought not therefore to maruel if God abhorre them that ſell by falſe waight and meaſure, or which haue one weight to buy by, & another to ſell by. This falſhood, & diuerſitie is marked, or noted, when Solomon doubleth

Pro.16.11.

the words, ſaying, *Two maner of weights, & two maner of meaſures*: which is to ſay, the great, to buye by; and the litle, to ſel by. And they that haue a double meaſure of corne, the great to buy by, and the litle to ſel by, are al abhominable before God. Although we had but a natural light which taught vs to doe to our neighbours, as wee would they ſhould doe vnto vs, yet wee ought to be iuſt in weight and meaſure: And by farre more reaſon, when God commandeth it.

11 The childe alſo ſhal be knowne by his conuerſation, whether his workes be pure and right.

Many thinke that one ought to let children doe according to their owne phanſie, not vexing them, nor conſtreining them at al to keepe them ſelues vpright, and vſe honeſt dealings, & good maners, nor to accuſtome their wittes to practiſe things pure & right, to exerciſe their tongues and handes therein, and others members as neede and oportunitie require. At leaſtwiſe, there are many fathers and mothers, there are many Superiours and Gouernours, which haue no care to holde youth vnder in feare, and refourme their inſolencie and diſſolution. Whereof it commeth, that when children are more in age, they are of wilde and wandering wittes, of peruerſe and corrupted willes and affections, and applie not their members but to vanitie and follie, to ſhame, and filthines, to works wicked and abhominable. And when they are come to perfect mans age, according to the time of life, they neither can nor wil finde in their heartes to change, but if they could they would by their willes waxe far woorſe: as one may ſee by experience, when they prouoke young folkes to giue them ſelues to paſtime, with al inſolencie, and looſenes of life, and that they deſire alſo to be young againe, to accompliſhe the deſires of the fleſhe, in their concupiſcences. But becauſe wee ought to couet that our children ſhoulde become honeſt men, and reioyce to ſee them in good company, whereby wee may iudge, and hope, that in time to come, they wil gouerne themſelues honeſtly in al pureneſſe, and vprightneſſe, it is not meete that wee be of this fooliſhe opinion, or that wee folowe this negligence. But that wee be heedful, and diligent, to guide and keepe youth which is

comcõmitted to our charge, bringing thẽ vp in the feare & knowledge of the Lorde, to the ende, that as muche as in vs lyeth, wee teache our children and ſeruants good and honeſt maners, and that we accuſtome them in the ſame: inſomuche that wee ſeeke to bring to paſſe that they giue them ſelues thertoo, and take pleaſure therein, and applye al their whole ſtudies thervppon: if wee can gaine thus muche of our young folkes, wee haue good hope that in tyme to come they wil walke vprightly, and giue them ſelues to cleane and pure woorkes. Solomon affirmeth and pronounceth it, ſaying, *The childe alſo ſhalbe knowne, &c.* Let vs not thinke that he ſpeaketh according to the maner and opinion of wiſe worldlinges, who iudge of children in the time to come, according as they ſee them enclined of them ſelues, without the worde of the Lorde. For ſuch an inclination be it neuer ſo faire, is but filth, vanitie, hypocriſie, and wickedneſſe. But hee wil that by the worde of God, wee gouerne young age, and that wee vſe them to honeſt and religious conuerſation. It is verie neceſſarie to doe ſo: for this worde is the rule of al ages, Dauid ſheweth it wel. And Saint Paule praiſeth Timothie, in that euen from his youth hee hath had knowledge in holie letters.

Deut.4.9. 10.& 6.6. 7.& 11.18. 19.
Pſal.34.12.
2.Tim.3.15.

12 *The Lorde hath made both theſe twoo: to wit, the eare, to heare, and the eye, to ſee.*

The worlde is giuen to ſpeake foule and filthie, iniurious and yl wordes, in diuers ſortes: To doe alſo deteſtable, hurtful, vilainous and infamous woorkes. And although the conſcience of many, yea, of al, almoſt reprooue them, yea make them to tremble, wil they, nil they, neuertheles they ſtriue to perſuade them ſelues that God heareth not their ſpeeches, nor ſeeth not their doings, But if a workeman which hath made a worke, doe know the ſame in al partes, and wotteth wel to what vſe his worke is moſt proper: By a farre more reaſon, it is meete we doe this honour to our Lord God, and Creator, to acknowledge and confeſſe, that there is, neither wordes nor woorkes in the worlde which hee heareth not, or

Pſal.59.7. & 64.6.

ſeeth not,bee they neuer ſo hid,and ſecret.Solomon ſheweth it wel when he ſaith,

The Lorde hath made both theſe twoo. &c, Hee nameth but two for briefneſſe ſake.But that which hee let vs vnderſtande, that there is no parte or member of man which hee hath not made,and which hee hath not himſelfe placed vppon the body as ſeemed him good.Then if it bee ſo(as of force wee muſt beleeue it is ſo) it followeth that there is neither breath nor motion in any part of mans body,but God ſeeth it and vnderſtandeth it. And therefore it is by good right, that the Pſalmiſt complaineth of the wicked which vſe violence, and perſwade themſelues that God neither heareth nor ſeeth any thing.Alſo becauſe they play ſo with God, hee pronounceth them accurſed by his Prophete Eſay. Let vs learne therefore heere to apply al our ſenſes to heare,ſay, and doe, that which God hath ordeined by his woorde, without deſpyſing or mockery at all, knowing that hee which hath made vs,is alwaies preſent with vs. And if wee abuſe our members,which ought to bee the temples of the holy Ghoſt,let vs knowe that God wil cal vs to accompt thereof, which wee ſhal not abſolutely performe, and therfore hee wil deſtroy vs,yea without any difficultie,ad Dauid ſignifieth wel when he ſaith,But thou Lorde wilt haue them in deriſion, and wilt laugh al the heathen to ſcorne.

Iob.10.8.
Pſa.139.5.
1.Cor.12.18
Pſa.94.6.7.
Eſa.29.15.
Pſa.139.
Pſa,59.9.

Wee merite and deſerue well then to bee derided,deſpyſed, and reiected of our God,if wee abuſe our members.For it is an infallible argument that the inwarde parte is infected,and corrupted, when the outwarde hath his mouings. And thus wee are wholy and intyrelie infected and filthy, and by conſequent abhominable before our God,whoſe handywoorkes wee abuſe wickedly. Let vs learne moreouer that if there bee any likelyhood of goodneſſe in our members, not to forget our ſelues nor to bee puft vpp with pryde, to deſpyſe them which ſeeme not too bee ſo prompt and ready as wee thinke our ſelues to bee. But in all humilitie and modeſtie acknowledge GOD, who hath giuen vs the vertue that is in our members, to the ende wee employ it to his glorie and the profite of our neighbours. Otherwyſe wee are vnthankeful and proude: for without the ayde of

him which hath giuẽ vs eares & eyes, we can neyther heare nor ſee.
Nom.22.23 Balaams Aſſe ſaw the Angel. The eies of the two that went to Emaus
Luke.24.16 were cloſed. For the reſt, let vs note that if of our ſelues wee haue not the outward ſenſes, nor the motions thereof, then of our ſelues we cannot haue that which is more excellent, as our ſpirites, and the motions of them which proceede of the regeneration of the holy Ghoſt to conduct vs in al holineſſe, and innocencie. For he that cãnot do the litle, cannot doe the much: knowe we therefore that our ſpirits cannot rightly contemplate nor vnderſtande but that God is their helper. Alſo although wee take paine to giue counſel, and to gouerne, yet our labour is in vaine, if God doe not gouerne it. The common ſorte heare and obay their ſuperiours, if GOD giue them good vnderſtanding and tractable heartes. Princes ſee cleerely, and are wiſe, and giue good order, and foreſee well for the common wealth, if they bee ayded by GOD. This may ſomewhat
Pſal.33.13. be vnderſtoode by the Pſalmiſt, wherefore we haue to followe the
Iames.1.5. counſell of S.Iames. That if any of you haue lacke of vnderſtanding, let him demande it of God, who giueth it to al men ſimply, and it ſhalbe giuen him, &c.

13 *Loue not ſleepe, leſt thou come into pouertie: but open thyne eyes that thou maiſt haue bread ynough.*

There is no man which in his owne phanſie is deſirous of pouertie: Neuertheleſſe many ſommon it with great haſt not mouing
Prou.10.11. a foote but reſting at their eaſe, as the ſlouthful doe. And Solomon hath ſomewhat touched it: but he wil not that we reſẽble ſuch ſluggards, as he declareth vnto vs, ſaying, *Loue not ſleepe.&c.* Hee forbiddeth not one to take his reſt, and ſleepe, for it is a thing natural to men, which proceedeth not of ſinne. For if ſleeping had proceeded of ſinne, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt had not ſlept as hee did. And
Gen.2.21. men of force muſt ſleepe, as experience ſheweth vs. For without ſleepe they coulde not performe their buſineſſe. But it is meete that
Mat.8.24. ſleepe bee moderate, and temperate and that it be taken at conuenient houres. That we reſemble not them, which are not content to ſleepe a nights, but alſo ſpend therein the moſt part of the day: Nor they which take their pleaſure, to play a nights, & then make the day their night, lying, and ſleeping til breakefaſt or dinner bee ready.

Solomon forbiddeth vs the loue of ſleepe, after the maner of ſuch folkes, to the ende it happen not, that pouertie aſſaile vs: not that hee meaneth, that the thing which ought principally to keepe vs from the loue of ſleepe, is the feare of pouertie: but hee hath regarde to that which wee feare naturally aboue al thinges, excepte death, and threateneth the ſlouthful with that, which they feare wil betide them. And after this threatening, hee admoniſheth vs to wakefulnes, when hee ſaith, *Open thy eyes, &c.* not to playes, and paſtimes, and other diſſolutions and inſolencies, as there are many who are too muche wakeful about the ſame, but hee admoniſheth vs to watche about our buiſineſſe which is committed vs to doe, as hee ſheweth by the promiſe which hee addeth, ſaying, *That thou maieſt haue bread enough,* for hee ſaieth, Hee that laboureth the earth, ſhalbe ſatisfied with bread. In eche labour is abundance, the ſoule of the diligent ſhalbe ſatisfied. Pro.12.11. & 14.23. & 13.4.

14. *It is naught, it is naught, ſaieth hee that buyeth: but withdrawing him ſelfe aſide, he boaſteth of his bargaine.*

As there are wicked ſellers which diſguiſe their wares, extolling it, and praiſing it, and ſetting it out farre more then they ought, by lying and ſwearing, or rather forſwearing, to the ende to ſel it for the moſt that they can: and ſel it with leſſe meaſure or leſſe weight, or in ſome other maner of way, vnlawful: So are there buiers which are litle better, for they wil doe nothing but watche how they may deceiue the ſellers, and chiefly when they thinke that they are not ſkilful and wylie, but proceed in ſimplicitie, or vnderſtand not what the ware is woorth, or els are ſo needie, that they are conſtrayned to ſel that which they haue, at a ſmal price: then the ſuttle and craftie buyers, knowe howe to diſprayſe the ſame, ſaying, that they knowe where is as good, and at a better price, or varie ſo muche, that they make them forget the number, or els wil haue more weight, or meaſure, then it behoooueth them, or wil giue ſome money in hande, and the reſt take at credite, neuer to paye. The experience thereof is but too manifeſt. Neuertheles, Solomon letteth not to ſhewe it vs, when he ſaieth, *It is naught, it is naught, ſaieth hee, that buieth.* Hee ſpeaketh ſo, to the ende, to ſhewe buiers, which wil haue things almoſt for nothing, that the holie Ghoſt knoweth wel their malice, and that againſt their conſciences they diſpraiſe in wordes, that which they woulde buye, and which they knowe to be of a good value, for after that they haue obtained it at a lowe price, they ſcoffe and ieſt at the ſeller behinde his backe, and glorifie them ſelues in the deceite they haue wrought. Solomon ſpeaketh ſo, when he ſayeth, But withdrawing him ſelfe aſide, hee boaſteth of his bargaine. Some ſay, Naught, naught, ſayeth he, that poſſeſſeth: but when the thing goeth away, then hee praiſeth it. Wherein they vnderſtand, that Solomon blameth thoſe which are not content with their eſtate and condition, and neuer ſay wel thereof: but when they are falne into a woorſe, then they acknowledge and confeſſe that they were wel. Then according to this ſeconde ſenſe, let vs learne to content our ſelues with our calling, although it be poore, and labourſome, knowing that wee haue nothing, be it good or euil, but it commeth by the wil of God our father, to whome wee owe al obedience. and to take al in good parte at his handes, to prayſe it, and giue him thankes for it. For in what ſort ſoeuer hee afflict vs, he neuer depriueth vs of thoſe thinges which hee knoweth are needefull for vs.

15 *There is golde and a multitude of ſtones: but the lippes of knowledge are a precious iewel.*

The fleſhly and worldly men, which wil bee fine and gaie in their bodies, houſes, and alſo in their riches and treaſures, ſeeke to decke them ſelues with goldringes, fayre and riche Pearles, and ſtones verie precious, Chaines of golde, and other ornamentes about their garmentes: And as farre foorth as they can, they garniſh their houſes with veſſels of golde and ſiluer, to the ende, that all ſhine with them, and men haue them in admiration: for ſuche ſightes do dimme the eyes of the poore which are ſimple, & would gladly bee of power to appeare like vnto them. So alſo they ſeeke to hoarde vp in their treaſuries, great ſommes of gold and money.

And when they are ſo enriched, they pleaſe them ſelues greatly, as being poſſeſſours of the moſt precious thinges of the worlde. And indeede there is no worldly thing more precious than golde and pearle. Alſo the holie Scripture (to applye it ſelfe to our rudeneſſe) beeing willing to ſhew vs the excellencie of the worde of God, and howe wee ought greatly to eſteeme it, compareth it to gold, ſiluer, and precious ſtones. It is onely becauſe of our rudeneſſe, that ſuch a compariſon is made. For the woorde of God ſurmounteth infinitely, and incomprehenſibly al riches of the worlde. And therefore, if wee eſteeme and praiſe worldly thinges that are precious, it behoooueth vs farre more to be affectioned to the worde, and ſay with a pure, and cleane heart, The iudgementes of the Lorde are more to bee deſired than golde, and more ſweete than honie, &c. The doctrine of thy mouth is better vnto mee then a thouſande peeces of golde, or ſiluer. I haue loued thy commandements more then gold or Iewels. Solomon hath ſhewed vs heeretofore, that wee ought to be ſo affectioned to this worde. Hee ſheweth it vs preſently, when he ſaith,

Pſ. 12.7. & 18.31.
Mat. 13.44.
Pſa. 19.10. 11. & 119. 72.127.
Pro. 3.13.

There is golde, &c. Wee ought to eſteeme nothing more precious then the worde of trueth, which is ſpoken vnto vs by the lippes of the Miniſters of the Lorde. That worde is the knowledge which maketh their lippes precious. And if the worldly ſort do take pleaſure, and delight their eyes when they ſee fayre Iewels of gold, and precious ſtones, by a farre more reaſon, wee ought to bee attentiue to the lippes of knowledge, to receiue it, not as the ſeede which falleth by the high way, or on rockie grounde, or amongeſt thornes, to receiue thereby ſome tranſitorie or temporal taſt: but as the good earth doeth which maketh the ſeede to flouriſhe: ſo it behoooueth vs to receiue this knowledge in heart pure and neate, thereby to reioyce and feede our ſoules. Not as they which feede onely their eyes, when they beholde any fayre Iewel, and afterwarde haue no fruition thereof. But if wee receiue the word with a good hearte, it wil remayne with vs for euer, and wil neuer departe from vs: for it is not like fraile and tranſitorie things, but endureth and abideth for euer.

Eſai.40.6.7.8. And therefore Saint Peter counſelleth vs to loue one an other in heart purely, being regenerate not of corruptible ſeede, but incor- *1.Pet.1.23.* ruptible, to wit, the worde of God, liuing, and enduring for euer. If wee deſire to come to this, let vs folowe the counſel that Solo- *Pro.14.7.* mon giueth vs. Get thee (ſaieth hee) from a fooliſhe man, &c. Thus doing, we ſhal not onely haue pleaſure to heare the lippes of knowledge, but alſo our heartes ſhalbe ſo repleniſhed with ſcience, that of the abundance thereof, our lippes ſhalbe opened, and ſpeake to the praiſe of God, and the edification of our neighbours, after the counſel of Saint Paul. Ephe.5.ver.19.20.

19 *Take his garment that is ſuretie for a ſtranger, and take a pledge of him for the vnknowne ſake.*

The Lorde God in his lawe permitteth, that one take a pledge of him to whome hee hath lent any thing, but hee wil that incon- *Mat.5.42. Luk.6.30.35.* tinent the pledge bee giuen againe to the poore, and that rather one endure ſome loſſe, then to bee vnkinde and cruel towarde the indigent, and needie, folowing that which Ieſus Chriſt hath taught vs. Solomon folowing the lawe, wil that wee take heede of looſing our goods which we lende, and for the ſuretie thereof, to take a pledge, for hee ſayeth,

Take his garment, &c. And therefore he ſpeaketh not of taking a pledge betweene brother and brother, that is to ſay, of him that is of the ſame nation, and religion with him that lendeth, and taketh pledge, as there is expreſſe mention made therof in the law: for it ſaith not, when thou lendeſt to whoſoeuer, but, to thy neighbour, to wit, hee that is a Iewe by nation and religion as thy ſelfe, but hee ſpeaketh of people which knowe not one an other, nor knowe not the faculties, and neede the one of the other, as may bee ſeene by that, where hee ſaieth, *A ſtranger:* but for expoſition he ſaieth alſo, *The vnknowne.* For this cauſe hee maketh no mention of reſtoring the gage againe ſtraight way. Neuertheles, let vs not thinke, that hee wil permit more or greater rigour then God doeth in his in his lawe. For (as it hath beene touched) The lawe ſpeaketh of them which are of the ſame nation and religion, and which knowe one an other, and howe eche thing ſtandeth amongſt one an other. And Solomon ſpeaketh of the vnknowne, and willeth that one bee careful to take good aſſurance, for one knoweth not whether they be men of a good conſcience, and conuerſation, or prodigal, and exceſſiue in expences, as dicers, gluttons, drunkardes, and whoremaiſters. In whoſe handes it is not good to truſt ones goods: but if hee doe, to take a ſure pledge for ſafegarde: for goods are committed to vs, not to let them goe at randon, but to diſpende reaſonably, and helpe our neighbours therewith, which are poore and indigent. Meane while, let vs eſteeme none as ſtrangers, but thoſe which are of a diſſolute life. For Ieſus Chriſt hath vnited vs all. *Ioh.10.16. Ephe.2.14.*

17 *A man thinketh the bread ſweet that is gotten with deceite: but afterwardes his mouth ſhalbe filled with grauel.*

Wee ought to knowe by that which is commanded vs in the lawe, and by the great number of aduertiſementes which are made vs in diuers places of the Scripture, that God loueth trueth, iuſtice, innocencie, loyaltie, and humanitie, and wil that wee folow theſe vertues: where contrariwiſe, hee hateth lying, iniquitie, falſe dealing, deceite and crueltie, and al wicked traffickes, deceites, and diſguiſements, which hee wil in no caſe that wee vſe. Then if wee were the ſeruantes of God, fearing him as wee ought: if we woulde frankly obeye our heauenly Father, as good children, wee ſhoulde thinke his commaundementes good, and take great pleaſure, to folowe and keepe them, being verie loath and ſorie to faile in any one pointe of them. But wee are of ſo corrupt, and wicked a nature, that wee wil not hearken to our God and Father, but thinke that too ſharpe and rigorous, which hee commaundeth. It ſeemeth vs, that hee is too ſeuere and rigorous, and that wee ſhoulde neuer haue good daye, if wee ſhoulde yeelde our ſelues ſubiecte to his wil. For this cauſe, turning backe, and wholy rebolting from him, reiecting his yoke, wee giue our ſelues to the deuil, and wil accompliſhe his deſires as if hee were our good father, Ioh.8.44. and wee his children altogether at his commandement: for as hee is a lyer, and father of al lyes, and as hee hath beene an homicide from the beginning, and hath not dwelled in trueth, nor trueth in him: ſo we loue lying & crueltie, and take delight to liue by fraude and deceit, exaction and oppreſſion. Solomon ſignifieth this in one worde, when hee ſaieth,

Bread that is gotten with deceit, &c. Hee ſaieth not abſolutely, that ſuche bread is ſweete, but hee ſaieth, *That a man thinketh it ſweete*, wherein hee taxeth greatly the peruerſitie, malice, inhumanitie, and crueltie of man, in that hee hath pleaſure and delight to liue by a wrongful, violent, & outragious meanes, the which bringeth to his neighbour woe and griefe: and is to him verie bitter: for a man can not eate the bread of deceit, but hee muſt make them eate the fruites of anguiſhe, whome he deceiueth, pilleth, and oppreſſeth. So Merchantes and worldly Artificers, which ſet not before their eyes, nor make no account to loue their neighbours, as muche as in them lyeth, make them eate a ſharpe and ſowre bread, whome they deceiue. So doe al Princes, Magiſtrates, and Iudges which loue bribes, and giftes, and which haue reſpecte of perſons: but aboue al the Monkes of the Papacie (who vnder ſhadowe of their gaie diuine ſeruice, or rather diabolical, get to them ſelues the ſubſtance of the ſimple, which beleeue in their lying) make folkes eate a bread ſo bitter, that the ſoules are loſt and deſtroyed for euer after it. The bread therefore of falſhood, is not ſweete abſolutely: becauſe it endomageth them of whome it is taken. So doth it alſo to them that eate it: for their fraudes and theftes, their exactions, and oppreſſions, their inhumanities, and violences, (which are the bread of falſhood or deceit, becauſe they poſſeſſe not iuſtly, the goods which they haue heaped together by ſuche iniquitie, neither can they vſe them lawfully) are finally greeuous and noyſome to them, as Solomon pronounceth it, ſaying,

But afterwardes his mouth ſhalbe filled with grauel. Hee vſeth heere a ſimilitude of corne, which hath beene threſhed on a duſtie flore, or grounde, immediately after the Mill hath bene picked. Of ſuche corne one may make fayre breade, but they that ſhal eate of it, ſhalbee vexed at the grauel which they ſhall finde betweene their teeth, for it hath no ſauour, but rather hurteth the teeth, when it comes betweene them. So the breade of deceite wil bring in the ende great domage to them which eate it. For through the ſame they ſhalbee caſt into vtter darkeneſſe, where ſhalbe weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.

18 *Confirme thy thoughts by counſel: and ſo make warre with wiſedome.*

The Princes of this worlde haue great thoughtes, and diuers, and knowe not for the moſt parte howe to atchiue them. They eſteeme them ſelues ſo great and puiſant that they dote ouer their owne hautineſſe and power, and thinke verily that none ſhoulde reſiſt them, or at leaſtwiſe if they doe, to bee able too beare off the blowes, and eaſily become conquerours. But experiẽce hath ſhewed it in Pharao, and Sennacherib, and many others, and alſo ſheweth it nowe in our time, that the great men of this worlde are often fruſtrate of their attemptes: which ought to be a great ſhame and griefe to them which eſteeme of them ſelues ſo.

Nowe to the ende that faythful and Chriſtian Princes come not to ſuch confuſion, Solomon warneth them ſaying.

Confirme thy thoughts by counſel: and ſo make warre with wiſedome.

Wherein he aſſenteth ſomewhat, that kings & Princes ſhoulde thinke on that which they haue to doe, and chiefly when there is queſtion of warre. For it is not meete then that they be aſleepe. But he wil not that they proceed in the execution of their thoughts, according to their phantaſies, & opinions. For moſt cõmonly by their ambition & diſordinate deſire of raigne & bearing rule, they wil put oftentimes, both them and their ſubiectes in greate danger.

And therfore he ſayth not, Confirme thee in thine own thoughtes of thy ſelfe, but, *by counſel*. And that is it which wee haue alreadie alledged heeretofore in ſome places, That Kinges and Princes are not ſufficient of them ſelues alone to rule and gouerne, but they ſhoulde haue about them, men of good counſel and aduiſe. If they folowe the admonition of Solomon, and that warre be moued againſt them, it ſhal be eaſie for them to reſiſt it: as Solomon promiſeth, ſaying, *And ſo make warre with wiſedome*. For we ought to knowe that Solomon admoniſheth not Princes, but becauſe hee knoweth that the wil of God is ſuche, as importeth promiſe. And that which is alſo done truely by wiſedome, is neuer vndone, but hath yſſue, and durance. Let vs vnderſtande alſo, that hee commandeth not to make warre, but hee ſheweth that for the good guiding of the ſame, it behoooueth to proceede by wiſedome not humane, but diuine, which is ſo ſay, that one enterpriſe no warre, but firſt hee knoweth that God appointeth it: wherevppon enſueth, that it is not lawful for kings & princes, to make warre, to enlarge their limites, and make themſelues great earthlings, but for too defende the countrie which GOD hath committed them in charge.

Notwithſtanding ſome wil ſay, that the children of Iſrael haue aſſayled many people, and deſtroyed them by warre. But for anſwere one may ſay againe, that one particular feat which God commandeth for a time, ought not to be turned in conſequence, to bee made laweful for euery man. One may ſay moreouer, that that which hath happened to the children of Iſrael, hath beene done in figure of things to come, to wit, to inſtruct vs that wee haue no acquaintance with the enemies of God, which are chiefly the Diuel, and our owne ſinnes.

19 *Hee that reuealeth ſecrete counſel, turneth to a backebyter: wherefore meddle not with him that offendeth with his lips.*

Solomon accuſeth him of backbiting, whome his neighbour hath made priuie of ſome of his ſecrete imperfections, to diſcharge his heart, and be vnloaded thereof, and to haue ſome reſt in his ſpirite: when incontinently, hee publiſheth that which he hath heard or ſeenē in ſecrete, to the ende to be welcome amongſt the enemies of him which hath bewrayed him ſelfe, or amongſt them which are couetous to heare euil ſpeeches of others. And in this wiſe, hee ſtriueth to hurt his neighbour, either in his name, or in his goods, or els in his perſon. Solomon doeth ſo here, ſaying, *He that reuealeth ſecrete counſel, turneth to a backbiter.* And this is, becauſe the world is greatly repleniſhed with reporters of things which profit nothing, neither to thē which tel them, nor to them which heare them. And ſo of flatterers which ſeeke to be welcome vnto them, which delight to heare one praiſe & extol them, and diſpraiſe others. Likewiſe of backbiters, which ſeeke the decaye of their neighbours, and procure it in lying, and ſpeaking falſe witneſſe againſt them. It is alſo, becauſe that of our corrupt nature, wee are enclined to couet glorie and praiſe, and thinke that we ſhould be the rather praiſed, if wee ſpeake yl of our neighbours. And if we be not often aduertized of our duetie, we forget our ſelues, and applye our tongues (headlong) vnto euil ſpeaking. And becauſe wee are neuer ſo wel reformed, but ſtil our nature is inclined, to bee ſoone agayne corrupted and peruerted, and becauſe euil woordes corrupt good manners, Solomon wil in no caſe, that we conſpire with the backbiters, nor that wee be familiarly conuerſant with them, nor that he conſent to them any way. He forbiddeth vs this, when he ſaieth, Pro.11.13.

Wherefore meddle not with him, &c. It is verie neceſſarie that wee vnderſtande this ſame, according as it hath bene expounded. For as long as wee be in this world, it muſt needes be that darnel muſt growe amongſt the Wheate, but when God hath giuen vs the grace to be Wheate, let vs take heede that wee turne not into darnel. Let vs walke therefore in feare and trembling, and take no pleaſure at al to be amongſt backbiters, *which offende with their lippes*, that is, which ſpeake againſt their conſciences, and againſt that which they knowe to be good and right, and forſake the word of trueth, giuing them ſelues to lying. Then if it wil doe vs hurt, to be amongeſt ſuche people, muche more ought wee to feare, to agree with them, either in ſpeaking or hearing euil. And wee ought to knowe that when our hearing and ſpeeche are corrupted, the reſt is woorth nothing, neither within nor without.

20 *The lampe of him that curſeth his father or mother, ſhal be put out in the depth of darkeneſſe.*

After that God had commanded vs to honour father and mother, hee adioyneth a promiſe of long life theretoo, which is ſingular and ſpecial to this commaundement. And therefore Saint Paule ſayeth, That this is the firſt commaundement of promiſe, and by this promiſe, hee giueth hope of felicitie and proſperitie, to children which wil be obedient to their fathers, & honour them. Contrariwiſe, hee wil that thoſe children which in ſteede of honouring father and mother, doe vexe them by diſobedience and curſes, ſhal be put to death, as hath bene alledged heeretofore. Then ſeeing hee deemeth not ſuche children woorthie of the life preſent, it foloweth, that they ſhalbe depriued of the heauenly light, and ſent into vttermoſt darkeneſſe. Solomon ſignifieth this, ſaying, Eph.6.2

The lampe of him, &c. This maketh not, that wicked and rebellious children ſhal haue any lampe of true ioye, and proſperitie, but onely that which they thinke they haue: which as is ſaide) *ſhalbe put out in the depth of darkeneſſe.* For they ſhalbee in ſo great payne, and anguiſh ſo ſharp, & torments ſo troubleſome, that of the proſperitie which they thought to haue, there ſhal remaine no whit, neither ſhal there bee remembrance of it any more. The paines that they ſhal ſuffer, ſhal ſurmount, al that which hath gone before, as contrariwiſe, the ioye that the obedient children ſhal haue of the heauenly proſperitie, ſhal be ſo great, that if in this life they haue ſuffered payne, grieſe, and teares, they ſhalbe al defaced, and blotted out of remembrance.

Wee vnderſtande therefore by the *Lampe*, which is cleare and bright, ioye and proſperitie: And by the *darkeneſſe*, ſorow, ſadneſſe,

neſſe, yll lucke, and miſerie, according as the Scripture ſpeaketh oftentimes of light and darkeneſſe, ſhadowe and obſcuritie. And chiefly in Iob, in the Pſalmes and Prophetes. But becauſe light ſignifieth alſo knowledge, and darkeneſſe ignoraunce: some ſay, that Solomon meaneth heere, that rebellious and diſobedient children ſhalbe puniſhed with great ignorance: whereof enſueth great decaie. For it muſt needes be, that thoſe which can not guide them ſelues by the wordes of the Lorde, muſt periſhe. And ſo in what ſenſe ſoeuer wee take the lampe, and darkeneſſe, let vs know that Solomon pronounceth for wicked children, euerlaſting perdition.

1.Kin.11.& 15.4. 2.Chr.21.7.

Moreouer, becauſe in the Scriptures a Lampe is taken for poſteritie. One might ſay, that Solomon threatneth vnruly children, that their offspring ſhalbee of none indurance, and the memorie thereof ſoone aboliſhed, or that they ſhal haue no yſſue: as is ſeene to come to paſſe in many obſtinate children, who becauſe they haue not had their parentes in honour as they ought: God hath depriued them of iſſue, and permitted not that they ſhould enioy that honourable title of father. Whereof alſo enſueth, that hee diſaloweth them for his children, and ſo conſequently, they are the children of the Deuil. And therefore in which of the three ſenſes ſoeuer wee take this ſentence, let vs note, that Solomon foretelleth deſtruction to wicked children.

21 *The heritage that is gotten in haſte, ſhal not be bleſſed in the ende.*

It is a harde thing for a ſenſual man to endure pouertie, and therefore eche one flyeth it as muche as hee can, and foloweth the meanes which hee thinketh wil make him riche. And heereby, ſome haſte to get a great heape of golde and ſiluer; other, marchandiſe; and others, houſes and landes. They thinke that when they haue beene quicke at the beginning, and made haſte too make them ſelues riche, then they ſhal neuer haue pouertie, but their goods will encreaſe and multiplie, and they ſhall growe euerie day richer and richer. Nowe becauſe they which ſtriue to enriche them ſelues in haſte, proceede therein with an euil conſcience (as they them ſelues wel knowe: for they would not that one ſhoulde proceed with them, as they doe with others: and ſo Saint Paule ſheweth vs their euil conſcience:) for this cauſe they are at laſt fruſtrate of their attempts, and their goods decaie at the twinkling of an eye, and vaniſhe away, ſo that they fal into great pouertie, as many feele the proofe thereof. And Solomon ſpeaketh it, ſaying, *The heritage that is gotten in haſt, &c.* Whereypon enſueth, that man enricheth not him ſelfe, in haſting after the goods of this worlde, ſeeing that the heritage ſo gotten, is not bleſſed: for the bleſſing of the Lorde maketh riche. Which thing Abraham and other holie fathers, which were not couetous, haue prooued, as the ſcripture witneſſeth, ſaying: that God hath bleſſed them, and multiplied them greatly. On the other ſide, Achab and Iezabel, were couetous of Naboths Vineyarde, and had it by and by: but it was not bleſſed with them. Alſo the thirtie pence which Iudas receiued, were not bleſſed with him. *1.Tim.6.9.10.* *Pro.10.20.* *1.King.21.* *Rom.22.* *Rom.9.*

Let vs vnderſtande therefore, that in this ſentence we are taught to doe our buſineſſe carefully, and attende with patience the goods and profite which it ſhal pleaſe God to giue vs, folowing many admonitions of the ſcriptures alledged heretofore.

22 *Say not thou, I wil recompence euil, but put thy truſt in the Lord, and he ſhal deliuer thee.*

We deſire al to be out of danger of the violence and outrage of our enemies, and to attaine thereto, it ſeemeth vs, that there is nothing better then to fortifie our ſelues, not to ſuſteine and endure patiently the euil which they wil doe to vs (for that wee thinke is for them to doe, which haue no blood in their nayles) but we ſeeke to fortifie our ſelues, to the ende, to recompence the euil which one doeth to vs, or more: for in this caſe wee ſeeke (as much as is poſſible for vs) to owe nothing vnto them, which haue giuen or done vs any thing againſt our wil.

But it is ſo muche abſent that wee ſhoulde render ill for il, that we ought to take great heed that it enter not into our thought to doe any miſchiefe, or to render the like to them which doe vs harme. Solomon ſheweth it vs wel for he ſaith not, recompence not euil for euil. But *ſay thou not, &c.* When hee forbiddeth one to threaten his neighbour with wordrs which proceede from the hearte: It followeth wel that hee reprooueth the inwarde ſpring without the which the mouth coulde not vſe any threatenings. Alſo in the Scripture, ſpeache is taken for thought, and chiefly when it is ſaide, That the wicked ſay thinges abhominable, the which notwithſtanding they woulde not ſpeake foorth, for although they bee wicked, yet they woulde bee counted honeſt men, which they ſhould neuer, bee if they were lauiſhe of their wordes. It is not meete therefore that wee bee reuengeful in our thoughts, nor that we ſhew our ſelues ſo by words or threatnings, much leſſe in deede, and execution. But it behoueth vs to be wary, peaceable, & patient, as Solomon teacheth vs ſaying,

Pſa.14.1.

Put thy truſt in the Lorde: Hee wil not that wee take paine, to recompence the euil which is doone to vs, but that wee haue regarde to the Lord, hoping vpon his ſuccour and aide, & aſſuring our ſelues that hee wil not abandon vs to the wicked wil of our enimies, but deliuer vs therefro. Solomon promiſeth it ſaying,

And hee ſhall deliuer, &c. Hee promiſeth nothing heere but the holy fathers haue prooued it. And therefore if wee will be partakers thereof, let vs foll owe their faith and patience: and for to doe it wel, let vs obey that which our Lord and Sauiour Ieſus Chriſte teacheth his Apoſtles. And when hee ſaith, Put thy truſt in the Lorde, let vs not thinke in any wiſe that the Lord is abſent from vs, or that he is farre off, although according to our ſenſe, hee bee ſo, becauſe wee cannot alwayes perceiue his aide in our anguiſhes and tribulations, whereof the Saintes alſo make complaint. It is onely according to mans ſenſe, that hee is abſent from vs, for in veritie hee ſeeth all that is done about vs. Hee is alwaies preſent to aſſiſt vs, and aideth vs to the end we fall not in the danger which is prepared for vs as the Saints haue wel knowne. And therefore after their complaints they comfort themſelues with the aſſi-

Mat.5.39.
44.
Rom.12.14.
17.
Col.3.12.
1.Pet.3.9.
Pſa.10.1.
& 13.2.&
44.24.

ſtaunce and ſuccour of the Lorde. Note wee alſo that although God reſerue the reuenge to himſelfe, neuertheleſſe it is not meete that wee ſhoulde requeſt him to take reuengement ouer our enimies, hauing regarde to vs: but it behoueth vs to put our whole truſt in the Lord, referring our ſelues wholy to that which ſeemeth him good to doe, without deſiring hurt to them which do vs hurt: for ſuch is the will of God, although his office bee to defende the innocent, and puniſhe and deſtroy the outragious and oppreſſours, as hee doeth ſtill at times conuenient: finally, when it is ſaide that God wil ſaue them which put their truſt in him with patience: let vs note that although God ſuffer the innocẽt to endure oftentimes euen vnto death, by the violence of their enimies: neuertheleſſe hee ceaſſeth not to bee true in his promiſes, and to fulfil them. For the innocent which haue true patience in their afflictions, and temptations, although they dye in the ſame, yet they are ſaued, and deliuered in that they ouercome them, and are victorious by faith, and patience: and thereby obteine eternal ſaluation, to the which the children of God ought principally to aſpire: when they haue any promiſe to bee ſaued, and deliuered from the handes of their enimies: for it is then that they are wholy deliuered.

Pſ.10.14. & 13.6.

23 *Diuers weights are an abhomination with the Lord, and falſe ballances are not good.*

Solomon hath alreadie aduertiſed vs in diuers places that wee ſhould bee iuſt and equitable in that which we haue to change together as wel in buying as ſelling: and nowe hee admoniſheth vs againe of the ſame, not ſticking to pronounce one ſentence oftentimes to the ende wee flatter not our ſelues in falſhoodes and deceites, ſeeme they neuer ſo little to vs, but that wee knowe, that if we be not vpright, faithful, and loyal to our neighbours, as wee woulde they ſhoulde bee vnto vs, wee ſhoulde bee the more inexcuſable and worthy of greeuous puniſhment, when wee haue byn dul and ſluggiſhe, or hardened and obſtinate in our fraudes, and deceites, after ſo many admonitions. It is not onely Solomon that hath troubled him ſelfe to warne vs, but we haue the lawe,

Prou.11.1. & 6.11. & 20.10.

the Prophetes, Ieſus Chriſte, and his Apoſtles alſo. Likewiſe (wil we or nil wee) our owne conſciences teache vs the ſame, when we condemne them that vſe vs not rightly, loyally, and faithfully, as wee deſire: hauing then ſo many maiſters, wee ſhall greeuouſly bee puniſhed, if wee deſpiſe to giue them audience and obey them.

24 *The ſteppes of man are in the handes of the Lord: how then ſhall a man knowe his owne waies?*

There is none of vs, but hee naturaly, attributeth to himſelfe power to conduct and gouerne himſelfe, ann thinketh that hee hath free will and libertie to doe wel or euil. In which thoughts there is great pride: for by this meanes man rauiſheth to himſelfe the honour and glory of God, and maketh himſelfe his God and his Sauiour, and leaueth his creature, as if hee had not too doe with him, whereas man ought to humble himſelfe, and knowe that he ought in no wiſe to attribute that to him ſelfe which is appertinent to God. Therefore it is hee that guideth and gouerneth vs. We may alſo ſee it in many praiers. Solomon following his praiers ſaith,

Exod.15.13.
Deut.32.10.
11.12.
Pſ.6. & 25.
45.89.& 27.
11.

Now the ſteppes of man are in the handes of the Lorde, &c. Wherunto Ieremie accordeth. But we muſt note that Solomõ ſpeaketh not, of manners, deedes, deliberations, and affections of man according as he were the ſonne of Adam: for therein is nothing but corruptiõ, of the which God is not the authour: It is mã which hath corrupted himſelfe by his owne wil. But Solomon ſpeaketh of a man, who renouncing himſelfe, and declining from his infirmitie and naturall corruption, ſtriueth to thinke wel, ſay wel, and do wel. We ought to knowe manifeſtly, that God is the authour of ſuche ſteppes according to the teſtimonies aforeſaide: and that Solomon ſpeaketh heere of the ſteppes of him that forceth himſelfe. Hee ſheweth it ſomwhat, whẽ he vſeth in his ſpeach here a worde taken of force and puiſance, and ſignifieth man: whereby wee are admoniſhed that if we haue any power to apply our ſelues to wel doing, that we ſhold acknowlege it to come of god, & not attribute any praiers to our ſelues for the ſame, but let vs ſay, The Lord is my ſtrength & praiſe, & he is become my ſaluatiõ, with him is wiſdom & ſtrẽgth,

Ier.10.23.
Exod.15.2.
Iob.12.13.

counſel

Pſa.28.7.68 35. Eſay.12.2. counſel,and vnderſtanding. Then ſeeing it is ſo that our ſteppes are the Lordes, whoſe works are incomprehenſible to man, it followeth that man of himſelfe, knoweth not what hee hath to thinke deliberate, ſay or doe, to flye from vice and followe vertue, as Solomon ſheweth, ſaying,

Howe then ſhall a man knowe his owne waies? Heere hee ſpeaketh of man according as if hee were ſonne of Adam, and of nature corrupted: alſo hee ſheweth it ſomewhat, when in his ſpeach to ſignifie man, hee vſeth this worde *Adam*: and though hee vſed it not, yee wee ought to vnderſtand it ſo, ſeeing that God hath created man from the beginning to his owne Image, and likeneſſe, and hath made him right or ſtreight: but being corrupted by ſinne, hee hath made himſelfe ignorant, dul, and bruitiſhe, not becauſe he hath not naturally ſufficient knowledge of the good way which he ought to holde, to the ende hee bee made inexcuſable, if his life and conuerſation bee not ſuch, that by the ſame, God may bee glorified as Rom.1.18. hee ought. When therefore Solomon addeth this preſent interrogation, it is as though he ſaide: If man indued with vertue, haue neede to bee guided, and gouerned by the Lorde: by a farre more reaſon the ſenſual man, which makes no account to reſiſt the affections of his fleſhe, ſhal haue no vnderſtanding to knowe that which hee ought to follow, neither maketh he account therof, but rather goeth aſtray.

To knowe therefore and to vnderſtande our way, not that which we imagine or finde good in our owne ſight, but that which God ſheweth vs by his worde, (which is called ours, becauſe wee ought to followe it, without declining either this way or that way, but to obey vprightly our Lord god) it is meet we renoūce our natural corruption, to wit, our firſt Adam, & that the holy Ghoſt fortifie vs, and giue vs courage, and teache vs the right wil of God, wherein lyeth our way, otherwiſe wee ſhal remaine dul and ignorant. It is not therefore in vs, nor in our free wil, to doe or vnderſtande that which is our duetie. Neuertheleſſe, when God calleth vs, and teacheth vs by his worde, wee ought to ſtriue to walke in the way which hee ſheweth vs, and not ceaſſe to craue his conduict without attending newe inſpirations, nor that hee ſhould take vs viſibly by the hande, for to leade vs: for the worde that is ſpoken to vs dayly, is ſufficient to doe that ſame : for by it the holy Ghoſt teacheth vs, and guideth vs, if we ſtop not our ſenſes, and drawe backe our ſelues.

25 *It is a ruine for a man which deuoureth holineſſe : and after the vowe, to make enquirie.*

Becauſe wee ſee not God with our eies, and that we heare him not with our eares, neither alſo it ſeemeth vnto vs that hee neither heareth nor ſeeth vs : for this occaſion wee are not afraide to depriue him of the honour which wee doe owe to him, and are abuſed ſo farre, that wee thinke not of the euil which wil come to vs thereby. This while wee ceaſſe not to be in danger of perdition, as Solomon ſignifieth, when he ſaith,

It is a ruine for a man, &c. Heere Solomon hath regarde to *Leuit.27.9.*
that which is written of vowes in the lawe, as God woulde that *Num.30.3.*
one ſhoulde doe him this honour, to holde holy that which he hath *Pſa.76.12.*
vowed to him, & not to applie it to prophane vſes, but to yeeld it to
him according to his promiſe made. Alſo when by baptiſme we are
dedicated to him, and ſanctified by the worke, we ought to offer our
ſelues continually to his ſeruice, and to ſeparate our ſelues from all
prophane thinges, to the ende that wee bee holineſſe to the Lord. *Exo.22.31*
and that we yeelde our ſelues to him, according as wee haue promiſed *Leui.11.44*
: and alſo he calleth vs thereto, and commandeth vs, You ſhalbe *& 19.2*
holy vnto me, otherwiſe we ſhal deuoure holyneſſe, appliyng it to *1.Pet.1.14*
another vſage then is lawful, and this ſhoulde bee *after the vowes
to make inquirie,* howe wee ſhoulde bee deliuered from rendring
them to doe then as wee woulde our ſelues. And in this ſorte wee
ieſt at God, to be ieſted at of him again : and to be deſtroyed, as we
wel deſerue, then to the ende that wee fal not into ſuch inconuenience,
let vs followe with perſeuerance that which Saint Paule teacheth *Rom.12.11.*
vs, I pray you therefore brethren that you offer vp your bodies *2.Cor.6.14*
a quicke ſacrifice, holy, and acceptable vnto the Lord, which is
your reaſonable ſeruice.

26 *A wiſe king diſpearſeth the wicked, and bringeth the wheele ouer them,*

Becauſe there are not many kinges, princes, and ſuperiours in the worlde which make account of vnderſtanding or dooing their duetie, but deſpiſing gouernment and adminiſtration, they giue themſelues to paſtime, and againſt all right and reaſon, fauour them that are wicked afore the good and the iuſt. For this cauſe Solomon knowing that they had neede to be well admoniſhed, too the ende they might returne to doe their duetie wel, or elſe, be the more inexcuſable, is not content to haue ſo often afore warned the kinges of that they had to doe, but againe here he admoniſheth them of their duetie ſaying,

Pſa.2.10.
Deut.17.18
1.Kings 3.9.

A wiſe king &c. Wherein firſt of all hee ſheweth that kinges haue neede of wiſedome, according to the admonition of Dauid: And therefore they ought too bee carefull, too regarde the woorde according as it is commaunded them, and that they praye with Solomon, Thou ſhalt giue to thy ſeruant a heart, which hath vnderſtanding to iudge thy people, and to knowe the good from the euil. If kinges be ſo wiſe, they wil not only vnderſtand that which they haue to doe, but alſo miniſter right to euerie one, according as it appertayneth. Which thing Solomon ſheweth vs heere, although he expreſſe but diſperſement and ſcattering of the wicked: for this is done to conſerue the right to the good, and to make them liue in peace.

Hee ſheweth moreouer that kinges ought to bee mortal enemies to the wicked, in ſuch wiſe, that as a mightie king purſuing his enemies and ſmiting them athwart, maketh ſome to fal here and other ſome there, ſo that they cannot riſe againe, euen ſo is it meete that they ouerthrowe and deſtroy the wicked. And as in the time when they fought and went to warre with waggons or chariottes, they ranne the wheeles ouer the bodies of the enemies, which were ſmittē down to the grou͂d, to bruze thē, to the end that they ſhould not reuiue again: ſo kings & ſuperiours, ought to bruſe the wicked, to the ende they haue no more power to doe euil to any body. Hee that woulde vnderſtande by the wheele any kinde of torment that the Iewes vſed, it woulde be no inconuenience. For the reſt, when Solomon threateneth ſo the wicked of being diſperſed and bruſed, let vs vnderſtande that hee warneth vs too flie from wickedneſſe, and to giue our ſelues to wel doing according as God commandeth it in his lawe, and according to the ordinances of our Princes and ſuperiours which are wiſe and prudent, and which ſeeke not, but that God be ſerued and honored according to his worde, and their ſubiects liue in peace, and good vnitie togither.

27 *The lampe of the Lorde is the ſoule of man, ſearching all the inward partes of the belly.*

The lampe that is cleere and ſhyning ſerueth to many vſes: firſt to guide them that walke by night in the darke, and to make them ſee their way, to the intent they goe not aſtray, nor ſmyte themſelues againſt any thing, or fal into any ditch or caue. Secondly, it giueth light to them that are locked in darke priſons, wherein they ſee neither Sunne nor moone: And for theſe twoo purpoſes it is as it were halfe a life to them that vſe it, for thoſe that are, or walke in darkeneſſe, are as it were halfe dead. Thirdly, it ſerueth to finde things hid in holes, & in the darke. Now that which the lampe doth outwardly, and corporally, the worde of God which liueth & raigneth in our harts by the holy Ghoſt, doeth the ſame inwardly and ſpiritually. And therefore the ſcripture calleth it *Lampe* or light, & attributeth to the word the things aforeſaid: and this is not without cauſe, for of our ſelues we are and walke in darkneſſe of ignorance, not knowing what we haue to doe, and it conducteth vs. Thy woorde ſerueth for a lampe to my feete, and as a light to my pathes. Of our ſelues we are dead, being ſeruants & ſlaues to ſinne and death, and the worde lightneth vs, freeth vs, and quickneth vs. Of our ſelues wee are hypocrites, and cannot, nor wil not knowe that which is in vs. But the woorde diſcouereth and reuealeth the things that are hid in the depth of the heart. And ſo it is not without cauſe that Solomon ſaith, *Pſ.119.105. 130. Rom.7.14. Eph.2.8. Pſ.19.8.9.*

The Lampe of the Lorde, &c. For as the ſoule giueth life to the body, ſo the word of God maketh man quicke: and principally when man by faith cleaueth to his promiſes. For by the lawe, wee are accurſed and condemned, in ſo much as wee cannot accompliſhe it, but wee liue, and are ſaued by the aſſurance which wee haue in the promiſes: for the innocencie, obedience, iuſtice, and *Iohn.8.31. 32.& 16.8. Heb.4.12. Deut.27.26. Gal.3.10.*

Rom.5.18.19.
1.Cor.5.21.
Deut.30.15.
Leuit.18.5.
Rom.3.20.

and holineſſe, of Ieſus Chriſt are imputed to vs. Neuertheleſſe wee ought not to ſeparate the lawe from the promiſes. For were it not our corruption and naughtineſſe, it were to vs a cleere lampe to reioyce and quicken vs as one may ſee. Alſo it *ſearcheth well the inwarde partes of the bellie* when it diſcouereth to a man the malice of his hart. For by the lawe it is giuen to knowe ſinne.

28 *Mercy and truthe ſhal preſerue the king, and with louing kindneſſe his ſeate ſhalbe eſtabliſhed.*

Prou.16.14.
19.20.2.
Prou.16.35.

For as much as kings haue not one onely duetie towardes al their ſubiects indifferently, but it behoueth thē to handle the wicked after one ſort, & the good after another: For this cauſe the holy ſcripture giueth them now one inſtruction, and now another, to the end that they may knowe how to render euery one his deſerts. We haue ſeene heretofore, that when Solomon would encourage kings againſt the wicked, hee hath attributed to them, rigour, ſeueritie & crueltie, and to make them meeke and gentle towardes the good he hath attributed to them mercy and benignitie. And nowe againe he warneth kings of their duetie towardes the good when he ſaieth, *Mercie and trueth, &c.* And therewithal hee ſheweth them, that to raigne, and beare rule long tyme, and without reſiſtance, it is not meete that they vſe tyrannie and crueltie, diſceyt, or diſloyaltie, but that they bee merciful and true. Benignitie regardeth principally the ſubiectes. For they are willingly induced to loue their ſuperiours, and obay them freely, when they ſee them gentle, curteous, pitiful, and that they are more inclyned to mercy then to rigour and ſeueritie. Trueth alſo regardeth the ſubiects. For it is not meete that Princes vſe fraude to their ſubiects, but that they defende and keepe both them and their goods faythfully. Notwithſtanding one may ſay that trueth hath reſpect principally to them abrode, with whome Princes haue any thing to practiſe. For if they wil raigne peaceably and without contradiction, it is meete that they keepe faythfully their promiſes, and that they ſeeke no way to breake the fayth promiſed, neither by diſceit nor violence or any other meanes towards them with whome they haue to doe, if one wil ſay that mercy regardeth men, and trueth God, I wil not withſtande them: for it is neceſſary that kinges ſerue God in trueth according to his worde, eſchewing al thinges contrary to the ſame, and making it bee kept of their ſubiectes as much as in them lyeth, to the ende that God bee honoured as hee requireth. And alſo, as it is ſo that they holde the ſeate of God, who is iuſt and true in al his iudgements, it is meet that they iudge with iuſtice & trueth, without reſpect of perſons, or couetouſneſſe of giftes and preſents, and that they repulſe the lyars, flatterers, talebearers, and backbiters, puniſhing them, and deſtroying them with all falſe witneſſes. Thus doing they ſhalbe preſerued, and eſtabliſhed in their thrones, as the good kinges haue tried it. Pharao hath not vnderſtoode this ſame, neither hath hee beene preſerued, but after many plagues hath beene deſtroyed in the waters of the Sea: one may ioyne Solomons ſonne who woulde not handle his people gently. If therefore kinges and princes wil not come to the like condition, let them not lift vp their heartes ouer their brethren: but let them followe the meekeneſſe of Moſes, Ioſue, Dauid, Ioſias, Ezechias, & ſuch others, which haue been preſerued, and haue eſtabliſhed their thrones by benignitie and mercy. And becauſe it is not moſt commonly profitable for the people to change their kinges and princes, when they haue them that gouerne well: ſubiectes ought to vnderſtande that they are heere warned to pray to God for their ſuperiours, to the ende it may pleaſe him to preſerue them. And whiles they liue in this humilitie and obedience, that they giue occaſion to their rulers to bee curteous and iuſt, for to followe their head.

Deut.17.20

29 *The nobilitie of young men is their vertue: and a gray head, is the honour of the aged.*

It ſeemeth at the firſt, that Solomon ſpeaketh according to the fantaſie of young folkes, which glorifie them ſelues in their force, vaunte of their actes which haue any apparance of vertue, and eſteeme them ſelues noble, and worthie to bee had in eſtimation with the worlde, when they haue behaued them ſelues valiantly. And alſo that he ſpeaketh according to the opinion and deſire of old men to whome it ſeemeth, that it is a great matter to haue liued ſo long that their bearde and heares are waxen white, and wil that one honour them becauſe of their olde age, which ſheweth himſelfe in the whiteneſſe of their heares, although in themſelues bee neither knowledge, skil, nor prudence. And if we ſhould take this ſentence thus, it were not far amiſſe: notwithſtanding, it behoueth vs to vnderſtande , that Solomon hath not ſpoken it to pleaſe either the young or the old, nor to make vs ſticke at their fantaſies and affections, But know we that when he ſaith, *The nobleneſſe of young men is their vertue*, hee ſheweth firſt to fathers and mothers, & to al them which haue gouernment or ſuperintendence, if they will that their children, or inferiours become honorable & renowmed, or worthie to be accounted excellent, that they ought to be careful to teach vertue to youth, and to accuſtome them to the ſame: not vnto that which one calleth vertue according to the worlde, which is to bee couragious, and to haue blood in the nailes, to render euil for euil, and to doe outrage and violence vnto them which one hath in hate, or to take great paines to become rich, and to keepe (as one woulde ſay) a good houſe, ſuch men according to the world are willingly eſteemed noble. But that in following the word of God, one giue good example of life to the younger ſort, that one teache them, admoniſh them, reprehend them, & correct them, and that one accuſtome them to applie their time in good workes, and that they learne to haue charitie, yea towards their very enimies. See here the vertue, wherein conſiſteth the noblenes, excellencie, glory, & honor, of young folks. Secondly he ſheweth that the younger ſort are knauiſh & infamous, worthy of al rebuke and reproch, if not being wel inſtructed they faſhion not their maners in al humilitie, & modeſty, temperance, honeſtie, holineſſe & iuſtice, according to gods word: for in the obedience and faith of the ſame there is vertue, & not otherwiſe. Alſo therein it is that God craueth one to apply his force, and S. Paule ſheweth wel that there is vertue in the worde: and when Solomon adioyneth, *And a gray head is the honor of the aged*: he ſheweth firſt of al to old folkes, that they ought to be graue temperate, wiſe, prudent, acknowledging that God hath done them this honour to haue mainteined them in this life ſo long that they are waxen white, and to haue giuen them ſpace to learne vertue,

Deut.6.5.
Eph.6.16.17

and ſollowe the ſame, that they might haue vice in diſdaine, and be an edification to the younger ſort. Secondly, he ſheweth to them that are young, that they ought not to puffe vp them ſelues in pride and diſdaine againſt their elders, although for the feebleneſſe, and debility of the body they ſeeme vnprofitable, & a let or hinderance, but in al humilitie and gentleneſſe they ought to forbeare them, & with al care and diligence to aſſiſt, and honor them, in ſuch ſort that they be wholy at their commandement. It is neceſſary that wee learne this in this preſent ſentence, otherwiſe there will bee no excellencie in the ſame. Let vs not thinke therfore that Solomon hath forced himſelfe to teach vs carnal or temporal nobilitie, wherof the worlde makes account, through ſome force, magnanimity and hardineſſe, which they perceiue in the deedes and feates of ſome perſonage led by glory and ambition: nor that hee maketh great account of the white heares which are on the chin, or on the head of old men: for al this paſſeth, but the vertues which he teacheth vs in this ſentence, are in eternal memory before God, and they which follow them ſhal remaine for euer.

Leui.19.23.

30 *Bruſed woundes purge euill: and ſtripes in the inward partes of the body.*

When we are bodyly ſicke, wee wilbe handeled gently, and it ſeemeth vnto vs that the Phiſitions and Surgeons are vncurteous, and haue no compaſsion vpon vs, when they ordeine vs ſharpe medicines, or apply to vs any pearcing ointment, or other thing which augmenteth the dolor for the preſent time. Neuertheleſſe it is needful & neceſſary that ſomtimes one ſpare not the patient for to purge and cleanſe him of the filth and corruption which is in his body. Otherwiſe he is in danger of his perſon for the life preſent. Alſo although we be very euil, & that this euilneſſe hath ſo corrupted vs, that al our conuerſation is polluted & defiled therby, and that there is in vs no intire thing: neuertheleſſe we woulde haue others to flatter vs, and account vs for honeſt men: and thinke that they which admoniſh vs, reprehende vs, checke vs, & threaten vs, accuſe vs, and condemne vs, are our enimies and hate vs. But it is neceſſary to purge the inwarde naughtineſſe which corrupteth al our conuerſation, that men rebuke vs ſharpely, and threaten vs rigorouſly,and that they plundge vs euen into the depth of hell, making vs diſpaire of our ſelues,as if without remedie wee were wounded,and murthered euen vnto the death. This is the way to cleanſe the wicked,which are very muche infected, corrupted with vice and iniquitie,and yet flatter themſelues in their owne diſeaſes. Solomon pronounceth it ſo, ſaying, *Bruſed woundes purge euill.* Dauid after the adulterie and murder flattered himſelfe wel, when he made no account to confeſſe his faultes.But the ſharpe & ſowre reprehenſion of Nathan,ſerued him for a purgation. So did the reprehenſion of Saint Paule to the Corinthians. But let vs note that Solomon ſpeaketh not of the wicked reprooued : for to ſuche men rorrection profiteth nothing,but to make them obſtinat, and bring them in deſpaire,as Cain,the whole worlde deſtroyed by the flood, Sodome,Pharao, Saule.

2.Sa.12.12.
1.Cor.5.1
2.Cor.7.8

The xxi. Chapter.

1. *THE kinges hearte is in the hande of the Lorde: Like the riuers of water, ſo hee may turne it whither ſoeuer hee will.*

THE kinges of the earth are in great eſtimation and admiration with the worlde, men feare them & worſhip thẽ,men trẽble at their puiſãce honouring their highneſſe, and humbling themſelues vnto them, rendring them obedience, and fearing to prouoke their anger, ſubmitting themſelues wholy to their wil and pleaſure. Inſomuch that they ſeeme to encline the hearts of their ſubiects,whither it pleaſe them. And it is no maruel if kinges be ſo honoured of the worlde, ſeeing that god honoureth them,giuing them his titles,calling them gods,and ſuperiour powers,placing them in his ſeate,to exerciſe iuſtice, & iudgement indifferently and vprightly, and willing that men ſhoulde ſubmit thẽſelues to them without any reſiſtãce or rebelliõ. So kings make themſelues redoubted as much ae they can, to the end to ſubmit their ſubiectes heartes to them, and bowe and order them as it ſeemeth them good : this while what highneſſe ſoeuer they haue, (wil they nil they) yet they haue a ſuperiour which hath another maner of puiſance aboue them, then they haue aboue their ſubiects & inferiours, for they hate not the power to gouerne their ſubiects heartes at their pleaſure, although they haue authoritie to commande, and the other ought to obey. But God which is their ſoueraigne Lorde, and ruler, hath not onely power to commande, but alſo to diſpoſe their heartes at his pleaſure, without let or reſiſtance at al. Solomon ſheweth it them wel, where hee compareth their heartes to riuers of water ſaying,

The kings hearte is in the hande of the Lorde, &c. Kings ought not therefore for to vaunt of their powers : for although riuers ſwell ſometimes, and flow ouer with ſuch impetuoſitie as though they woulde cary al away with them : and although alſo kinges haue hautie and ſtout hearts, and thinke themſelues ſo mightie, that they weene none may reſiſt them, but that they ſhal cut and cary away al at their pleaſure: neuertheles as by ſluces, rampiers, or other inuention one may reſiſt a great riuer, and ſtop it from doing harme: ſo it is eaſie to God to ſet a ſtay for kinges, that they hurte not with the pride and hautineſſe of their heartes : as Solomon ſignifieth clearely, when hee compareth their heartes not to great riuers, but onely to little running brookes which turne their courſes eaſily which way one pleaſeth. It is not fit alſo that they ſhoulde vaunt themſelues of their free wil : for as riuers turne not rhemſelues this way, or that way, nor cannot doe it, but men turne their courſes according as it ſeemeth them good which haue to do therewith : So as Solomon ſaith,

God turneth the kings hearte whither he wil : Hee ſaith not that hee turneth it to this or to that, *but whither he will*, for as the ſcriptures ſhewe vs : hee inclineth one to one thing, and another to another thing : one man nowe to one thing, and by and by too a contrary. Hee turned the king of Egypts hearte in Ioſephes time, to doe wel to Iacob and his kindred. Contrariwiſe hee turned his ſucceſſours hart, to miſuſe the children of Iſrael after the death of Ioſeph. This inclination ought to bee wel knowne of vs, when *Gen.45.16.*

God

God ſaith to Moſes . But I am ſure that the king of Egypt wil
Exod.1.8. not let you goe , but by a mightie hande. And yet more manifeſt
& 3.19.& 4 when God ſaith, And I will harden his hearte, &c. Hee hath turned
21. Dauids heart to goodneſſe, as appeareth, when hee ſaith, From this
day forwarde, the ſpirite of the Lorde ſhal proſper in Dauid . And
afterwardes hath enclined it to euil : but one might make here two
1.Sam.16. obiections : the one, that kings are not culpable, when they do euil,
13. ſeeing that God enclineth their heartes thereto : the other, that
2.Sam.24. God is the cauſe, and authour of ſinne. An anſwere to the firſt
obiection, although God doe turne the heartes of kinges to euil, yet
are they neuertheles culpable : for god by his iuſt iudgement, which
Rom.1.24. is incomprehenſible to vs, prouoketh them to euil, either to puniſh
their former ſinnes by other ſinnes, and make them more fautie,
or for to puniſhe and chaſtice them whome hee thinketh good,
as hee ſtirred vp Sennacherib, and other kinges againſt his people of
Iſrael : or to trie and exerciſe his choſen ones to patience : as hee
Iam.1.13.14 hath by the miniſter of Satan ſtirred vp the Chaldians and Sabians
againſt Iob : but the wicked hauing no knowledge of the iudgements
diuine, no reuerence to the prouidence of God, nor any feare
of his worde, are carried away by their owne concupiſences. Likewiſe
the wicked doe not referre their faultes vnto God, but being
reproued by their owne conſcience, confeſſe their wickedneſſe, as
Pharao knewe wel that he was an offendour, Saule maketh the ſame
Exod.9.27. confeſſion or very like . Dauid elected of God , hauing numbred
1.Sam.24. the people, layeth not the faulte on God, but confeſſeth his owne
18.& 26.21. offence. Wherefore for a briefe anſwere to the ſeconde obiection,
2.Sam.24. wee ſee that God is not the authour of ſinne : for the reſt, ſearch
10. the Inſtitutions of Iohn Caluin. So Princes and Magiſtrates are
taught to haue God in honour and reuerence, crauing his conduct
and gouernance, and that they feare to bee giuen vp into a reprobate
ſenſe, as many haue been. Alſo ſubiects are admoniſhed to
pray for their ſuperiours , otherwiſe they are in danger leſt it wil
1.Tim.2.1. happen to them according to the threatninges which are in diuers
Eſa.3.1. places . For the reſt, if kinges which are mightie, as they think,
Oſe.13.11. and which make them ſelues redoubted , haue neede to bee gouerned
by GOD, who turneth their heartes at his pleaſure, it is

not meete that we promiſe our ſelues any thing againſt the will of God.

2 *Euery mans way ſeemeth right in his owne eies, but the Lorde pondereth the heart.*

Man is ſo much giuen to flatter, praiſe, and eſteeme of himſelfe: that hee neither can nor wil finde any thing in himſelfe worthie of reprehenſion, but perſwadeth with himſelfe, that al that he willeth, thinketh, enterpriſeth, ſaith, or doth, is good & iuſt: wherein he is deceiued, as Solomō pronounceth it. And becauſe ſo fooliſh an opinion, cannot eaſily bee rooted out of the thoughtes of man, therefore Solomon rebuketh it nowe againe, when he ſaith, *Euery mans way, &c.*

Pro.3.5.6.7. & 12.15.& 14.12.& 16 2.25.

3 *To doe iuſtice and iudgement, is more acceptable to the Lorde then ſacrifice.*

From the beginning of the worlde, men haue thought to doe God great ſeruice, when they haue offered vp ſacrifiſe, of beaſtes which they killed, of the which, or of other goods of the earth, they made great oblation and after the flood, they haue not forgotten this cuſtome. And as men haue eſteemed it, ſo the Lorde hath alwayes helde acceptable the ſacrifices of the faithful, who offered them in firme faith, and true repentance, regarding the true Meſſias which ought to bee ſacrificed onely and perfect for the remiſsion of their ſinnes, whereat they were ſore agreeued and diſpleaſed. And then when hee gaue the tenne commandementes, hee ordeined ſacrifices, which is a good argument that they were acceptable too him, as is ſeene in Leuiticus: I haue ſpoken ſpecially of the faithful, which are neither hypocrites, nor ambitious, nor theeues, nor murderers. For although the faithleſſe full of al iniquitie, violence, & extortion, did offer oblations, and ſacrifice, which had great apparance of holyneſſe and religion: and that they ſhewed by Ceremonies that they had a meruellous great zeale to the ſeruice of GOD, neuertheleſſe their ſacrifices pleaſed not the Lorde,

Gen.4.3.4. Gen.8.20. & 12.7.8. & 13.18.

but rather prouoked him to wrath and anger, and he deſpiſed them as thinges abhominable : but hee willeth that the wicked ſhoulde turne from his euil wayes refraining to doe iniurie and violence and giuing himſelf to al right and equitie, in reſtoring to euery man that which belongeth vnto him, helping the oppreſſed and afflicted, and deliuering them from the handes of thoſe which doe them wrong: which thing apperteineth principallly to kinges and ſuperiours of the earth: but it is meete alſo that euery one apply himſelfe therein, as much as is poſſible. And ſo his workes ſhalbe agreeable to the Lorde, more then al the oblations of beaſtes, or fruites of the earth, Solomon pronounceth it thus in briefe, ſaying, *Pſa.40.7.& 50.7.*

To doe iuſtice and iudgement, &c. Hee ſheweth vs in one worde that which wee haue principally to doe, to the ende wee ſtudie not on thinges, which haue a faire apparance outwardly, and bring no profite, aide nor ſuccour to the poore afflicted. Alſo he reproueth in briefe the kinges and gouernours of the earth, which are hypocrites, as were the Scribes and Phariſees, which are oppreſſours. Hee reprehendeth likewiſe all hypocrites, which loue to bee ſeene, and praiſed, and in the meane while haue no care of their neighbours, as are in the Papacie, the eaters of the crucifixe, as alſo are they which come to ſermons of the worde, and communicate the Sacraments, and yet ſticke not to bee repleniſhed with fraudes deceites, inhumanitie, and crueltie. Wherefore let vs not thinke that Solomon reproueth ſacrifices, vnder the which he comprehendeth al the works commauded in the firſt table: but onely the abuſe committed therein, neither is he contente that one doe iuſtice and iudgement, for one ought principally to mainteine the honour and glory of God, and to obſerue true religion, which is commanded vs in the firſt table. But by the workes of the ſeconde Table, the obſeruation of al the lawe is ſet downe: for if wee abſtaine to doe iniury to our neighbours, if in aſmuch as in vs lyeth, we doe ſuccour them which are oppreſſed, and deliuer them, if finally wee imploy our ſelues to doe the workes of charitie, we giue ſignification of the feare of God, by the which the fruites of iuſtice, iudgement & charitie are brought forth. And therfore although one cãnot loue god, vnles hee loue his neighbour; notwithſtanding, this is not to ſay, that the loue of God proceedeth of the loue of his neighbour. But *Mat.22.23.25. Eſa.1.10.23* if wee loue God truely, it is neceſſarie that we loue our neighbour. As alſo wee haue the commaundement of him, That hee that loueth God, loueth alſo his neighbour. It is true, that if we loue our neighbour, we giue a ſigne that wee loue God: for the loue that we beare towardes our neighbour, is the fruite which bringeth foorth the loue which wee haue to Godwarde. *1.Ioh.4.20. 21.* *Rom.13.10.*

And ſo when Saint Paule ſaieth, That hee which loueth his neighbour, hath fulfilled the lawe, hee exempteth vs not from the workes of the firſt Table: for his intent was to ſpeake in this point of the duetie which the lawe commandeth vs to doe to our neighbours, whereto wee woulde not applye our ſelues, if wee did not loue them: but louing them truely, we doe to them al duetie. And meane while it is true, that the lawe is accompliſhed by charitie towardes our neighbours, the which proceedeth not, but of the loue that wee haue to God, and therof yeeldeth teſtimonie, as the effect doeth of the cauſe.

4 *An high looke, and a proude heart, which is the lanterne of the wicked, is ſinne.*

When the wicked allowe of them ſelues in their owne hearts, and that they think they are ſomewhat more excellent then others, they cannot guide them ſelues, but they muſt giue ſome outwarde ſigne of this pride and arrogancie, and perſuade them ſelues, that in ſo doing, they doe wel, and by this meanes, keepe their credit, and come to the ende of their attemptes gallantly: but in ſuche ſorte of dealing, they abſtaine not to do iniurie and violence to their neighbours, againſt whome they lift vp them ſelues fiercely, and take ioy and delight therein. And ſo there is great wickedneſſe in their proceedings, eſtate, and ioye. Solomon ſheweth it by this worde ſinne, when he ſaith,

An high looke, and a proude heart, &c. Wherein we haue to note firſt of al, *That an high looke*, (as al other brauities and pompes of the bodie) is a ſigne and token of the pride which is in the heart. And therefore one calleth it pride, and it is ſinne, as it is iudged naturally to bee without the ſcriptures: for men wil ſay, Beholde a great pride, to wit, when one ſeeth any to bee very glorious, and beare his head on high, or vſe any other geſture contrarie to humilitie and lowlineſſe. And they wil ſay, hee hath a ſtoute and loftie heart: Therefore, with nature the Scripture imputeth this to pride, and blameth, and condemneth it, and threateneth to deſtroy it, as hath beene ſeene to happen to ſome, who haue bene deſtroyed for their pride which they ſhewed by outwarde geſture. And becauſe wee wil not be ſo beaten downe by the wrath of the Lorde, it behooueth vs to humble our ſelues, as wel in our hearts, as in our geſture and dooinges: ſo that wee may proteſt, Lorde I am not high minded, I haue no proude lookes, &c. Thus dooing, humilitie ſhalbe deemed a vertue in vs, and we ſhalbe exalted of our God.

Eſa.2.11.& 3.15.& 5.14 Dan.4.26. & 5.22. Pſa.131.1.

Note ſecondly, that the pride which is betokened by high lookes, and a proude heart, is called *the Lanterne of the wicked:* becauſe they guide them ſelues by the ſame, and therein place their ioy and pleaſure: for they think they ſhould not doe their buſineſſe halfe wel, if they ſhoulde not ſeeke by pride to extoll them ſelues aboue others. Note we thirdly, that of the proude heart proceedeth the high looke, with al the other fruites of pride, which are in great number, which we ought to take to be comprehended heere vnder one kinde. Let vs note finally, that ſeeing the lampe of the wicked, is imputed as ſinne to them, they make of vice, vertue, & ſo contrarie.

Eſa.3.20.

5 *The thoughts of the diligent, are onely vpon plenteouſnes:*
but he that is haſtie, commeth verily to pouertie.

We are al ſlouthful by nature, as we our ſelues wel perceiue, yet neuertheleſſe, we thinke that we are woorthie to haue muche ſubſtance: but we iudge in the meane while, that there is none but the diligent that ought to haue plentie of goods: wherein wee ſhoulde iudge aright, if we vnderſtood who they were that are diligent, for we wil conſent to that which Solomon hath ſpoken heretofore, and to that which he ſaith preſently: *That the thoughts of the diligent are onely vpon plenteouſnes, &c.* He ſpeaketh but of thoughts, but he ſheweth therwithal, that they are not vaine and light thoughts, which are without effect, for he ſaieth, *Of the diligent*, that is to ſay, of him which thinketh not to couet onely, as the ſlouthfull

Pro.10.3.4. 5.& 11.25. & 12.11.& 13.4.23.25.& 14.4.23.& 20.13.

doe, but thinketh, in imploying him ſelfe carefully to his buſines, to the ende it may be diſpatched duely, and may profite and yeeld him ſuche abundaunce, that hee may be farre from pouertie, and neede, which if wee wil be free from, wee ought not to proceede in our affaires, raſhly, and without conſideration (for there is onely plenteouſneſſe, where the diligent thinketh wel without raſheneſſe) as the haſtie doe, which boyle with inordinate deſire, and neuer obtaine their wiſhes ſoone enough, as they thinke, nor ſuch plenteouſnes as they woulde haue: and becauſe they proceede in their enterpriſes without good conſideration: in ſteede of hauing plentie with the diligent, they run into pouerty. As Solomō addeth, *But he that is haſtie, commeth verily to pouertie.* Hee is not content to affirme ſimply this ſame, but becauſe he ſpeaketh againſt the ſenſe of many (for we neuer are ſoone enough come to our deſires) he ſtriueth to confirme his ſaying, by this word *verily*, or *onely*. He hath alreadie ſaide the ſame. Then although there were none other fault but that he which is haſtie, proceedeth raſhly, and without aduiſe, hee deſerueth wel to be poore and needie, but there are other foule faults. One is, that he miſtruſteth of the bountie & prouidence of God. Cōtrariwiſe, he which beleeueth, is not haſtie. The other is, that willing to enrich him ſelfe, he falleth into temptation, and many fooliſh deſires, which plundge men in perdition, &c. Wee ſee likewiſe by this Scripture, that it is not lawful to couet plenteouſnes, although of it ſelfe it be good, and that a man which thinketh diligently vpon his buſineſſe, may lawfully poſſeſſe it, not ſetting his heart thereupon. A man therefore being readie to thinke vpon his buſineſſe, and diligent to doe it, may poſſeſſe the plentie which proceedeth therof, with a ſure & ſound cōſcience, and in the meane while, ſhal take heede of couetouſnes. And to do this wel, he ſhal folow that which is ſaide in diuers places.

Pro.20.21.
Eſa.28.16.
1.Tim.6.9. 10.
Pſal.62.11.
Luk.12.15
Mat.6.19.
1.Tim.6.7. & 17.
Hebr.3.5.6.

6 *To hoard vp riches with a deceitful tongue, is vanitie toſſed too and fro of them that ſeeke death.*

Wee doe al naturally feare pouertie, and flye from it as much as is poſſible for vs, for we ſee that the poore endure many miſeries, and are deſpiſed, and forſaken of the world, yea, hated of their owne borne brethren. As Solomon hath ſaide, if one ariſe againſt

Pro.19.7.

them, it ſeemeth that they ought to be incontinently quailed: for they haue neither power nor ſuccour, but languiſh in this world: inſomuche that it ſeemeth, they are continually in death. Contrariwiſe, naturally we loue riches, ſeeking for thē, & hoarding it vp as much as is poſſible: for we perſuade our ſelues that when we haue heaped ſtore of worldly goods, in golde and ſiluer, in houſes and other heritages, wee ſhal not bee ſubiect to the miſeries of this preſent life, we ſhal get many friendes, which wil fauour vs, honour vs, and preſent vs with al pleaſure and ſeruice. And as it ſeemeth, wee ſhalbe in ſuche proſperitie, that wee ſhal not thinke to dye, although we knowe and confeſſe, that wee muſt needes dye. But to attaine to their riches, men imagine fraudes, couſonages, vſuries, theftes, and wicked dealinges, and to practiſe it, and atchiue it, they lye, ſweare, and forſweare, they curſe and banne, they renounce God, and giue them ſelues to the Deuil. The moſt parte of Merchantes and Artificers knowe this ſame. And if one rebuke them for ſuche wickedneſſe, ſtraight way they anſwere, That they ſhould bee otherwiſe fooles and ſhoulde ſel nothing. And in caſe fathers deale thus wickedly, they wil that their children reſemble them, or be rather woorſe: for at twelue or thirteene yeeres of age, they ſet them to keepe ſhoppes, and teache them their craftes, or rather deceites, by the which they obtaine vniuſtly the ſubſtance of the buyers. And in this maner, they thinke to eſtabliſh their ſtate wel, and to be perpetuated either in themſelues, or in their children & ſucceſſours, they thinke ſtil to launche forwardes, and make them ſelues ſtrong enough to ſhun death: but in ſteed of exalting them ſelues, they periſh miſerably, and go to *Death*. Solomon ſpeaketh it plainly, when he ſaieth,

To hoard vp riches with a deceitful tongue, is vanitie toſſed too and fro of them that ſeeke death. Wherein wee ſee, that that which the wicked feare, happeneth vnto them. Moreouer, we are admoniſhed, not to bee careful to heape vp muche goods in this worlde, ſeeing it is but vanitie and perdition.

7 *The Rapines of the wicked ſhal deſtroye them: for they haue refuſed to doe iuſtice.*

Becauſe it is ſeene that the wicked which take and rauiſhe al they can get either by deceite and guile, or by violence and oppreſsion, or by receite of giftes and brybes, or other meanes vnlawful, doe proſper in the viewe of the world, and haue credite and authoritie and that it ſeemeth that they be of long endurance and liue at their eaſe, for this cauſe many ſnatch vp goods where they can find them, and for the moſt parte vniuſtly. Of whome the principal and captaines are the iudges and gouernours of the earth, which deale by reſpect of perſons, and loue and take brybes and giftes, too doe wrong to him that hath good right. And although the Scriptures often complaine of ſuch pillers, and raueners, and threatneth them deſtruction, as hath beene alleadged heretofore, and alſo their conſciences reprooue and reprehend them, and they them ſelues condemne them which are petie theeues in reſpect of them, and that they ought to vnderſtande that as they condemne the petie theeues to death, ſo they themſelues are woorthie of ruine and deſtruction. Neuertheleſſe they thinke that to take on all handes and on al ſides, is the beſt way for to make themſelues great and mightie, and haue a laſting houſe, and as it were perpetuall. But becauſe they cannot vſe ſuch trade, but by renouncing all equitie and right, and doing wrong and iniurie outrage and violence to their neighbours diſpoiling them of their ſubſtance, for this cauſe their iniurie ſhal returne vnto them ſelues. As Solomon pronounceth it ſaying, *The rapines of the wicked ſhall deſtroy them.* Wherein he ſpeaketh principally of kinges iudges, and gouernours of the earth, which are the greateſt theeues and raueners, as is aforeſaide. The reaſon which he addeth, ſheweth wel that it is of ſuch men that hee ſpeaketh, when he ſayth,

For they haue refuſed to doe iuſtice. True it is that we ought al to doe our endeuour in helping eche one his neighbour, and defending him, inaſmuche as wee can, from the yl dealing of the wicked. But becauſe the Superiours of the earth are placed in the ſeate of God, and that their office (as they can wel tel) is to doe iuſtice: It is lawful to vnderſtande, that this preſent ſentence pronounceth principally, that they ſhal periſhe wickedly: for they make no account to doe right, in ayding the feeble, and defending them, but rather eate and deuoure them: as it is laide to their charge, & they *Pſal.82.2.*

6.7.

Ia.33.1.& are manaced deſtruction.

8 *There is a man, whoſe waye is frowarde, and ſtrange: but the worke of the pure man is right.*

Pſal.14.2
Eſai.64.6.
Iere.17.9.

There is none but he thinketh or ſtriueth to perſuade him ſelf, that he is an honeſt man, and that hee walketh ſo vprightly, that in him is nothing worthie of reprehenſion: ſo proude and haughtie is the nature of man, ſtriuing to forget his owne iniquities, which are continually before his eyes. Inſomuch, that if he commit any thing or imagine againſt his neighbour, that which he would not ſhould be done vnto him ſelfe, it can not be but his conſcience wil reproue him. Notwithſtanding, hee reſiſteth it as euerie one may feele in him ſelfe naturally, and as Solomon hath ſometimes ſpoken, when hee ſaieth heere aboue, verſe, 2. That euerie mans way ſeemeth right in his owne eyes. And nowe hee ſheweth openly, that this opinion of vprightneſſe is falſe, when he ſayeth, *There is a man whoſe way is frowarde and ſtrange*. Wherein we haue to note, that although it be ſaide, The Lord hath looked from heauen vpon the children of men, to ſee if there were any which vnderſtoode and ſought after God, but they are al gone aſtraie, &c. And wee are al as it were filth, &c. The heart is deceitful and frowarde, more then al other thinges, &c. Neuertheleſſe, Solomon condemneth not vs al, becauſe that God accepteth the woorkes of him that is regenerated, which Solomon calleth pure, ſaying,

But the worke of the pure man is right. For although beeing left off in the corruption of our nature, wee walke in frowarde and ſtrange wayes, doing wrongful, and abhominable woorkes, which leade vs to perdition, and that we cannot be ſo iuſt, but wee muſt needes ſinne: neuertheleſſe, when our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt by his holy ſpirite mortifieth our wicked concupiſcenſes, and diſordinate affections, hee purgeth vs ſo, that our affections are holy, good, and iuſt, and cannot be otherwiſe, inſomuche, as the holie Ghoſt conducteth them, and guideth them. Then it foloweth, that wee take pleaſure to walke vprightly, and wee cannot be turned therefro, to abandon intirely the right way, and withdrawe our ſelues wholly from righteouſnes for we haue the ſeed of God which is perpetual, that is to ſay, which maketh them to perſeuer in holines and iuſtice which are engendered of God by his ſeede. For whoſoeuer is born of God, doeth not ſinne, for his ſeede remaineth in him, &c. This is not to ſay, but this ſeede is ſometimes choked of them, that are regenerate, as it hath beene in Dauid, but it is neuer wholly extinguiſhed.

1.Ioh.3.9.

9 *It is better to dwell in a corner on the houſe toppe, then with a brauling woman in a wide houſe.*

God at the beginning created man and woman, and ioyned them together in marriage, to the ende they ſhoulde liue together in peace and vnitie, whereby they might haue ioye and conſolation and be an aide and comfort one to the other, as members of one bodie. And principally it is ſayde that the woman is an helpe too man. But men and women deſpiſe the end and purpoſe of GOD, and not weighing the duetie which they owe one to another, ſeeke for earthly goodes and ſubſtance, and couet earneſtly, the highnes and magnificencie, the glory and honour of the world. When they are about to marry, they enquire not principally of the life and maners of the man or woman, that is to be had, but aboue all thinges they haue regard to the goodes and riches, to the might, credite authoritie, and noblenes of the parentage, that thereby they may become greate and haue ſupport and credite, and a greate number of people, which ſhall woonder at their riches, reuerence them and court them. Or at leaſtwiſe that they may haue wherewith too walke by their neighbours, liue at their eaſe, and vſe great traffique or haue inheritãce of great reuenue. Now becauſe in this ſort they forſake God, and regard more the world, it comes to paſſe that for the confuſion of ſuch perſons, and to puniſh their vanitie and pride their greedines and auarice, God ouerturneth the lawes of mariage: So that a man that wil marrie, inſteede of finding an honeſt wife, which ſhould ſupport and aide him, giue him peace, ioy and conſolation, God giueth him a proude and fierce wife which ſerueth to no other purpoſe, but to torment & vex him, braule & make war with him, and put him to great trouble and ſorrow: when a man hath

Gen.2.18.

mette with ſuche a matche, hee ſaieth in his heart, that which Solomon auoucheth, ſaying,

It is better to dwel in a corner on the houſe toppe, &c. Alſo the wife that wil marie, in ſteed of finding an honeſt man which wil loue her, and be acceptable & pleaſant to her, meeteth with a proud and cruel man, a churle, and one with whō ſhe can haue no quietnes. Then ſaith ſhee alſo in her heart, *That it is better to dwel in a corner on the houſe top, then with a brawling husbande in a wide houſe.* Beholde heere howe wee ſhoulde applye this ſentence, although Solomon make mention but of the woman, and not without cauſe: for ſeeing that the woman is choſen by the man, & was created to aſſiſt and obeye him, and be ſubiect to him, as the Church is to Ieſus Chriſte: It is good reaſon, that ſhee be rebuked by name, when in ſteede of keeping the houſholde in ſilence and peace, ſhee lifteth vp her ſelfe againſt her husbande, and reſiſteth him: alſo becauſe by proofe women are more prompt & readie to ſtriue againſt their husbands, and that this vice is moſt common amongſt them, Solomon ſpeaketh the rather of the brawling woman, and blameth her: who in as muche as ſhee is inferiour to her husbande, ſhee ought to ſuffer patiently the ſeueritie of him, rather then to moue debates, and ſtriue againſt him. Note wee alſo, that when the *toppe of the houſe*, whereupon one endureth great heate and alteration in the ſommer, and great colde in the winter, is preferred before the company of a brawling woman, howe riche or noble ſoeuer ſhee bee: women are warned to walke warily in al humilitie and obedience, and be gentle, pleaſant, and louing, as they are taught to bee in many places of the ſcripture, which haue bene ſometimes heeretofore alledged.

Ephe.5.

10 *The ſoule of the vngodly wiſheth euil, and his neighbour ſhal finde no fauour in his ſight.*

There is none but hee woulde be eſteemed an honeſt man, but in the meane while, al (as it were) haue their harts enraged, & their affectiōs poiſoned, their deſires repleniſhed with rācor & hate, with ſtrife & wil to reuenge, their determinations and enterpriſes ful of inhumanitie and crueltie, of outrage, violence, and oppreſſion, of murther and homicide. Solomon knewe mans inwarde wickedneſſe to be ſuch, that they had neither feare nor knowledge of God, *Iere.17.9.* but deſpiſed al correction, and ſcorned thereat. And therefore hee complaineth ſaying, *The ſoule of the vngodly wiſheth euil.* This is not that he coulde ſounde the harts, and pearce the inwarde cogitations: for that appertaineth to God onely: But hee had this knowledge of the deſires and affections: as alſo wee may haue by the fruites which proceed therof. Hee ſeeth howe the wicked haue no pleaſure to doe workes of mercy, nor vſe charitie towardes them which haue need & neceſſitie therof, but rather to doe them al the wrong that they can, not ſparing them any more then a hungry Lyon, when hee hath caught his pray. Solomon expreſſeth ſuch euil fruites, and complaineth thereof ſaying,

And his neighbour ſhal finde no fauour in his ſight, or ſhall obtaine no mercy, or ſhal not be ſpared. The Hebrewe tongue importeth al theſe three ſenſes in one worde: and yet there is no contrarietie, although there bee diuerſitie. Alſo the innocent are diuerſly deſpiſed, and ill handled of the vngodly, who wil not once lende them a good looke, nor vſe any courteſie towards them, but rather vſe them as cruellie as they can inuent. Knowe we moreouer, that Solomon taxeth heere the hypocrites principally, which counterfeit Saintes and Lambes, either by ceremonies or by words or by other deeds, and geſture, by the which they ſeeke to intrapp them which are not wel aduiſed, and to oppreſſe them, to make their profit by the loſſe and damage of others.

11 *When the ſcorneful is puniſhed, the ignorant taketh better heede: and when the wiſe is inſtructed, hee wil receiue vnderſtanding.*

Becauſe this preſent ſentence hath beene alreadie handled, wee *Prou.19.25.* wil note only, that the repetition heere made, is very neceſſary, to the end we may learne to regarde neerely the puniſhmentes which happen to the wicked, either by the iudges mouth, or by warres, or by other meanes, which they thought not vpon. And that theſe puniſhements ſerue to ſchoole vs, to the ende wee may feare to deſpiſe, with obſtinacie and ſtubborneſſe, the inſtructions, admonitions and reprehenſions which are made to vs, and the good counſels and aduiſements which are giuen vs by the woorde, knowing that wee cannot haue too many examples, to aduiſe vs, and bring vs in feare. For wee are ſo fooliſhe of our owne nature, that eaſilie wee are perſuaded, and drawne, to followe the wickedneſſe of mockers and deſpiſers of al holineſſe and religion. On the other ſide wee cannot be ſo wiſe, but wee ſhal haue greate neede to increaſe in knowledge and vnderſtanding. And we ought to take heede, not to thinke nor ſay that wee haue ynough, and that no man hath to doe to inſtruct vs.

12 *The iuſt man inſtructeth the houſe of the wicked: But for wickedneſſe, God ouerthroweth the vngodly.*

Although the vngodly perſecute the iuſt, as though they had deſerued it, and deſpiſe to take example by their godly conuerſation, and although they reiect al good doctrine as vnprofitable or hurtful: Notwithſtanding the iuſt which is iuſt indeede, looſeth not his courage, he ceaſeth not to ſhewe himſelf a mirour of holy life, not to teache the wicked, counſelling them and correcting them, accuſing them and threatening them with the wrath and vengeance of God, and condemning them as worthy of the horrible iudgements of God. Solomon ſignifieth this when hee ſaith, *The iuſt man inſtructeth the houſe of the wicked.* Hee ſpeaketh not ſo without good proofe, for hee was in the time of the Prophetes who were of an vnſtained life and ſound doctrine, and ceaſed not to teach, admoniſh, correct, and threaten the wicked according as God commanded them. And afore that time there were many iuſt men which had done the like: As Noe which was a iuſt man, & was Herauld of iuſtice, and condemned the worlde. One may heere ſet downe Abraham, Lot, Moſes, Ioſue, & others which were before Solomons time. After whome alſo there were many other iuſt men, and amongſt the reſt, the Apoſtles of our Lord & Sauiour & theyr ſucceſſors, which haue liued holily, and purely adminiſtred the worde. And becauſe in the Hebrew tougue, one worde hath diuers ſignifications, ſome for *inſtruct*, ſay conſider wiſely. And it is wel ſaid: for

Gen.6.9.
2.Pet.2.5.
Heb.11.7.

it is very conuenient to regarde that which the wicked doe, and to take heede thereof, that we conſent not to their woorkes, but rather reprooue them thereof. And alſo of that which happeneth or ſhal happen vnto them, to the ende we enuie not their proſperitie, which is of no endurance, and after the ſame, they are in perpetuall miſerie. Other ſay, to make proſper, as Abraham made the king of Sodome to proſper, and Iacob Laban, God cauſed Ioſeph to make his maiſter to proſper. But although one inſtruct the wicked, although one conſider the ſtate of his houſe, to ſeeke to refourme it, although one make his goods to fructifie & proſper: Neuertheleſſe becauſe he deſpiſeth the word, and is puffed vp with pride, and addicted to all wickednes, for this cauſe nothing profiteth him, but all the goods that hee getteth, be they ſpiritual or temporall, turne to his deſtruction: which if it be not in this worlde, God ceaſeth not to reuenge it at laſt, as Solomon expreſſeth ſaying, *Gen.14.16. & 30.29. & 39.2.*

But for wickednes God ouerthroweth the vngodly. Heere Solomon ſayth nothing, but the wicked haue prooued it at al times, and doe prooue it yet. Alſo the Lawe and the Prophets are ful of ſuch threatninges. But although the wicked are woorthie of no good, and that they are threatned deſtruction: Neuertheleſſe it is not lawfull for vs to wiſhe them euil, much leſſe to woorke them the ſame: but rather to deſire their welfare, and chiefly the health of their ſoules, we ought to inſtruct them and ſhewe them the way of health, and not to bee affraide of looſing our paines: for when wee beare the worde of truth vprightly, we are a good ſmel to the Lord. *2.Cor.2.14.* Thus dooing, God wil not ouerthrowe vs with the wicked to deſtroy vs, but if we bee comprehended with the wicked in temporal deſtruction, God wil gather vs againe to himſelfe, and deliuer our ſoules from perdition, but he wil deſtroy for euer the ſoules of the wicked without any remiſſion.

13 *Hee that ſtoppeth his eare at the cry of the poore, ſhall crye himſelfe alſo, and not bee heard.*

God hath ſhewed himſelfe very merciful towardes vs, when before wee euer called vpon him, hee prouided for our neceſſitie, creating al things for our vſe, and giuing vs plentie thereof. Neuertheleſſe to the ende we ſhoulde not be vngrateful, but acknowledge whence this comes, he permitteth vs to haue pouertie, and wil that we vnderſtand, that without his grace, liberalitie, and bleſſing, our goods profit vs nothing: to the ende that wee may bee careful to craue that he wil giue vs our daily bread: as Ieſus Chriſt teacheth vs to aſke: and as our good God and father is merciful vnto vs, and giueth vs liberally that which wee requeſt: So hee wil that wee reſiſt, according to our power the pouertie of our neighbours, diſtributing to them any goods, as wee woulde they ſhoulde doe vnto vs, if wee were in their cace. And heerein hee requeſteth nothing but that which is reaſonable: as wee ought naturally to vnderſtande without ſcripture. Notwithſtanding to waken our nature, which is negligent to doe good to the needie, and to ſhewe vs that hee hath great care ouer the poore, hee recommendeth them to vs by diuers commandementes, in the Lawe and Prophetes, and in the wrytings of the Apoſtles and Euangeliſtes: adding promiſes, and alſo threatenings to the commandementes, to giue hope to the liberal and pityful; and to afray the cruel and vnmerciful, and make them the more inexcuſable. As hath beene alledged heeretofore. But becauſe that God executeth not preſently his threatnings or forgetteth them eaſilie: and therefore it is needful that one repeate them, as Solomon wel knewe: For this cauſe to the former promiſes and threatnings, he addeth another ſaying,

Pro.14.31.
& 19.17.

Hee that ſtoppeth his eare, &c. This preſent threatning is executed often in this life. For one ſeeth that by warres, lawing, famine and euil gouernement many riche men are impoueriſhed and when they craue any thing, then they obtaine not that which they deſire, and whereof they haue need. The ſcripture alſo giueth vs examples thereof. As of Eſau who ſoulde his byrthright. One ſeeth that Eſau was giuen to his pleaſures, which is a ſigne that hee made no accompt of the poore. As alſo the yonger of the twoo ſonnes ſpending his portion prodigally, ſheweth well that hee had no care nor regarde of the poore. It is executed alſo very horribly after this lyfe in hell, in damnation and

Gen.25.29.
& 27.34.
Heb.12.17.
Luke.16.19.
Mat.25.14.
Iam.2.13.

death eternal, as is ſeene in the ſcriptures. Alſo as wee ought to bee liberal of our earthly goods towardes the indigent to ſuſteine this bodily life: ſo wee ought to haue pitie on the ſoules of them, which haue neede to haue their fautes pardoned: Otherwiſe God will not pardon vs ours. *Mat.12.14. 15.&18.23.*

14 *A priuie rewarde pacifieth diſpleaſure: And a gift in the boſome ſtilleth furiouſneſſe.*

When men beganne to multiply on the earth, it was corrupted before God, and repleniſhed with extortion and wrong. Wherein wee haue argument that the feeble and weake were oppceſſed, that the poore and needy were deſpiſed and forgotten. For this cauſe God was much an angred, and deſtroied the worlde by the flood. Alſo the Lorde ſaide, The cry of Sodome and Gomorrha is multiplyed, and their ſinnes are very grieuous, &c. Ezechiel expoundeth what this cry and ſinne was. For this cauſe Gods wrath was kindled againſt them, and hee deſtroied them. Heerein wee ought to bee aduertiſed, that if wee reſemble them, wee ſhal alſo periſhe by the iuſt vengeance of God. Nowe to ſhunne this yre and furie, Solomon ſheweth vs what wee haue to doe when hee ſaieth, *A priuie gift, &c.* Wherein wee haue to note, that to imprint ſurelie in our hartes that which hee teacheth, hee ſaith one thing twiſe. Alſo the doctrine which hee giueth vs heere, is ſo excellent and neceſſary, that it deſerueth wel to be repeated, and alſo declared and expounded. Of it Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe is a good expoſitour. If wee take this preſent ſentence in this ſenſe, wee haue together with the doctrine therein, promiſe of euerlaſting life: for ſeeing that God refreineth his anger, and rage, when wee giue to the poore for his ſake, it ſoloweth wel that wee ſhal not periſh, but that by his grace and goodneſſe we ſhal liue eternally. But if we vnderſtande this ſentence, of brybes and giftes, that the iudges, and gouernours of the earth take to peruert the lawe and equitie, it behoooueth vs to ſay, that Solomon accuſeth the Magiſtrates and rulers of rapine, which ought in their anger to roote out the wicked. But to ſpare and fauour them, they let themſelues bee corrupted by giftes and brybes, for the which they doe wrong to the innocent: and fauour the wicked

Gen.6.

Gen.18.20.

Eze.16.49.

Mat.6.1.

Rom.13.

ked as hath beene alreadie ſpoken of diuers times. In this ſenſe, wee haue a menace of eternal death againſt wicked iudges that ſpoile and rob. For theeues and couetous perſons haue no parte *1.Cor.6.* in the kingdome of God. They are alſo accuſed that they, and thoſe which giue them giftes and bribes, proceede againſt their conſciences knowing wel that they doe wickedly, when they dare not publikely before the worlde, the one giue, nor the other take: which thing Solomon ſignifieth wel, ſpeaking of priuie giftes and of boſome.

15 *The iuſt man hath ioy to do iuſtice: but horror is to them that worke iniquitie.*

Wee al deſire to reioyce and be merie, and to bee exempt from al feare and horrour. But there are very fewe which knowe howe they ought to reioice, nor in what. For after the common trade of the worlde, the manner of reioicing is, to take pleaſure in laughing at vanitie and follie, at filthineſſe and villanie, at diſſolution and naughtineſſe, and this is when one reioiceth at the deſires of the fleſh. As when one hath abundance of riches, credite, and power, or when one commeth to the end of his enterpriſes, and findeth no reſiſtance, but rather eche one fauoureth him, and ſeeketh to pleaſe him in al things. I ſay namely, that this is the common trade of the worlde, whereof the iuſt man is not. And therefore hee reioiceth not in this manner, nor at ſuch thinges. But hee reioiceth in doing wel, and helping thoſe which haue neede of his aide, defending, and deliuering them which are oppreſſed. Such a care according to the worlde, is but trouble, griefe and ſadneſſe: for dooing thus, one hath neuer good day, as worldlings ſay and thinke. But making no account of their opinion, let vs ſticke to that which the holy Ghoſt ſaith thereof by Solomon, ſaying,

The iuſt man hath ioy to doe iuſtice, &c. Now ſeeing it appertaineth principally to Kings, Princes, and gouernours to doe iuſtice, they are heere taught that their ioy ought not to bee in delights & pompes, in pleaſures and playes, as their common vſe is, when they haue no feare of God: but to render right to euery one carefully, in defending the innocent,feeble and weake: and deliuering thẽ from the violence and oppreſſion of the wicked, and puniſhing the oppreſſours and offenders. Otherwiſe they are not iuſt,but wrongful and wicked: which thing is not ſeemely for them which are placed in the ſeat of God,which loueth iuſtice and righteouſneſſe, and taketh pleaſure therein. Alſo that which cauſeth ioy to them,that doe iuſtice, is that they are certaine that God accepteth their doings,& eſteemeth of them,and they themſelues do nothing whereof their conſciences reprooue them. The vngodly, and wicked haue no ſuch certaintie: true it is that they ſtriue to aſſure and harden themſelues in their miſdeeds,and deliuer themſelues from al ſcruple,and caſt away care, to reioice in riots and inſolencies, exceſſe, and diſſolutions. But the word is true without exception,which ſaith, that there is no peace for the wicked: which accordeth wel with that which Solomon ſaith here, *But horror is to thẽ that worke iniquitie.* And it is in folowing the curſes, which are threatened to the tranſgreſſors of the lawe. Although then that the iuſt in this worlde, which giue themſelues to doe their duetie,ſeeme ſad and ſorowful,neuertheleſſe for the quietneſſe,and eaſe of their conſciences, and for the aſſurance that they haue,that their workes pleaſe God,they reioice and take pleaſure to employ themſelues to doe good. Alſo although the wicked ſeeke to leade a pleaſant life in toying and fooling, and though they ſeeme merie, yet neuertheleſſe they haue no true ioy, for through their miſdeeds their conſciences accuſe them, and torment them,mawgre their harts,with the feare of the iudgementes of God. And ſo although they ſtriue to ſhewe outwardly a ſmyling countenance,and take their pleaſure in making good cheere, eating and drinking,ſinging,leaping, and daunſing, yet they ceaſe not to haue within them the worme that gnaweth, grieueth them, and maketh them ſad: and thus they haue no true ioy. If therefore at our neede wee wil haue ioy that is durable, let vs beware to doe any thing, whereof our conſciences may reprooue and accuſe vs, which thing wee ſhal wel doe if the onely woorde of GOD bee the rule of al our actions: for wee can haue no peace in our conſciences but by the ſame. And there is nothing which can aſſure vs that wee doe wel, but this holy woorde,

Iſa.48.22.

Deut.28.28 65.66.

Wherefore it behoueth the wicked, which make no account to doe
good to their neighbours, but rather afflict them, and haue no right
Pſ.14.4.5. knowledge of God, to tremble, and haue no aſſurance. Then if they
ſo tremble, they cannot bee in laſting ioye, but muſt needes haue
Pſ.32.10.11 continual horrour and feare, griefe and ſorrowe: where contrariwiſe
the iuſt are inuited to ioy.

16 *The man that wandereth out of the way of wiſedome, ſhall remayne in the congregation of the dead.*

Becauſe the worde of God is ſimple, and teacheth vs not hye & excellent things in the opinion of the world: for this cauſe it is deſpiſed, and men make no account to folowe the way which it teacheth: thinking it a great diſhonor to be conformable to the ſame: and that they ſhoulde bee ſcarce worthy to liue. Likewiſe men perſecuted at al times, and preſently doe, thoſe, that folowe it as wicked, and eſteeme them vnworthy of life. But thoſe which deſpiſing the worde, ſeeke out things which are in price with the worlde, and folow thẽ, are reputed honeſt men, & are placed alwaies in the moſt honorable place amongſt worldlings. Which is the cauſe that they thinke themſelues to be in good eſtate, and of ſuch force that they ſhal neuer periſh. Wherein they diſceiue themſelues, for ſeeing the worde of God is our wiſedome and vnderſtanding, and that hee
Deut.4.6. which doeth the things appointed by the ſame ſhal liue: and as wee
Leuit.18.5. ſee, there is long life in her right hande: it foloweth, that without
Pro.16. this wiſedome there is nothing but death. And therefore Solomon
Mat.22.32. ſaith.

The man that wandreth out of the way, &c. Hee ſpeaketh not
of them which are dead bodily: for if they haue bene faithful, they
are not dead, but liue. Solomon therefore condemneth al worldly
wiſe men to death eternal: for there is none that ſhoulde bee eſteemed
Iohn.5.24. dead, but thoſe that are in the ſame. In the death of the faithful,
& 11.25.26 there is nothing but a paſſage to life: ſeeing that our Sauiour ſo
ſaith. Wee are therefore heere admoniſhed to folowe rightly the
only worde, if we wil liue, and are threatened death eternal, if wee
wander out of the way of the ſame.

17 *The man that loueth banketting, is worthy of pouertie: and who ſo delighteth in wyne and delicates, ſhall not be riche.*

It is not ill done to liue pleaſantly: bee it in taking bodily repaſt, or doing any other thing (as it hath bin partly ſpoken of elſewhere) God hath not put vs in this world to giue vs onlie neceſſarie things for our ſelues, but alſo delectable, and pleaſant, to recreate vs with ſobrietie and temperance, without any diſordinate deſire. It is not without a very needful cauſe that I ſay with ſobrietie: for it is not meete that the children of God bee like vnto worldlings, which neither thinke their meate ſweete, nor drinke good, if they laugh not with open mouth as they ſay, and bee in companie with thoſe which doe play the vnthrifts. Whiles they are buſie about ſuch delights, or rather about ſuch wantonneſſe they thinke not that they offende awhit: and therefore they ſpare nothing, but ſpende ſuperfluouſly and with great exceſſe. But although it be late, yet they ſhal receiue their hyre which they deſerue: that is to ſay, pouertie and want. As Solomon threateneth them ſaying,

The man that loueth, &c. This is not to ſay that it is ill done to reioice in taking ones repaſt naturallie, nor that it is amiſſe to vſe ſweete wine and meates, which Solomon comprehendeth vnder the name of delicates: if ſo bee it we vſe them, as S. Paul teacheth. *1. Timo. 4. 3.* For in this alſo conſiſteth the ioy of the Chriſtians: and not in ryot and greate deſire to fulfil the appetite of the belly, and pleaſant taſte of the mouth. As is the tricke of the prodigal and gluttons, to ſeeke to ſatiſfie their ſenſualitie. Alſo Solomon ſaieth not, *The man that delighteth, &c.* ſhal haue pouertie: and hee that drinketh wine, and eateth good meates ſhal not bee riche. But he ſaieth, *He that loueth*, By the which worde hee ſheweth that hee ſpeaketh of him, which is wholy giuen to banketting, drunkenneſſe, and gluttonie, and hath no delight in ſoberneſſe, and temperance. Solomon threateneth ſuch a one of pouertie, as our Sauiour doth alſo, which *Luk. 6. 52.* pouertie beginneth after in this life, as is prooued by them which hauing ſpent their goods prodigally, are conſtrained to begge their bread: ſome frō dore to dore, otherſome in borrowing money neuer to reſtore it againe: the reſt in ſeeking their liuing by playing the Paraſites and flatterers, which is a miſerable eſtate, but it ſhal bee without compariſon far more miſerable after this life. As one may ſee in the riche man which is in hel. Let vs folowe therefore ſobrietie, and temperance, not deſiring to enriche our ſelues. For although that riches are good, and that it is laweful to bee riche, yet neuertheleſſe one ſhould not ſet his affection thereon: As hath beene ſhewed heeretofore by the ſcriptures. Alſo beeing in pouertie, we ſhoulde not deteſt it, to rage and murmure againſt God, nor to giue our ſelues licence to take goods, where wee finde them, but by lawful meanes and waies, wee ſhoulde ſeeke to ſhunne the ſame, applying our ſelues ech one to his buſineſſe wheretoo he is called.

Luk.16.23.

18 *The vngodly ſhalbe a ranſome for the righteous, and the wicked for the iuſt.*

It might ſeeme at the firſt ſhew, that Solomõ ſpeaketh againſt experience, and againſt the ſcriptures. Firſt of al (as it is prooued in the worlde) one beateth the dog before the Lyon: And ſo the wicked and vngodly pay not ranſome for the iuſt and righteous, but rather the innocent are the ranſome of the wicked. The anſwere to this experience is, that it is not amiſſe that Solomon ſpeaketh contrary to the ſame: for his intent is not to ſhewe how the wicked are handled of the world, and in the world. For the world afflicteth not his owne, to ſpare the innocent. Secondly, as concerning the ſcriptures, Solomon ſpeaketh not againſt them: for although Ieſus Chriſt bee the ranſome of the wicked and vngodly (who is onely iuſt & righteous by nature) which hee hath paide for vs wicked and vngodly, as was figured foorth in the lawe by the ſacrifices, and oblations, and was foretolde vs of the Prophetes, and alſo as hee himſelf hath ſaide, and his Apoſtles affirmed: Neuertheleſſe there is no diuerſitie betweene the ſcriptures, and that which Solomon ſpeaketh ſaying, The vngodly ſhalbe a ranſome, &c. For if wee take good heede wheretoo the enterpriſes of the wicked tend, and howe God can wel ouerthrow them, we ſhal vnderſtand how the vngodly ſhal be the ranſome of the iuſt. For the intent of the wicked is to deſtroy and roote out the iuſt and righteous without al remedie. But

Iſa.53.4.
Mat.20.28.
1.Cor.1.30.
Gal.3.13. &
4.4.5.
1.Tim. 1.5.
1.Ioh.4.9.10.

what force ſoeuer they ſhewe againſt them, yea although they put them to death, yet neuertheleſſe God wil deliuer them, and put the vngodly and wicked in their place: that is to ſay, he doeth to them, as they had thought to haue done to the iuſt: and ſo they are the ranſome of the righteous. For when God puniſheth the wicked becauſe of the euil, which they had practiſed againſt the righteous, it is as though he toke ſome ranſome of them. That which hath bene ſaide in the 11. chap. verſ. 8. accordeth wel to this. Then ſeeing the vngodly and wicked are called *ranſome*, let them knowe, that God wil neuer diſcharge thẽ, no more then an earthly Prince doeth ſend away his priſoners of account, till hee haue pledge, or ranſome for them. Note wee moreouer that although the wicked bee the ranſome of the iuſt and righteous: yet neuertheleſſe they ſatiſfie not for them: for Ieſus Chriſte onely is the ſatiſfaction for the ſinnes of the whole world.

19 *It is better to dwell in a wilderneſſe then with a chyding and an angrie woman.*

A wilderneſſe not only is vnprofitable, but alſo noyſome and hurtful, as the children of Iſrael deemed it: as may be ſeene by their complaintes, and murmurings againſt Moſes. Alſo it is prooued by this, that beſides one cannot haue there what is needeful, it is alſo repleniſhed with wilde beaſtes, venemous, and cruel. Notwithſtanding Solomon preferreth the habitation and dwelling in a deſert, before a chyding and an angry woman, and ſo declareth that it is a very pittiful cace to be accompanied with ſuch a woman. And herein hee ſaith nothing elſe in ſubſtance, but that which hee hath ſaide heere aboue verſ. 9. although he vſe other words. For ſtrifes or debates proceede of furie or indignation. Wherefore one might ſay, that Solomon vſeth Repetition, to admoniſh them ſurelie that will mary, that they enquire diligently of the partie, which preſents her ſelfe, what manners, and conuerſation ſhe is of. For when one is maried, he cannot ſeparate himſelfe againe, as one may retire himſelfe out of another country.

20 *In a wiſe mans houſe there is treaſure and oyle: but a fooliſh body will deuoure it.*

Although it ſeeme that Solomon praiſeth the wiſeman, becauſe hee hath in his houſe precious treaſure and oyle, by the which things are ſignified greate riches, delicacies, pleaſures and voluptuouſneſſe: yet neuertheleſſe, let vs not thinke that if we haue worldly proſperitie, that for the ſame, wee are wiſe, nor that it is laweful to ſeeke to gather togither great ſtore of worldly ſubſtance, nor to take delight in our owne pleaſures and doings, after the deſires of the fleſh. For the moſt fooles and naughtipackes are ſeene to haue plentie of riches. For the ſcripture (as wee haue partly ſpoken of) teacheth vs, that wee ought not to ſet our hartes vppon the riches of this worlde, nor that wee bee giuen to delightes and pleaſures, to vſe our fleſh to his appetite. This is not to ſay that it is ill done to haue much goods, and enioy the delightes and pleaſures of this worlde, ſo that it bee in ſoberneſſe, and temperance, and that willingly wee make our poore neighbours partakers thereof, according to their neceſſitie and neede, and that wee be readie to yeelde to euery one without any grudging when they neede our aide, according as S. Paule teacheth vs. But Solomon inſtructeth vs, that to poſſeſſe and keepe the goods, and pleaſures wel, which God giueth vs in plentie to enioy them, and vſe them as wee ought, and not to looſe nor ſcatter them abroade, it is neceſſarie that we be endewed with wiſedome. This ſenſe is plaine vnto vs by the Antitheſis which he maketh, ſaying,

1.Cor.7.29.

But a fooliſh body wil deuoure it. When hee ſaith, that the fooliſhe knowe not howe to keepe their goods, but diſperſe, and waſt them, hee ſheweth wel that it is very neceſſarie for vs to bee wiſe, if wee wil haue our dwelling places repleniſhed with precious treaſures and oyle, and by conſequent, that our principal treaſure bee the feare of God. For it is alſo the beginning, or principal point of wiſedome, and without the ſame wee cannot bee wiſe, nor conſequently capable to keepe the goods which God giueth vs, and diſpoſe them as wee ought. And this is, why Solomon ſaieth that the fooliſh man which is without feare, without reuerence of God, and without wiſedome ſhal deuoure the precious treaſure. Although hee ſtriue to keepe that which hee hath, and ſpare it aſmuch as is poſſible, and ſeeke to increaſe it: neuertheleſſe he deuoureth it, becauſe the ſame is not ſanctified to his vſe, and commonly goeth away in ſmoke ſooner then hee thinketh it: or by that which is taken from him by warre ſutes in lawe, theftes and robberies, or that hee himſelfe is taken from his goods. Beſides this let vs note firſt of al that Solomon calleth *treaſure and oyle*, the goods that GOD giueth to the wiſe man: becauſe the wiſe man, eſteemeth it ſo greatly that although it bee litle, and of ſmal valewe, and that hee poſſeſſeth it with greate difficultie: neuertheleſſe, hee contenteth himſelſe with it, hee reioiceth in it, and giueth thankes to God for it, beeing warie not to waſt it prodigally, but to ſpend it ſoberly, and preferreth it before al the riches and pleaſures of kings, knowing that better are a fewe things to the iuſt man, then greate abundance to the vngodly. For this ſame reaſon Solomon attributeth not to him, caſtles, pallaces or greate houſes, but onelie a dwelling place, wherewith hee is content to dwel vnder couert, and lodge there the litle goods which God hath ſent him: not that it is not laweful for the wiſe man to poſſeſſe greate riches, & haue a mightie houſe, and reioice in the ſame with al modeſtie. But hee is content with ſmal thinges, and of litle eſtimation according to the worlde without deſiring more: for hee imagineth that the wil of God is ſuch, which hee wil no wayes withſtand. Let vs note ſecondly, that ſeeing fooles and wicked perſons beare enuy and hate againſt the wiſe and righteous, that they robbe them, and take of their ſubſtance, aſmuch as they can, that it is not without cauſe that Solomon complaineth howe they deuoure the *precious treaſure and oyle:* as may bee vnderſtood, although wee haue expounded that the foole deuoureth his ſubſtance, becauſe hee keepeth it not by good and laweful meanes, and it is not ſanctified to his vſe. Note wee thirdly, that the wiſe men are admoniſhed to inſtruct their familie in all wiſedome and vnderſtanding, to the ende that their children bee not fooles, and that they bee not giuen to their mouth, and belly, to conſume by gluttony and drunkenneſſe, the ſubſtance which they haue ſpared: but that they learne to vſe it

Pſal.37.16.

with al ſobrietie, and temperance: and content themſelues therewith, without rauiſhing other mens goods to deuoure them, and put them to euil.

21 *Who ſo foloweth righteouſneſſe and mercy, ſhal find life, righteouſneſſe and honour.*

What thing ſoeuer we doe, we cannot merit at gods hande, nor binde him to yelde and pay vs any rewarde: and this is for diuers reaſons. Firſt hee hath treated it vs, and not we our ſelues, and giueth vs al things abundantly for our vſe: wherevpon enſueth that we are bounde to ſerue him according to his wil, and that wee doe nothing but that we ought to doe. For this cauſe alſo our Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt admoniſheth vs, When you haue done al things which *Iohn.15.1.* are commanded you, ſay, yet we are vnprofitable ſeruants, and haue left vndone thoſe things which we ought to haue done. Secondly, we cannot do wel if we become not new creatures in Ieſus Chriſt, as hee himſelfe ſheweth vs, whereby it foloweth that wee can merite nothing. As alſo S. Paule argueth of the ſame reaſon that wee *Ephe.2.8.* merite not ſaluation. Thirdly, wee are neuer ſo iuſt but wee ſinne. *Eccle 7. 21.* Alſo Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth it vs wel, when hee wil, that wee aske *1.Iohn.1.8.* pardon for our treſpaſſes. Our workes alſo are neuer perfect, bee *Mat.6.12.* they neuer ſo good. For this cauſe S. Paule braggeth not of his me- *Rom.7.14.* rites but rather accuſeth himſelfe. Notwithſtanding if wee giue our ſelues to doe wel according to the worde of God, and if we continewe in the ſame, we ſhal not looſe our labour, but ſhalbee wel rewarded, as hee promiſeth vs by his worde, and wee haue teſtimonie thereof in the ſcriptures. And amongſt the reſt, when Solomon ſaith, *Who ſo foloweth righteouſnes, &c.* We ſee heere that there is great rewarde in ſtore for them that continewe in doing wel. It is nothing to begin, if one continewe not. And therefore Solomon is not content to ſay, *who ſo foloweth righteouſnes, &c.* wheretoo S. Paule accordeth & inuiteth vs to this perſeuerance. It is not ynough therefore, that for a certaine time, we giue to euery one that which is his owne, and that we be ſomwhat, and for a certain ſpace pitiful, to them that haue need of another mans aide: but it behoueth vs to be at al times iuſt & merciful, ſeeing we owe continuall obedience, and ſubmiſſion to his commandements, admonitions & demonſtratiõs, which if we performe, we are happy & bleſſed, as Solomon pronounceth it, promiſing vs that we ſhal finde *life, righteouſneſſe, and honour*. Wherein hee ſheweth that wee ſhal want nothing, but firſt of al God wil giue vs al things needful, for the body which he comprehendeth vnder this word *life*. Secondly, that forgiuing vs our treſpaſſes, he wil aſſure vs of life eternal. Thirdly, that hauing iuſtified vs, hee wil alſo glorifie vs. *Rom. 8. 30.* *Coloſ. 3. 3. 4.*

22 *A wiſe man ſcaleth the Citie of the mighty, and ouerthroweth the ſtrength wherin they truſted.*

Seeing we haue neither wiſedome nor foreſight, nor vnderſtanding, but that which wee bee taught in the woorde of the Lorde ſo that we ſerue him in feare and trembling, it behoueth vs to vnderſtand that *a wiſe man* in this point, is he which guideth himſelf vprightly, according as he is taught by this worde, & neither truſteth in his bodily force, nor in the fantaſie of his natural ſenſe, neither in any induſtry or nimbleneſſe which is in him according to the mã: but only leaneth vnto the Lorde, & taketh him for al his force and might, as Dauid teacheth. *Pſal. 18. 2.* Now ſuch a man ſhal not be void of aide & ſuccour, to be deliuered from the handes of his enemies for the Lord wilbe alwaies ready, when he ſhal cal vpon his name. As Dauid ſaith, & not only wil deliuer him, but alſo make him triumphe ouer his foes, as Dauid acknowledged. *Pſal. 18. 29.* Which thing he himſelf prooued, & many others before him. As Abraham, Ioſue, Sampſon, Gedeon, and others which haue liued in the feare of the Lord. Solomõ expreſſeth it in one word ſaying, *A wiſe man ſcaleth, &c.* And this is folowing the promiſes of God, made to them which ſhal walke vprightly in his lawe. *Deut. 28. 17.* So the wiſedome which is the feare of the Lorde, is of a farre more excellencie, then al worldly force without compariſon. It is that which wee ought principally to retaine in this ſentence, to the ende wee folowe that which the Lorde teacheth vs by his Prophet Ieremie, *Iere. 9. 22. 23* and not that wee enterpriſe warre, for to occupy another mans dominions. For although theſe holy perſonages aboue named, and others haue made warres, and that they haue obtained victory againſt their foes:

Yet neuertheleſſe let vs not thinke, that by their example it is lawful for vs to inuade another mans countrie, for firſt they knewe that it was Gods wil they ſhoulde doe ſo. Secondly they were not led by their owne proper affections, ſearching their particular profite. But they purſued the glory of God, ſtriuing to deſtroy his enemies, & the enemies of his Churche. Thirdly this happened them in figure, to the end wee ſhoulde learne to behaue our ſelues valiantly againſt the Diuel, our fleſh, and ſinne, which are enemies to God. Wee are inuited to this warre in many places of the ſcriptures: as it hath bene alledged partlie heeretofore. Moreouer let vs learne that it is follie to truſt in places wel fortified and defended according to the worlds opinion, and that wee ought ſo to walke in fayth, and in the
Pſa.20.8,9. feare of God, that wee may ſay with Dauid. Some put their truſt in chariots and other ſome in horſes: But we haue recorded the name of the Lord our God.

23 *Who ſo keepeth his mouth and his tongue, the ſame keepeth his ſoule from troubles.*

It ſeemeth to many that to ſhunne afflictions, nothing elſe is needeful, but to haue a multitude of friends, and that they bee redoupted, and mightie. And to get ſuch friends, one ought to be conuerſant with great men, ſtil pleaſing them and flattering them, lying, making falſe reportes, and backbyting, ieſting, and telling tales of laughter. Such people thinke themſelues ſure ynough, and out of danger: but they are far diſceiued, as common proofe ſheweth. For one ſhal ſee it oftē come to paſſe, that thoſe which haue ſuch vaine, & venemous tongues, fal in great diſtreſſe, according as they are alſo menaced in the ſcriptures. Theſe menaces are put in execution, now
Deut.19.16. Pſa.5.7.& 12.2.& 50.19. by iudges, another while by ſtryfes, ſeditions, and warres, and ſometimes by other puniſhments. Now to the ende that we may ſhunne ſuch threatnings and puniſhments. Solomon ſheweth vs what wee haue to doe, when he ſaith. *Who ſo keepeth his mouth, &c.* He teacheth vs to be ſilent & fly al vaine talke that is ſuperfluous & hurtful, & to folow that which Dauid ſaith, I haue bin domb, & not ſaid
Pſal.39.2. & 141.3. a word. And to do wel this ſame, it behoueth vs to praye like him, Set a watch Lord beforemy mouth, & keepe the dore of my lips.

342

If we do thus, he promiſeth vs that we ſhal keepe our ſoules: That is to ſay, our perſons from tribulation, not that we ſhal keepe them, but that there wil come many: but that by the grace of God, wee ſhal ouercome them al, as it is written. Such deliuerance ſhal not be of ſmal endurance, as Dauid ſheweth vs. There is another kinde of keeping ones mouth: of the which together with this ſame, it hath bene ſpoken of. Chap.13.verſe,3. Pſ.34.19.13

24 *He is called proude, arrogant, and ſcornful, which in his wrath worketh preſumptuouſly.*

Although ſometimes men of the world attribute names vnto perſonages ſuche as they deſerue: yet neuertheleſſe moſt vſually, they attribute names & titles which are nothing fitting for the perſons: and this is either to flatter them, or to reproche and blame them without iuſt cauſe, onely becauſe they wil bee welcome vnto thē, vnto whō they vſe theſe honourable titles; & becauſe they hate them whome they reproch and blame, in giuing them vile and infamous names. And therefore the children of God ſhal haue no regarde to ſuche names and titles, knowing that their names are regiſtred in heauen, and that the memorie of them is eternal before God. But the holie ſcripture calleth no man, but as is wel agreeing either to his nature, his affections, or his maners. It flattereth no man, although it giue verie honourable names and titles to the faithful, neither blameth it any bodie, but vpon iuſt cauſe. For the ſcripture is diuinely inſpired and indited by the holy Ghoſt, which is teacher of al trueth, and hath lying in hate. And ſo, when Solomon ſaith, *That he is called,&c*: he ſetteth here no title, which is not fitting for him *that worketh preſumptuouſly*: That is to ſay, to him that doeth his deedes by audacitie, temeritie, and raſhneſſe, and perſuadeth with him ſelſe, that hee ought not to faile, but to mooue him ſelf furiouſly againſt them, that wil any way withſtand him. Of ſuch men the preſumption is ſo great, that they dare ſtriue againſt God, in deſpiting, curſing, and renouncing him, and deſpiſing raſhly al holie religion, good admonitions and corrections. Alſo it is by good right, that Solomon calleth them, *proude, arrogant*, and *ſcornful*, as in truth they are, whē they are tranſported with ſo furious a preſumption. Nowe ſeeing ſuch names and titles diſpleaſe vs, let vs haue regarde to vſe our ſelues vprightly, in al modeſtie, feare, and humilitie, and the Lorde wil graunt vs his grace. But if wee beare the name of *proude, arrogant, and ſcornful,* hee wil reſiſt vs ſtoutly, and deſtroye vs, according to the threatenings which haue bene alledged heretofore. Wee may wel be obſtinate and hardened in our opinion, deſpiſers of God, and of his worde, reuengeful, wrongdoers, and outragious, but this can not let God to do his worke, and vſe and execute his iuſt vengeance againſt vs, for his highneſſe which is to vs incomprehéſible, is aboue al worldly highneſſe. As he hath wel ſhewed at the flood, vpon Sodome and Gomorrha, on Pharao, and the people of Egypt, and vppon many others.

25 *The deſire of the ſlouthful ſhal kil him: for his handes haue refuſed to labour.*

Solomon bare great hate both to ſlouth, and the ſlouthful, as hee ſheweth wel, when ſo often he threatneth the ſlothful with pouertie and need, with deſtruction and death. And by ſuche repetitions he teacheth vs to flye ſlouth. And againe, preſently, when hee ſaieth, *The deſire, &c.* Wherein alſo hee ſheweth vs, who are the ſlouthful, that is to wit, curious of the goods and ſubſtance of an other man. For by what right ſoeuer they poſſeſſe goods, ſeeing they employe not them ſelues to labour, they vſurpe and eate the bread of them which folow the vocation whereto God hath called them, for they are the ſeruauntes and children of the Lorde, whoſe the earth and the heauen is, and al therein contained, and conſequently, they onely are inheritours of the worlde. And ſo the ſlouthful are couetous, theeues, and robbers, whereupon enſueth, that they are woorthie of death. Alſo Solomon threateneth the ſluggiſh therwith, when he ſaith, *His deſire ſhal kil him.* And when hee ſo ſaith, he threatneth him ſecretly of eternal death. For if God deeme not the ſlouthful man woorthie of this preſent life, it foloweth, that he wil not giue him life eternal. It is therefore euil ſpoken, when one ſaith of a ſluggard, that he is a good man, except hee take good for vnprofitable: for wee ought to attribute no goodneſſe to him, that God condemneth.

26 *He coueteth greedily al the day long, but the righteous giueth, and ſpareth not.*

Sith hee putteth the righteous, as contrarie to the ſlouthful, he ſheweth wel that the ſlouthful is wicked, and that hee deſerueth wel to haue pouertie, deſtruction, and decaie. And when he putteth, *giueth*, and ſpareth not, againſt *coueteth greedily*: hee ſheweth the inſatiable auarice, and great crueltie of the ſlouthful. Hee ſheweth that the ſlouthful hath no care of him ſelfe, and that hee hath no compaſſion, nor pitie of the poore. And this is for no ſmal while, but he perſeuereth in his auarice & crueltie. For, as Solomon ſaieth, *He coueteth greedily al the day long*. And contrarie, The righteous neuer ceaſeth to doe good, as Solomon declareth, when hee ſaieth, *And he ſpareth not*. Wherein we ſee, that we cannot claime the title of being righteous, if we perſeuer not to vſe charitie, and doe the workes of mercie. But although it be ſaide, that the sluggarde hath a care of him ſelfe, neuertheleſſe the care that hee hath, is not properly care, but onely a greedineſſe more then beſtial. For if hee had a due care of him ſelfe, hee woulde ſtudie to woorke the health of his ſoule, with feare and trembling. And in this maner, he woulde ſaue both bodie and ſoule, whereas nowe they go to wrack and ruine. For iudgement ſhal be done without mercie, to him that hath vſed no mercie. Contrariwiſe, the righteous man prouideth for his ſoule and bodie by giuing, and perſeuering to doe wel: Seeing that, Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhal obtaine mercie, yea, perpetual mercie both in bodie and ſoule. *Deu. 12. 2. 3. Mat. 13. 41. & 25. 31. Ioh. 5. 28. 29.*

27 *The ſacrifice of the wicked is abbomination, by howe much more they bring it with an euil wil.*

The wicked worke in diuers maners both towards God & man: for ſome proceede with good intention, and think to doe God good ſeruice, & ought to bee praiſed of their neighbours for their deedes. As Saint Paule did before hee was called to the knowledge of the Goſpel, As alſo many in the Papacie, which thinke to doe

God good ſeruice in murthering his ſeruauntes and children, as Ieſus Chriſt hath foretolde his Apoſtles. But what good meaning ſoeuer they haue, their workes are wicked and abhominable, & principally before God. As Solomon hath ſaide. He ſaith alſo, anewe. *The ſacrifice of the wicked, is abhomination.* Theſe here are hypocrites hauing ſome outward ſhewe of holines, & religion, & within there is nothing but malice, which maketh them vſe crueltie, and inhumanitie. Although they them ſelues thinke not ſo, or at leaſtwiſe ſeeke to perſuade them ſelues, that there is no harme neither in their thoughts and deliberations, nor in their enterpriſes & proceedinges. See here what they be that proceede with good intention, and in what reputation their woorkes are with God. Wherevpō enſueth that they may wel trauel, afore they obtain that which they thinke they deſerue: for ſeeing their workes are abhominable before God, it is meete that they goe to perdition and decaie. There are an other ſort of wicked men which are more ſhameleſſe. For although they knowe wel, that they neither are nor wil be of any value, and that they doe wrongfully againſt their conſciences, beeing wholly infected with wicked thoughtes, mindes and willes, yet neuertheleſſe, they wil haue reputation of religion and holineſſe by ſome workes which haue faire apparance outwardly. But (as they wel deſerue) both they & their workes are more abhominable then the others which proceed with good intention, and their hypocriſie is more wicked. As Solomon ſignifieth, ſaying, *By howe muche more they bring it with an euil wil.* In the number of theſe heere, one muſt put al them that leade a life quite contrarie to the lawe of God, and in the meane while, ſeeke to blinde the eyes of others by ceremonies: which ſhoulde be good, if they had vpright heartes, and that in the reſt, their conuerſation were vnworthie of blame.

Iohn.16.2.

Prou.15.8.

28 *The falſe witneſſe ſhal periſhe: but a man that heareth, ſhal ſtil ſpeake.*

Although the falſe witneſſes knowe that they lye, and that their conſciences reproue, & reprehend them, and they can ſoone condemne thoſe that ſhould beare falſe witneſſe againſt them, and iudge them worthie of death, not onely temporal, but alſo eternal:

yet neuertheleſſe they ſeeke to lye aſſuredly, without remorce of conſcience, inſomuche as they thinke that God neither heareth, nor ſeeth them: and they weene that their falſhood and lying ſhal not come to the knowledge of any Iudge which ſhal haue power to puniſhe them. For this cauſe, the Scripture threateneth them often, as we haue ſeene heeretofore, as wel in the lawe, and Prophetes, as in this preſent booke. And againe, wee ſee this preſent threatening, which is conformable to them that are gone aſtraie. Suche menaces are made, and redoubled for diuers reaſons. Firſt to terrifie, and afraie al lyers and falſe witneſſers, and thoſe which take the name of God in vaine: being ſuch as ſweare ſuperfluous othes, and are blaſphemers, curſers, and renouncers of God, and that being ſo often menaced, they are made more faultie. Secondly, that wee bee wel admoniſhed to take heede of our ſelues, to the ende wee become careful to folowe trueth, and to flye from lying. Thirdly, to the ende that Iuſtices, and Magiſtrates bee diligent to inquire out the trueth, and not to let ſlip the falſe witneſſers vnpuniſhed, as it is expreſly commanded them in the lawe, and hath bene alledged heretofore. But becauſe contrarie *to the falſe witneſſe*, he putteth *a man that heareth*: and againſt *periſhe*, placeth *ſpeaking ſtil*: wee haue to note firſt of al, that the lyar and falſe witneſſer hath neither lawe nor Faith, and conſequently, no religion: for, to yeeld obedience to the lawe, one ought to heare, and to ſubmit him ſelfe to Fayth, he ought alſo to ſpeake. And in theſe two pointes conſiſteth the Chriſtian religiō, beſides the which there is no religion. We may know it by the beginning of the preaching of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Then ſeeing trueth conſiſteth in the word of God, which is declared by the lawe and Goſpel, it muſt needes be, that he which wil not heare the woorde, muſt be voide of trueth, and repleniſhed with lying, and falſhood, and that hee be without religion, ſeeing alſo, hee is without God, and forceth not if God, which cannot conſiſt without his trueth, be depriued of his diuinitie, and be no more God. For in as muche as in him is, hee maketh him authour of vntruth: and ſeeing wee vtterly abhorre the falſe witneſſer, (yea as it were by nature) it behoooueth vs to heare, and yeelde our ſelues attentiue to the worde of trueth, and then we ſhal not be of the number of falſe witneſſes, which periſhe: but wee ſhalbee in ſafetie

Deu.4.1.
& 6.4.
Eſai.53.1.
Rom.10.14.
Mat.1.15.

in the Church of our Lord God, which is kept by the veritable.

Pſal.15.1. Secondly, after lyers and falſe witneſſes haue once vttered their lyes quite againſt their conſciences, to diſhonour God, and blame and vndoe their neighbours, finally, they ſhall haue their mouthes cloſed, and be vtterly confuſed, ſeeing them ſelues reiected of God, and bee in damnation and death eternal, and that the euil which they thought to doe by their lying, be falne vpon them for euer, without any remedie. And alſo where they ſee that they, whome they woulde haue deſtroyed, vndone, and made dombe by their falſhoode, ſhal haue their mouthes open, and ſhal ſpeake without ceaſe, and not periſhe: As Abel the righteous, although *Gen.4.10.* *Hebr.11.4* hee was ſlaine by Caine, yet notwithſtanding, his blood cryed, and beeing dead, yet hee ſpake: for God had care ouer him, as hee wil haue alſo ouer al them which are attentiue to his worde, taking vengeance in his yre and furie vpon thoſe, which haue vexed them, and placing them in the celeſtial glorie, to haue ioye, honour, and ſauegarde, for euer. See howe Solomon meaneth, that thoſe which heare the worde of God, ſhal ſpeake ſtil.

29 *An vngodly man hardeneth his face, but the iuſt reformeth his owne way.*

Although the wicked knowe wel, that they doe nothing that is good, and that naturally without the ſcriptures they ſee that they are guiltie, and principally before God, as they giue and haue certaine argument thereof, when they are afraide of the iudgements of God, becauſe their conſciences reprooue them of their miſdeeds: Yet neuertheleſſe as Solomon ſaith,

They harden their faces, That is to ſay, they haue a fierce, and arrogant behauiour, both in wordes and geſture, to giue to vnderſtand, that they neither feare nor doubt any thing: and the more wicked they are, the more they ſtriue to aſſure them ſelues, and ſet a good face on the matter, ſaying in their heartes, wee haue made aliance with death, and knowe what hell is. And in this opinion, *Eſai.28.15* they make no account to conuert them ſelues to any goodneſſe, bee it to thinke, ſay, or doe. Solomon ſheweth that hee meaneth this by *hardening the face.* When hee ſaieth, *But the iuſt reformeth*

his owne way. For againſt hardening the face, hee putteth reformeth
his waies, which is no other thing, but the feare and reuerence, Phil.2.3.
which one hath to the woorde, to ſtudie howe to frame his
minde and thought, his wordes, and workes to the wil of God, for Pſa.5.9.&
to ſerue him duely, and worke his ſoules health with feare & trembling.
Which thing of our ſelues we doe not: for it is God which 25.4.5.8.9.
worketh in vs both the wil and the effect according as it pleaſeth & 119.5.&
him. Wherefore we haue to pray with Dauid, Lord leade me in thy 143.10.
righteouſneſſe, &c.

30 *There is neither wiſedome nor vnderſtanding, nor counſell againſt the Lord.*

We ought to be reſolued of this, that God aloweth that which
is not againſt him, loueth it, and maintaineth it, and maketh it ſerue
to his honour, and to the edification of his, according as hee ſeeth
expedient. But hee reprooueth the wiſe and ſage men of the world.
And their wiſedom, vnderſtanding and counſel, curſing them, ouerthrowing
them, and deſtroying them, as the ſcriptures witneſſe.
Whereby it may ſeeme at firſt viewe, that Solomon ſaying, *There* Iob.5.12.13.
is neither wiſedome, &c. ſaide againſt the ſcriptures. And therfore Eſa.5.21.&
when he ſaith, *Againſt the Lord*: That is to ſay, which can let or 29.14.15.&
ſtay the counſel of the Lord, ouerthrow his ordinances, and breake 44.25.& 8.
of his attemptes, For although the wiſe men of the world ſtudie to 9.10.
reſiſt him, yet neuertheleſſe his wil muſt needes bee accompliſhed, Pſal.33.10.
yea at his only worde without any other adoe. Wherefore whẽ we
haue God on our ſide, although we be but a litle handful, and folks Pſal.33.8.9.
without force, and worldly wiſedome, yet wee ought not to bee afraide, Eſa.46.9.10
though al the worlde, and al the power of hel were againſt
vs, but in al ſafetie to ſay with Dauid, I haue laide mee downe and
ſlept, and haue riſen vp againe for the Lorde ſuſteined mee. I will Pſal.3.5.
not be afraide of tenne thouſand of men, &c. Wee ought to confeſſe
that which Iob ſaith, Yea with him is wiſdom and force, counſel
and vnderſtanding.

31 *The horſe is prepared againſt the day of battel: but the Lord giueth victorie.*

Men make many preparations for the warres, to the end, that by the ſame, they may compaſſe their enemies, and obtaine victorie againſt them, or that if it happen that they be too weake, they may ſaue them ſelues. And therefore there is no preparation wherein man more truſteth, then in the Horſe (for a man beeing mounted vppon a light and valiant Horſe (as him ſeemeth) hee may purſue his enemies with more ſpeede, and ouertake them ſooner then if hee were on foote: and if hee haue neede to flye, hee ſhal ſaue him ſelfe the better: for this cauſe, the Scripture making mention of warre, of aſſault, or of fight, ſpeaketh rather of Horſes, then of any other Munitions, blaming and accuſing them that truſt therein. Wherefore, to the ende wee be not blamed, and accuſed of vaine confidence, let vs put al the hope of our health, victorie, and deliuerance in the Lorde: as the Scriptures teach vs. And alſo Solomon nowe admoniſheth vs, when hee ſaieth,

Deut.17.16.
Pſal.20.8.9.
& 33.16.17.
& 76.6.7.
Eſai.31.1.

The Horſe is prepared for the day of battel. Hee forbiddeth not that one ſhould defende him ſelfe againſt his enemies, neither to reſiſt them manfully, and to kil and ſlaie them, if hee cannot otherwiſe diſcomfite them: but he wil that one haue regarde to the Lorde. And that we knowe that al our preparations, and Munitions are but vanitie, and ſerue to no purpoſe, if God him ſelfe labour not, defending, deliuering and ſauing vs from the violence of our foes. And if we wil feele this aide, let vs not feare men, be they neuer ſo wel appointed, but let vs feare the Lorde, and cal vppon his name. And as he can wel ſaue and keepe the faithful, which put their truſt in him: ſo can he eaſily deſtroy their foes, as the Scripture witneſſeth, whereof the people giue thankes. And thus folowing the promiſe made to Abraham: and alſo folowing other promiſes, hee hath often ſaued his people, and deſtroyed their enemies.

Pſal.121.1
& 123.1.
Pſal. 124.1.
& 127.1.
& 144.1.
Pſal.145.18
& 147.10.
Exod.14.24.
& 15.1.
Gen.15.14

The xxii. Chapter.

A *Good name is more too bee deſired then great riches: and a louing fauour more then ſiluer and golde.*

EVery one of vs is naturally enclined to deſire, and chooſe that which ſeemeth to him good & profitable. And there are ſome, which are ſo addicted to their peculiar profite to enriche themſelues, that they forget al honeſtie, and al humanitie, and care not in what credite and reputation they be, nor if they be eſteemed or no, if they can compaſſe to make them ſelues riche and mightie, for they thinke ſtil, that if they come once to ſuch eſtate, they ſhal then haue neede of no body, but many ſhal haue neede of them, and fauour and flatter them, ſhewing them ſelues to bee at their commandement: And it is the maner of worldlinges, and carnal men to make account of the riche, and cal them honeſt men, and haue them in admiration, there are ſome that although they deſire to bee in reputation, yet they thinke that nothing is to bee accounted of but of riches: And therefore they ſet al their whole minde and affection thereon, to the ende to bee aduanced & praiſed. Al ſuch men are farre abuſed: for it is not them that wee praiſe, but their riches, as they ſhoulde ſoone know, if they had eies: for it is manifeſt, that if the riche man once become poore, hee is deſpiſed of them, yea that ſhewed themſelues in his proſperitie to bee his greateſt friendes. And therefore they are worthie to bee reprehended, and ſo Solomon doeth reprehende them ſaying,

Gen.6.4.

A good name is more to bee deſired: then great riches. And hee ſheweth vs that which wee ought to deſire and chooſe aboue al thinges in this worlde, to wit, a *good name*, and fauour not as the Giants did in the time Noe: nor as ieſters doe, which by lyes, flatteries,fables,and tales,doe purchace fauour : but by diſcrete manners,and honeſt conuerſation,by iuſtice and equitie, humilitie and temperance,and by other fruites of a righteous heart and ſound conſcience, which maketh vs to get credite,and be acceptable and worthie of prayſe both before God and our neighbours. This ought more to be deſired of vs then all other things,which one can wiſhe for in this world,be they neuer ſo precious, for they are fraile and tranſitorie ſubiect to vanitie and corruption,but a good name and a louing fauour remain for euer. Which thing Solomon ſheweth wel, when hee preferreth it before riches,golde, and ſiluer. Saint Paule alſo ſheweth it wel, when hee willeth vs to ſet our minds on things of a good report and praiſe,and when hee promiſeth that in thus doing,the God of peace wilbe with vs. *Phil.4.8.9.* But although wee ought greatly to ſet by a good name and louing fauour, yet neuertheleſſe wee ought greatly to take heede of being ambitious, to couet that others ſhoulde praiſe vs,and haue vs in eſtimatiō for our good deedes, but wee ought to ſearch the glory of God, and the edification of our neighbours,without thinking on our owne good name and reputation : for it is not for vs to exalt our ſelues : wee muſt tary til God doe it,yea he alone which hath power to exalt and humble, whome hee pleaſeth. And if wee walke in integritie and vprightneſſe of conſcience, although wee bee a reproche to al men : yet hee wil make our innocencie to ſhine foorth, where he ſeeth good,as hee hath doone with Ioſeph,Dauid,Daniel, & others. And alſo as it is ſeene,when the wicked are conſtrained to ſpeake wel of them, whome they perſecute vniuſtly.

2 *The rich and poore meete together : the Lorde is the maker of them al.*

In this worlde there are diuers ſtates,as is ſeene: there are poore men,rich men,weake and ſtrong,abiects,and aduaunced . And yet neuertheleſſe this diuerſitie , God hath not ſticked to put them altogether,and to binde them one to another, Solomon ſignifieth this ſame,when hee ſaith,

The rich and poore meete together. But in this meeting there is deſpite,and enuie,for the rich diſdaine,and deſpiſe the poore,and the poore vſe enuie againſt the riche and mightie. In which doing, they diſhonour God, which hath put eche one in that eſtate that hath pleaſed him, Solomon ſheweth it wel, ſaying,

The Lorde is the maker of them all. And this is following that which Anna ſaith, The Lorde maketh poore and riche, wherein wee ought to learne that euery one of vs ſhoulde content himſelfe with his eſtate, and acknowledge that it is good, to receiue at the handes of the Lorde, with thankes giuing, al that which pleaſeth him to ſende, knowing that hee placeth vs, where hee thinketh moſt profite for vs: and though wee wil not acknowledge it, yet it ceaſſeth not to bee ſo. Secondly, vpon this worde *Meete*, let riche men learne not to diſdaine the familiar conuerſation of the poore, and that it is no hurt for them to make thē partakers of the goods which God hath put into their handes: for ſeeing God is the maker of the riche man, it foloweth, that thoſe riches, are committed to him, to doe according to the minde of his maker. Otherwiſe he ſhoulde not be a wiſe, and faithful ſeruant. Thirdly, Let not the riche man vaunt of his riches, ſeeing he hath them not of him ſelfe, and they are his but for a litle ſeaſon. Alſo let not the poore man be ſadde, and vexed at his pouertie: ſeeing that God who hath placed him in that eſtate, knoweth wel what is needful for euerie one, ſeeing alſo that pouertie is of ſmal endurance, and that after the ſame, we ſhal attaine to riches ineſtimable.

Sam.27.8.

3 *A wiſe man ſeeth the plague, and hydeth himſelfe: But the fooliſh goe on ſtil, and are puniſhed.*

We ought to hold for certentie, that God, who is not vnconſtāt, diſpoſeth, gouerneth, and guideth al the world, according as he hath foreſeene and ordeined before the foundation of the worlde, and there is none that can let him, to accompliſh his determinations & enterpriſes, & to fulfil al his whole wil & pleaſure. meane while this is not to ſay, that wee ought not to take diligent heede to that which wee haue to doe, and eſchewe, according to the wiſdome and ſkill that God hath giuen vs, and that wee ſpare not the ſtrength and diligence, that hee hath indued vs with, for hee wil not haue the giftes which he hath giuen vs to be ydle, & vnprofitable. Alſo as his prouidence is no let that wee wil not: ſo our wil ouerthroweth not the diuine prouidence, ſeeing that if wee haue any wil or vnderſtanding, it proceedeth from this prouidence. Alſo although it behoueth that that which God hath ordeined eternally, come to paſſe of neceſsitie, and that none can let it, yet neuertheleſſe, God by his worde deſiſteth not to teach vs that which wee haue to doe, or eſchewe, to admoniſhe vs, reprehende vs, threaten vs, and condemne vs, as one may ſee in the holy ſcriptures, wherefore we ſhal doe no iniurie to the diuine prouidence, when wee ſhal ſearch diligently the ſcriptures, and ſhal carefully heare the worde, which is faithfully expounded vnto vs, and that by this meanes they ſhal learne a good wiſedome to the ende to gouerne our ſelues warily that we be not ſurpriſed with dangers on the ſoden, but that wee may ſhunne the damage which may happen to vs, that as to ſottes, fooliſhe, and yl aduiſed, wee make no account to keepe our ſelues, and to drawe backe from the danger which preſenteth it ſelfe to aſſaile vs, and intrappe vs. Solomon praiſeth ſuch wiſedome, when he ſaith,

A wiſe man ſeeth, &c. Here he ſpeaketh not of carnal & worldly wiſe men: for they cannot hide them ſelues ſo wel, but they wil be ſurpriſed: but hee ſpeaketh of them of whome it hath bene ſpoken off heretofore. *Iob. 5.12.13. Pro. 13.16. & 14.8.15.16.* They that are ſuche, by the worde of the Lord, doe foreſee the euil which is to come to the wicked, which ſet not their mindes vpon this worde. They knowe alſo that men practiſe many euils, to them which ſeeke to liue in holineſſe, innocencie, & righteouſnes. And ſo they ſee the euil, & hide themſelues, truſting in the ſhadow of the wings of the Lord, & ſaying, Keepe me as the apple of thy eye, & hyde me in the ſhadow of thy wings. *Pſal. 17.8.9. & 57.2.* And as they demande this ſame, putting their truſt in the goodnes, & mercy of God, ſo they obtain it. For although by perſecutions, & other aduerſities they dye, & fal away according to outward apparance, yet notwithſtanding they are ſurely hid, vnder the defence, protection, & ſafegard of the Lord. But they which haue not the foreſight, nor make no account to guide themſelues according to the worde: although for a certain ſeaſon (as for the ſpace of this life) they ſeeme to bee out of al danger, yet neuertheleſſe experience teacheth often, that GOD ſpareth them not, and when the plagues and dangers of this worlde wil not touche them, yet they ſhall not ſhunne the tormentes that are eternal: Solomon ſignifieth thus, ſaying,

But the fooliſh goe on ſtill, and are puniſhed. By this woorde *goe on*, or *paſſe forwarde*, is ſhewed aſſurance and inconſideration or rather the ouer boldneſſe and obſtinacie, which the ill aduiſed vſe, who make no account to learne by the worde to flie from the plague, but tary they neuer ſo long, yet they are puniſhed, but principally after this life, where is no redemption. The fooliſh therfore, whereof Solomon ſpeaketh, be ſcorners and contemners of GOD and of his worde, which onely giueth vnderſtanding and foreſight. The fooliſhe are alſo thoſe, which the worlde reputeth for moſt hardy and valiant, and thoſe that think themſelues ſo. In number with ſuch men one may put Pharao, Saul, Sennacherib, Nabuchodonozer, Iudas, & others, which ſuffered themſelues to be caried away by the malice of their heartes, and are hardy to do & ſay ill without ſparing, but when ſometimes fearing men more then God, they make ſhewe to withdraw themſelues and abſtaine from doing euil, to the ende to ſhunne temporal tormentes: But they cannot flee ſo long, but at the laſt they wilbe puniſhed with euerlaſting torments.

4 *The rewarde of humilitie, and the feare of the Lorde are riches, honour, and life.*

It is not enough to imploy ones ſelfe about ſomething, to bee recompenſed: for many meddle with matters wherein they haue no knowledge but to marre al, and ſo they merite ſooner to bee puniſhed, then to haue rewarde. But in doing any thing, one ought to knowe, howe and by what meanes he ſhould proceede not to looſe his labour. Many, to get goods and honour, and to make themſelues as it were immortal, thinke that there is no way ſo good, as to make themſelues of value by arrogancie, and pride, by boldnes, temeritie and raſhneſſe, without hauing regarde to the reuerence which wee owe al to God and to his worde: but after hauing takē great paines in this ſort, they find at laſt, that not only they haue beaten the winde, and profited nothing, but alſo that they are ruynated, and come to decay. Some feele it in this life, and al the wicked ſhal feele it in death eternal: for the ſentence muſt needes bee true, that Whoſoeuer exalteth himſelfe ſhalbe brought low, and contrariwiſe hee that humbleth himſelfe ſhalbe exalted, as it hath beene treated heretofore. The humble therefore looſeth not his labour: but is wel rewarded, as Solomon declareth it plainely, when hee ſaith, *Pro.16.18. 19.& 18.12*

The reward of humilitie and feare of the Lord,&c. Wherby he ſheweth that the waies to aduance ones ſelfe, are humilitie, and feare: hee putteth not humilitie alone: for many haue been humble, that is to ſay, vile, abiect, outcaſtes, and afflicted, which haue not obtained this hyre: but haue beene ſtill miſerable, and finally haue periſhed for euer, but hee ioyneth with humilitie, *The feare of the Lorde*, for if we be afraide indeede to offend God, deſiring to yeeld him obedience according to his worde, although to the outwarde apparance wee be the moſt vile and abiect, the moſt poore and miſerable of al the worlde, yet the Lorde can wel pay vs in opportunitie & when he ſhal ſee good, the hyre wherof mention is made, ſeeing he cannot lye, but his trueth is infallible.

Nowe hee hath promiſed to them that feare him, that they ſhal lack no good thing, and hee hath promiſed great riches to their offſpring. Dauid praiſeth the Lorde for the giftes that hee giueth to them which feare him, and promiſeth them that feare him to fulfil their deſires. Solomon according with the foreſaide ſcriptures, ſaith that the humble which feare the Lorde ſhal haue *riches, honour, & life*, they ſhal haue riches, for they ſhal haue ſuffiſance and contentment. They ſhal haue honour, for the Lorde ſhal deliuer them from al rebukes, and ſhal place them in honours from this time preſent, if it bee needeful, as Dauid, Ioſeph, Moſes and others. But it ſhalbe principally in eternal and heauenly honours. They ſhal haue life, for hee wil deliuer them the handes of thoſe which perſecute and oppreſſe them, and ſhal make them liue, yea in this world, as hee hath made the aforeſaide: and as hee maketh preſently the poore faithful flocke, which hee hath rent out of the handes of their perſecutors: but the principal life ſhalbe in that glorious immortalitie, *Pſa.34.9.10 11.& 25.12. 13.14.& 31. 20.21.& 145.18.19. 20.*

5 *Thornes and ſnares are in the way of the frowarde: but who ſo keepeth his ſoule, will flee farre from them.*

Hee compareth the frowarde to the hunter, which ſtriueth to take and kil wilde beaſtes, for as the hunter hath no pitie of the beaſtes, neither ſpareth hee them, but ſetteth ſnares in buſhes and thornes, wherethrough hee chaſeth the beaſtes, ſo to take them and vſe them at his pleaſure: Euen ſo the frowarde hath no pitie of the innocent, and to deſtroy him hee hath ſecrete fetches, which are without al humanitie, and cruel: as Solomon ſignifieth by *Thornes and ſnares*: for the thornes pricke, and the ſnares that are pitched in the ſame, doe ſtay the pray, til the hunter come to worke his will and pleaſure thereon.

Now as concerning the froward which one may cōpare to hunbters, there are ſome which ſet ſnares, and hunt after both goods and odies ro rob, and murder them, as theeues, couetous men, and vſurers doe, which are repleniſhed with great crueltie, wherwith being led & trāſported, they pitch, the ſnares of violence & oppreſſion, of proceſſe, ſtriffes, and debates, of ſwordes and weapons, of giftes to corrupt the Iudges, or other ſubtil wayes to doe iniurie, & outrage to the innocent: ſuch frowarde perſons are very wicked, and hurtful, and noyſome to their neighbours: as experience ſheweth but too much. But thinking to aduance them ſelues and make great profite by this meanes, they choke themſelues vp with the thornes of riches, and care and the delights and pleaſures of this worlde. And by and by they fal into temptation. Yet notwithſtanding they are not the moſt hurtful, for they ſpoyle but temporal goods, and kil but the bodies Alſo it is not of them that Solomou ſpeaketh heere nowe, as he himſelfe ſheweth, when he ſaith, *Who ſo keepeth his ſoule, &c.* for to keepe ones ſoule is not to flee farre from them, and their ambuſhes, to ſhunne the damage that they may doe to the goods and body, bee it not that wee take the ſoule for this preſent life, and the commodities there of. They that flee far from the ambuſhes of ſuch froward perſons, keepe their ſoules, that is to ſay, they liue out of al danger, and enioy the commodities that are temporal and corporal. But Solomon hath regarde to another life and other commodities, to wit, ſpiritual and eternal. Wherfore let vs note that there are other frowarde perſons, farre worſe then the aboue named, for they ſet ſnares to deſtroy the ſoules, and ſende them to hel and fire vnquenchable. Theſe are the infidels, ſuperſtitious, idolaters, friers, and monkes, which perſecute the members of Ieſus Chriſte becauſe of his name. The falſe Prophetes alſo, and teachers of lies, and heretiques which pitch the ſnares of falſe doctrine, and wicked opinions. And becauſe they are perillous, the ſcripture vſeth great complaintes againſt them, and chiefly in the Pſalmes. If wee wil truely keepe our ſoules vnto life euerlaſting, it is beſt we bee careful to flee from their ſnares, as the Apoſtle Saint Paule teacheth vs.

Pſal. 10. 9 & 35. 7. 8. Rom. 16. 17.

6 *Teache a childe in the entrance of his way: for hee ſhall not leaue it when hee is olde.*

Many thinke that it is not needeful to buſie themſelues about little children, to teache and inſtruct them: Some becauſe they thinke that one ſhoulde let them play at their pleaſure, and not break their braines with melancholy about knowledge and inſtruction. Others, becauſe that children are light and wanton, and not yet capable to reteine that which is taught them, becauſe they ſet not their mindes thereon, but rather on vanitie and folly: but when Ieſus Chriſte receiued the children that were brought him, hee ſheweth wel, that wee ought to bee careful to inſtruct them: and alſo when hee accepted the praiſe of children. Saint Paule likewiſe ſheweth it wel, whẽ he praiſeth Timothie in that he was inſtructed frõ his infancie. It is meete therefore to inſtruct children in the feare of the Lord by his word, and not to ſuffer thẽ to liue looſely in laſciuiouſneſſe, to the ende that when they become olde, they may bee ſo accuſtomed to holde the way of holineſſe, innocencie, iuſtice, and true religion, that they can neuer withdrawe themſelues therefro againe, but haue al their delight and pleaſure therein, Solomon teacheth vs to doe ſo when hee ſaith,

Mat. 19. 13. & 21. 16. 2. Tim. 3. 15

Teache a childe, &c. when he ſaith, *teache*, or giue the firſt principles of ſcience, and inſtruction, he ſheweth that if one haue no care to conduct, (as it were by the hande) children in the right way and knowledge and trueth, it muſt needes be that they wil remaine ignorant, for they can of themſelues learne nothing of that which they ought to vnderſtande, but rather giue themſelues too vanitie and folly, yea to malice and wickedneſſe, as experience ſheweth it. And when he ſaith, *the childe*, and not the man, he ſheweth in what age one is capable to receiue inſtruction, and that we muſt not tary til the perſon bee come to great age, and almoſt paſt teaching, for we ſee that it is almoſt vnpoſſible to put any good thing into the head of ſuch a one, but as hee hath liued in ignorance, ſo he wil continue therein. It is therefore very neceſſary to learne betimes, and not to tary til one haue an harde vnderſtanding. Moreouer, when he ſaith, *In the entrance, or in the mouth of his wayes*: Let vs vnderſtand, that as a little childe cannot of himſelfe take his bodily foode, if it be not put in his mouth: ſo hee cannot guide and gouerne his ſoule, if that from the beginning hee be not wel entered, and that one faile not to ſet him right in the mouth of his way, which is called his, not becauſe he naturally walketh therin, or that hee chooſeth it of himſelfe: but becauſe it is meete that for the health of his ſoule, and to doe his duetie towardes God and men, he followe ſuch a way as the Lorde hath ordeined him by his worde. If children from the beginning be ſo wel entred, they wil perſeuer in goodneſſe, as long as they liue in this worlde, as Solomon ſignifieth well, ſaying, *For he ſhall not leaue it, when he is olde*: yea if they haue wel receiued the inſtruction, ſo that they haue wel printed it in their mindes and heartes: for as one cannot bee nouriſhed by putting meate in the mouth, if hee doe not chawe it, ſwallowe it, and diſgeſt it: So what paine ſoeuer one take with children to inſtruct them, yet hee ſhal not profite with them, if God giue them not the grace to take pleaſure therein. If therefore one ſee many of thoſe, with whome one hath taken paine in their youth, to bee looſe and diſſolute in their age, it is a ſigne that they haue not taken pleaſure in deede to haue one teach them, and that they are vnthaukful for that goodnes which one would haue done to them, as there are many of that ſort, ſpecially in the place where the Goſpel is moſt preached.

wherefore if fathers and mothers deſire that their children become honeſt, let them beginne betimes to inſtruct them: alſo let rulers and magiſtrates bridle youth, and miniſters bee carefull to adminiſter the worde faithfully, with ſuche facilitie, that it bee as milke too little ones to nouriſhe and increaſe them.

7 *The rich beareth rule ouer the poore, and hee that boroweth, ſhalbe ſeruant to the lender.*

The man that thinketh himſelfe rich when he hath great abundance of temporal goods, not onely deſpiſeth and diſdaineth the poore, but alſo wil make them ſubiect vnto him: and to doe this Iam. 2.6. ſame, he vſeth towards them oppreſſion and violence, as one ſeeth by experience, and Saint Iames ſheweth it. And this is that which Solomon ſignifieth, ſaying, *The rich man, &c.* Although it bee very needeful that they to whome God hath giuen rule and ſigniorie bee riche to ſuſteine the charges: yet neuertheleſſe Solomon ſticketh not to blame the rich, becauſe of their boldneſſe and arrogancie, their oppreſsion and violence which they vſe towardes them which cannot defende them ſelues, or which are bound to them af- Iam. 1.5. ter the fleſhe, becauſe of the ſuccour which they ſhewe them with their riches, in helping their neceſsitie: when it appertaineth onely to Kinges, Princes, and Gouernours of the earth to rule, we ought to vnderſtand that Solomon blameth the rich men, ſaying, *That they beare rule ouer the poore*. For ſeeing they vſurpe that which appertaineth not to them, they exerciſe tyranny for the which they ought to loooke for an horrible puniſhment.

Now as by the abundance of worldly goods, one is puffed vp, & exalted aboue the needy: ſo alſo neceſsitie conſtraineth folkes, to abaſe themſelues, and to bee humble and meeke before them, whom they haue to do with to bee aided, and ſuccoured, as enſueth, *And he that boroweth, ſhalbe ſeruant, &c.* as he hath rebuked the hautineſſe & tyranny of the riche, ſo he reprehendeth the poore worldlings (which are afraide leaſt the earth faile them) of pulſillanimitie and flatterie. And by good right, for although we ought to ſerue one an other by charitie, yet neuertheleſſe wee ought to take heede of being ſeruantes of men, otherwiſe wee cannot bee the ſeruantes of Chriſt. And therefore Saint Paule biddeth ſeruantes, that in obeying their maiſters, they be alſo ſeruantes of Chriſt. Moreouer, note wee, that when pouertie conſtraineth men to ſerue, and it is not that which wee deſire, but we craue to be at libertie, that Solomon warneth vs to woorke diligently, to the ende, that wee may haue to ſuſteine our ſelues with our familie, and that wee bee not forced to abaſe our ſelues to borrowe more then God hath appointed vs by his worde.

1.Cor.7.23.
Gal.1.10.
Eph.6.5.

8 *Hee that ſoweth wickedneſſe, ſhal reape affliction, and the rodde of his anger ſhal faile.*

The holie Ghoſt in the ſacred ſcriptures, compareth often our workes to ſeede, be they good or bad, as alſo there is good and bad ſeede. Suche a compariſon is made verie fitly : for like as the labourer, which medleth with the earth, reapeth willingly ſuch ſeede as hee hath caſt into the earth, if the earth be not barren and vnfruitful, and vnable to reſtore the like againe : euen ſo it happeneth to man, according as he practiſeth and enterpriſeth. And as the labourer which hath ſowne good ſeede, tarieth patiently, til the time of harueſt come, ſo they which doe wel, ought patiently to attend their rewarde. And as the euil ſower cannot looke for any thing but that which is of no value: ſo although the wicked tarie and attende, yet they ſhal perceiue that their ſeed is nothing woorth. If they haue vſed wickednes, either againſt God, or the holie Ghoſt, by idolatries and blaſphemie, by deſpiſing al religion, and ſcorning the word, or haue vexed and greeued their neighbours, to oppreſſe and ouerthrowe them, by backbiting and falſe reportes, by lawing, or ſuttle meanes, by iniuries, and wronges, by weapons, and other violencies. If they ſowe (I ſay) ſuche wickedneſſe, although the puniſhment be ſlacke, according to mans opinion, yet they ſhal receiue their reward, as Dauid ſheweth it plainly by other ſimilitudes then of the ſower. Solomon to ſignifie ſuch recompence vſeth a ſimilitude of the ſower, ſaying, *Hee that ſoweth wickednes, &c.* He threateneth here principally the wicked, which practiſe againſt their neighbours, fraude and deceite, rauine, and extortion , inhumanitie,

Iob.4.8.9.
1.Cor.9.11.
& 2.Cor.9.6.10.
Gal.6.7.
Ia.3.18.
Iam.5.7.8.
Pſalm.7.15.

crueltie and tyrannie, and ſeeke by al meanes they can, to deſtroy and ouerthrowe them, in great anger and fury. He ſignifieth it, whē he ſaith,

And the rod of his anger, &c. By the rod of anger hee ſheweth that the wicked are much enflamed to perſecute the innocent by malice, as Dauid doeth alſo: And as hath beene, and is ſeene yet by experience. And by and by he ſheweth that the wicked which ſowe wickedneſſe, are much hardened and obſtinate in the ſame, when they ceaſe not to perſecute the innocent with rage, vntil ſuch tyme as they reape the rewarde of their purſute: to wit, affliction, which maketh an end of their wickednes, and cauſeth the rod of their anger to faile. As may bee ſeene (amongſt others) in Pharao & Saule. Moreouer hee giueth heere conſolation to them, which endure the malice of the wicked: for although according to mans iudgement it ſeemeth that they wil neuer ceaſe to ſow wickednes, in afflicting & perſecuting the innocent, because at al times one hath ſeene, and yet ſeeth, that the wicked, which are an infinite number in reſpect of the good and iuſt, haue ſo done, and doe yet ſtil. Neuertheleſſe it will come to paſſe that their wickedneſſe ſhal take ende. As Dauid prayeth. And that the good and righteous ſhalbe in ſafetie and reſt.

Pſalm.10.2.

Pſalm.7. 10.

9 *The good eye ſhalbe bleſſed, for he hath giuē of his bread to the poore.*

Wee couet greatly that al things bee well with vs, that wee liue in peace and quietneſſe, and that al thinges which belong to vs goe wel, and that hauing proſperitie, we increaſe and growe vp therein, ſo that nothing faile vs. The carnal worldlings which are couetous, to obtaine ſuch deſires, are very careful, and greedy to get a greate heape of riches and to keepe it with al diligence: and regarde not willingly them whome they thinke to bee needie, and to haue occaſion to vſe their aide. For they thinke verily, that their riches wil diminiſh, if they ſhoulde aide therewith the poore, and needie, and cannot ſee that the others doe their buſineſſe: ſo enuious, and afraide they are, neuer to haue ynough.

Now that which they feare, ſhal happen to them, although for a ſeaſon it ſeeme that they floriſh and proſpet : for as with an euil eye, ful of hate, enuie, inhumanitie, and crueltie, without al pitie, and compaſſion they beholde the poore, diſdaine them, and draw backe as much as they can from them : ſo God wil beholde them with the like eie, making thē moſt miſerable, which if it be not in this world, yet at the laſt they ſhall perceiue it in hel. But as we woulde gladly that in our indigence, whatſoeuer it bee, our neighbours ſhould beholde vs with a good eye, and ſhoulde vſe liberalitie towardes vs. So it behoueth vs to beholde with a good eie our neighbors, which haue neede of our aide in helping their neceſsitie according to our abilitie. Thus doing wee ſhal haue want of nothing : but ſhall abounde in al wealth, as Solomon promiſeth ſaying,

The good eie, &c. Saint Paule is conformable in this promiſe. This is not to ſay that our eye is ſo good, or that we may giue ſo much of our goods that by our liberalitie wee may merite benediction : for wee cannot obteine it but by grace, and becauſe the Lorde hath made vs a promiſe thereof, whereto wee wholy truſt. Alſo wee are neuer ſo liberal, that wee giue any thing which is properly our owne, ſeing that the earth, and al that is conteined therein is the Lordes, &c. And that which wee giue, is not any thing, wherof we ought to make great account, as Solomon ſheweth wel, when hee calleth it *bread*, which is the moſt common meate and of leaſt price, that wee ordinarily vſe. Neuertheleſſe, when God which cannot bee bounde to any body, bleſſeth him which with a good & liberal eie beholding the needie, giueth him bread, that is to ſay, of his goods, which ſerue to ſuſteine this life, it is moſt meete that hee which receiueth the good turne, bee not vnthankeful towardes the Lordes ſtewarde, but that hee honour him, as the organ and Inſtrument, by the which God hath giuen him of his goods at his neede. But it is not meete, that hee which giueth, ſhould deſire any regratulation, for he ought to content himſelfe with the bleſſing of the Lorde, the which onely maketh a man riche. Alſo they to whom one giueth any thing for meere pittie, if the almes be not great, yet they ought not to deſpiſe it, but to receiue it with thankes giuing.

2.Cor.9.8

Pſal.24.1.

Pro.20.22.

Moreouer, note we, that if wee ought with a good eie to diſtri-

bute our goods to the needie, that it behoooueth vs not to bee angrie if another doe the like: to the ende wee reſemble not him to
Mat.20.13. whome it is ſaide, My freende, I doe thee no wrong, &c. Is it not lawful for mee to doe what I wil with mine owne goods?

10 *Driue out the ſcornefull man, and debate ſhall goe out with him, yea variance and ſlaunder ſhal ceaſſe.*

It is an ordinary thing (as may bee ſeene) that the courtes and houſes of kinges and princes are full of hate, enuie, pride, and ambition. There is almoſt none which is content with his calling, but euery one aſpireth to a more higher eſtate. Some to honour and glory, ſome to riches, credite, and power, and ſtriue to exalte themſelues one aboue another. Whereof proceede debates, diſſention, quarrelling, wordes of defame and ſlaunder, which are ſtirred vp, and mainteined by the ſcorneful who haue no reuerence of God nor of his worde, and beare no loue nor duetie to their kinges and princes nor to the proſperitie of their realmes, & by decreed malice, ſeeke to ſet al in trouble and confuſion, and delight to work oppreſſion, & violence to their neighbours, and to diſhonour and diffame them, and care not for any thing but for their owne particular profite, and to come to the ende of their enterpriſes by the harmes of others, yea preſuming to incite, and prouoke princes one against an other. And ſo they fil the worlde with ſtrife, quarrels, and ſlaunder: wherupon enſueth the deſtructiō of many people, & the ruine likewiſe of kinges and princes. Wherefore in ſo much as kinges and princes loue to mainteine themſelues, and their ſubiectes, and too floriſh and proſper, let them be careful to roote out ſuch ſcorners as Solomon counſelleth them, ſaying,

Driue out the ſcorneful man, &c, And to doe this wel, let them determine with Dauid, I wil walke in the right way, &c. This
Pſal.101.2. ſentence may be applied to euery one of vs, to teache vs to flie from the ſcorneful, and al contemners of God, and of his word, and not to conforme our ſelues in any point with them, as alſo S. Paul teacheth vs in diuers places. But it is principally belonging to kings and princes

princes,to make this horrible riddance, to the ende men may liue more ſurely,and out of ſtrife,quarrelling and ſlaunder,

11 *The king is his freende that loueth cleanneſſe of hearte: and it is for the grace of his lippes.*

One may maruel why Solomon ſpeaketh ſo of kinges,ſeeing it is dayly proued,that they make their chiefe minions,familiars, and darlings commonly of whoremaiſters and ribaulds, of flatterers, fooles,and backebiters,of talebearers,theeues,and rouers, of raſhe and ouer haſtie perſons,of the ambitious and arrogant, of drunkardes and gluttons,of ſtrife makers, ſeditious perſons, and moouers of al miſchiefe. Al ſuch men by their feates,deedes and words, ſhewe cleare enough that their heartes are foule and filthie, ſtinking and infected,and that they wil neuer be otherwiſe. And ſo they loue not the cleanneſſe of heart,but one may ceaſſe his meruelling,when he ſhal vnderſtand that Solomon ſpeaketh not of worldly & carnal *Deut.17.15.* kings,Superſtitious,and idolaters,ignorant and vnfaithful: but hee *Pſal.2.10.* ſpeaketh of them which are truely inſtructed in the law, & doctrine of God, according as hee commmandeth it,and as Dauid warneth them. Such kinges doe abhorre the wicked, and diſpatch the lande of them as much as they can: and contrariwiſe they loue the men of a good and a ſounde conſcience, as Solomon ſignifieth by him *which loueth cleanneſſe of hearte*, the which conſiſteth in the true pureneſſe of faith,and charitie not feigned, in repentance and feare of the Lorde. Although ſuch cleanneſſe be knowne onely of God,which ſoundeth the heartes,& proueth the reines,yet neuertheleſſe it manifeſteth it ſelfe, for of the abundance of the hearte the mouth ſpeaketh. And the good man from the good treaſure of *Mat.12.34.* his hearte,draweth foorth good thinges: for this cauſe Solomon ſaith, *That it is for the grace of his lips*,that the king is his freende that loueth cleanneſſe of heart,hee calleth the *grace of the lippes*, wordes of trueth,good and profitable,which tend to the glory and honour of God,and the edification of our neighbours. By ſuche grace kinges knowe what men they ought to chooſe for the gouernment of their ſubiectes, what teachers they ought to heare, and what kinde of men they ought moſt to aſſiſt and fauour.

It is very neceſſary that we haue al this grace in our lips: but principally the Miniſters of the worde, and iudges of the earth, to execute their charge, and adminiſtration wel. Thus doing we ſhalbe loued, not onely of kinges and princes of the earth, which are wel inſtructed in the worde, but alſo of the king and ruler of heauen and of earth. And as it is ſo, that al kings and ſuperious of the earth ought to bee wel inſtructed in the worde of the Lorde, and to walke in his feare: one may ſay wel, that Solomon ſpeaketh not heere of that which kings do, but of that which they ought to do. And ſo cōmandeth almoſt al the kings of the earth: for there are very few that are their freendes which loue cleanneſſe of hearte, but rather hate them and perſecute them. Inſomuch that if God did not defende the pure and cleane of hearte, they ſhoulde bee often tempted to giue themſelues to filth and infamie, to ſhun the hate of kinges, and too eſcape their perſecutions.

Nowe when there is none of vs, but hee deſireth to bee beloued of ſuperiours, let vs vnderſtande that wee are heere counſelled to cleanſe our heartes, to the ende wee may haue gratious and pleaſant lippes. Vnder the which wee may heere comprehende not onely wordes, but alſo al workes and deedes which ſhewe an inwarde cleanneſſe: for to ſhunne prolixitie, Solomon hath named but the lippes. And alſo it woulde bee a thing of nothing, and worthie of condemnation, if wee vſed good woordes, and that our works were not conformable thereto. Let vs folowe therefore that which is
Eſay.1.16.17 taught vs. Waſhe your ſelues therefore, and be cleanly, take away
Iam.4.8. the filthineſſe of your workes from before mine eies. But what admonitiō ſoeuer is made vs, it lieth not in vs to obey it, neither can wee purifie our heartes our ſelues, there is naught but the blood of Chriſt Ieſus that purifieth vs, when wee drinke it by faith, and that by the holy Ghoſt, our conſciences bee watered therewith too ſanctifie vs, and make vs obedient to the worde: wherefore wee
Pſal.51.4 had neede to pray, Waſhe mee wel from mine iniquitie, & cleanſe mee from my ſinne.

12 *The eies of the Lorde haue regarde to knowledge: but hee ouerthroweth the woordes of the tranſgreſſour.*

If we deſire greatly to haue grace in our lips, to be acceptable to our kings and princes of the earth, by a ſtronger reaſon wee ought ſtil to ſtriue, to pleaſe the almightie which is King of Kings, & ſeeth not only the lips, but alſo al thoughts and deliberations be they neuer ſo deepe, al enterpriſes and attemptes bee they neuer ſo hidden. Nowe although al the world knowe not that GOD is ſo cleere of ſight, or that he printeth it not in his thought, yet neuertheleſſe there is none, but he naturally vnderſtandeth, that hee is a God, who ought to bee ſerued and pleaſed. As one may ſee, when there is no people ſo rude and barbarous, which hath not ſome religion and ſome ceremonies, by the obſeruation of the which he maketh profeſſion of his wil to ſerue God. And ſo hee hath the zeale of God, but this is not to ſay that hee pleaſeth God. For the zeale almoſt of al men is without knowledge, wheretoo onely the Lorde hath regard. As Solomon pronounceth ſaying,

The eies of the Lorde haue regard to knowledge. This is not the knowledge of the wiſe and prudent of this world which is but vanitie: but this is the knowledge by the which we are aſſured that God is our father, & that he loueth vs, & wil ſaue vs, by the which alſo we know ſo his wil, that we haue no greater deſire but to obay him according as he commandeth. This is the knowledge wheretoo the eies of the Lord haue regarde. This pleaſeth him ſo, that hee demandeth al thinges to bee done by the ſame: hee approoueth that which proceedeth from the ſame, and maintaineth and preſerueth them which walke according to the ſame. Solomon vnderſtandeth it ſo, as he ſheweth by the Antitheſis, ſaying, *but he ouerthroweth, &c.* When he putteth *ouerthrowing* againſt *to haue regarde*, hee giueth wel to vnderſtand, that God accepteth, alloweth, and preſerueth the knowledge, whereunto his eies haue regard. Contrariwiſe that he hateth and diſdaineth the woordes of the vnfaythful, who are rebels to him, ſeing *he ouerthroweth their wordes*. And when he putteth *The wordes of the tranſgreſſour*, a contrary to *knowledge*, hee giueth wel to vnderſtand that this knowledge is no other thing but the worde of trueth, of iuſtice, and equitie, the which is ſo imprinted in the hart of man, that he aſſureth himſelf of the bountie of God, and demandeth nothing ſooner then to obay him. Contrariwiſe, the wordes of the tranſgreſſour are al purpoſes, counſels, determinations, and enterpriſes of thoſe which deſpyſe this knowledge, and let them ſelues be caried away by their carnal affections, and diſordinate appetites to folow the wiſedome of the worlde, as alſo their deceites and malices. Suche wordes or ſuch doings pleaſe not, nor cannot pleaſe God: and therfore he ouerthroweth them, and bringeth them to nothing, and deceiueth the tranſgreſſours of their intents and enterpriſes, as he doth threaten them. Therfore let vs not be of the number of them which ſay to God, depart from vs, for we wil not know thy waies, &c. But that we inuite one an other, ſaying, Come, let vs aſcẽd to the hil of the Lord, he wil teach vs his wayes, &c. And albeit this knowledge, & al they which keepe it, haue many enimies, which craue but their decaie, yet neuertheleſſe, they cannot preuaile againſt them, for the Lord of hoſts, hath a care ouer thẽ, he keepeth them, & defendeth thẽ, as Solomon ſignifieth by the *eyes of the Lord*, which haue regard to knowledge. Alſo although the wicked, which are enemies to the church of God, wherin only is knowledge (as the Pope is, and al his adherents, enemies of trueth) vſe many wordes, and verie terrible, although they determine and conſult to mainteine themſelues, & ſeeke & practiſe to deſtroy the faithful. Yet neuertheleſſe, let vs take heede not to renounce the true knowledge, knowing that God hath a care ouer vs, and that he wil not ſuffer his enemies to obtaine their deſires, but wil ouerturne al their enterpriſes, & deſtroy them. And ſo the preaching of the pure trueth ſhal obtaine victorie and bee permanent, whereas contrariwiſe, the aduerſaries ſhal periſhe.

Eſai.8.9.10. & 19.3. & 30.1. Iob.21.14. 15. Eſai.2.3.

13 *The ſlouthful bodie ſaith, there is a Lion without: I ſhal be ſlaine in the ſtreete.*

One may wonder at Solomon, that ſo often, & in ſo ſundry maners, ſpeaketh of the ſlouthful: but the cauſe wel vnderſtoode, one ought not much to wonder, for the number of the ſlouthful is great, and what admonition ſoeuer is giuen them, yet they become not a whit more diligẽt. Alſo there are many which eſteeme not thẽſelues ſlouthful, becauſe it ſeemeth to them, that they haue good occaſion to deſiſt from their duetie. They perſuade thẽſelues, that they haue good wil to be employed, but there are many difficulties which will

not permit them. Solomon ſignifieth theſe difficulties by *the Lion*,
which *is without*, which ſpareth not thẽ which are weake, but kil-
leth them, and this is to mocke the ſlouthful withal. Therfore if we
wil not be mocked, let vs beware we cõceiue no feare, by the which
we may deſiſt from doing our duetie. For it is meete that we be re-
ſolute & aſſured, that if we walke according as God hath comman-
ded vs by his word, that he wil ſooner ſend his Angels, then he wil
ſuffer vs to fal, or to periſh without remedy. The faithful endure ma- *Pſal.91.11*
ny afflictions, yea, to the loſſe of life by the violẽce, & crueltie of Li-
ons, infidels, and idolaters, but they periſh not: for their perſecutors
haue no power ouer the ſoule. Whẽ therfore it is needful to do our
endeuour, wee tempt not God, if in folowing his ordinance we de-
ſpiſe, & feare not the temporal dangers which are offered: for to tẽpt
God is, when without his word, we aſſay extraordinarie matters, &
put our ſelues in euident perils. Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth vs both twoo:
firſt, when he did not caſt himſelf down headlong: as the deuil tẽpted
him to doe. Secondly, when he feared not to aſcend into Ieruſalem, *Mat.4.5.*
knowing that he ſhould be deliuered into the hãds of the Scribes & *& 20.17.*
Phariſees, & to be put to death. The Apoſtles went not out of Ieru- *Act.1.4.*
ſalem, becauſe they were ſo commanded: But when they were filled
with the holie Ghoſt, they went from Ieruſalem throughout al the
world, not fearing any Lions, for they are commanded ſo. Beholde, *Act.1.8.*
Daniel feared to diſobey God, & the Lions did him no harme at al. *Dan.6.16.*
If therfore it be needful to expoſe our ſelues to dãgers according to
the word of the Lord: let vs not feare Lions, let vs not ſay, *The Li-*
on is without, &c. But let vs aſſure our ſelues of the promiſe that
God maketh to the faithful, Thou ſhalt go vpon the Lion & Adder,
the young Lyon and the dragon ſhalt thou treade vnder thy feete. *Pſal.91.13.*
Note we moreouer that the ſlouthful are are not onely they which
do nothing, but alſo they which for feare of daugers, perfourme not
their duetie, although they apply themſelues to other works, which
ſeeme to be excellent. As amongeſt the reſt, they which couer them *Iohn.3.2.*
ſelues with Nicodemus deede, who came by night to Ieſus Chriſt.
Monkes and Friers perſuade them ſelues that they labor wel in their
diuine ſeruice, but they are not only ſlouthful, but alſo theeues, rob-
bers and murtherers, whereby they deſerue wel to haue pouertie,
and to be hanged and executed in hel.

14 *The mouth of ſtrange women is as a deepe pit: he whom the Lord is angrie withal, falleth therein.*

Wee haue bene amply admoniſhed to keepe our ſelues from whoredome, and the dangers haue beene ſhewed vs, wherein they fal that are whoremongers, and whores. Neuertheleſſe Solomon contenteth not him ſelfe: neither (ſeeing whoredome is ſo common a thing) we cannot haue too many aduertiſementes, as wel to turne the heartes of them, that wil be taught, as to make the incorrectible more guiltie, and inexcuſable. Therefore to ſhewe vs, what daunger it is to conſent to whoremongers, and whores, hee compareth the *mouth*, that is to ſay, the ſpeech, pleaſant talke, flatteries, and enticements of ſtrange *women*, that is to ſay, of whores, to a *deepe pit*. Wherein he ſignifieth, that as a beaſt which is hunted, if hee fal into the pit which is prepared for him, can neuer get out againe, becauſe the pit is very deepe, but muſt there lye and periſh. Euen ſo they which leade their eare to conſent to whooredome, goe to perdition: and principally if God by his iuſt anger chace or hunt them thither, as Solomon ſignifieth wel ſaying, *Hee whome the Lorde is angry withal, falleth therein*. Which is to ſay that God being angry with any one for his ſinnes, maketh him to fal into whoredome, to the end to puniſh him the more rigourouſly, & ſo he puniſheth ſinnes by other ſinnes. As alſo Saint Paule ſheweth well.

Pro.2.16. & 5.3.& 7.5.

Rom.1.14

Let vs learne therefore when whooredomes are riſe, that the Lorde is angry, and that he is greatly offended for their miſdeedes, to the ende we may be careful to keepe our ſelues from committing any iniquities, for feare leaſt the Lorde giue vs ouer to whoredome, and we deſerue horrible puniſhment. Let vs take heede we flee from pompe and delight, brauerie and pride, eaſe, & ydlenes, gluttonie, & drunkennes. For ſuch ſinnes the Lord was angry againſt Sodome, and Gomorra, and gaue them ouer to whoredome, yea to filthines and abhominable infamie quite againſt nature, and finally deſtroied them vtterly.

Gen.19.24 Exe.16. 49.15.

15 *Fooliſhneſſe is in the heart of a childe: but the rodde of correction wil driue it away from him.*

Solomon hath tolde fathers and mothers, that if they loue their children wel, they ſhould not ſpare the rodde. And it is not without cauſe that hee hath made ſuche mention: for it is verie neceſſarie for children to bee chaſtized, otherwiſe they are loſt for euer. Seeing that as Solomon ſaieth,

Pro.13.24.

Fooliſhneſſe is bounde in the heart of a childe. Which is to ſay, that naturally children are ſo corrupt, that they haue al their affections ſet on malice and wickedneſſe, on diſobedience and rebellion, on diſſolutions, and inſolencies, on deriſion, and deſpiſing of God, of his worde, and of al religion. Dauid confeſſeth as muche of him ſelfe: wherupon foloweth ruine and perdition as hath bene ſeene. And becauſe Solomon knewe wel that fathers and mothers, did not deſire that their children ſhoulde goe to deſtruction, but rather that they were preſerued: therefore hee teacheth them howe they ſhal vnbinde this follie from the heart, when hee ſaith, *But the rodde of correction wil driue it away from him.* Although the rodde wherewith one beateth children, be verie profitable, and verie neceſſarie to bring them in awe, and bridle them from many diſſolute and looſe deedes: yet neuertheleſſe the beſt correction to vnloſe the follie from the heart, & to driue it away from the childe, is, by the worde of the Lord, to exhort him, to ſhewe him the way, and to threaten him. Saint Paule ſheweth it wel. Magiſtrates, are here aduertiſed of their duetie, and alſo we are al aduertiſed to mortifie our fleſhe, and to repent.

Pſal.51.7.
Pro.1.24.
Ephe.6.4.
Col.3,21.

15 *Who ſo doeth the poore man woong, to encreaſe his owne riches, and giueth to the riche, hee certainly goeth to pouertie.*

We feare naturally pouertie, which to eſchue, we ſtriue to heape goods vpon goods. Which thing is verie hard to do, except by robbing others, and principally the poore, who haue no power to defende them ſelues, and by ſeeking by giftes and preſentes to obtaine the ſauour of the riche. And therefore the cuſtome and vſe of them which wil waxe riche, is to worke oppreſſion and violence to the poore, and giue to the riche. But they deceiue them ſelues: for as Solomon ſaieth, *Who ſo doeth the poore man wrong, &c. he certeinly goeth to pouertie*. For that which hee rauiſheth and taketh away from the poore man, can be of no great value, but in regarde that the litle which the iuſt man poſſeſſeth, is to him a great thing, and that hee is content with it, and it is more woorth to him then great treaſures to the wicked. And although the wicked can take no great ſubſtance from the poore man: yet neuertheleſſe to mainteine and keepe him ſelfe in the fauour of the riche man, it behooueth him to giue great giftes, otherwiſe hee ſhal not bee welcome, and the riche man wil deſpiſe him. If therefore hee take away but a litle, and giue muche, hee muſt of force come to neceſſitie.

Moreouer Solomon hath ſaide, Hee that doeth a poore man wrong, diſhonoureth him that made him. Whereby hee deſerueth wel to haue indigence: for he not onely diſhonoureth a mortal man, but alſo him, that giueth abundantly al things to our vſe. If the pouertie appeare not in this life, the wicked ſhal feele it at the vttermoſt, in death euerlaſting. Then ſhal be accompliſhed wholy: See heere, my ſeruauntes ſhal eate, but you ſhal haue hunger, See heere, my ſeruantes ſhal drinke, but you ſhal haue thirſt, &c.

Pro.14.31

Eſai.65.13
Luk.6.24.

17 ***Bowe downe thine eare, and heare the woordes of the wiſe: applye thy heart vnto my doctrine.***

There is none, but he woulde willingly be thought the faithful ſeruaunt of God: and to keepe them ſelues in that reputation, many wil be careful to obſerue auntient cuſtomes, and to hold the doctrines of men, and to folowe the inuentions of the Deuil, which beare any faire ſhew: or wil giue themſelues to liue after their good meaning, and phanſie of their owne heades, and take great paine about ſuche trumperie, and woulde haue God to take it in good parte, yea, and to bee bounde to them: for they are ſo much abuſed

ſed, that they perſuade them ſelues, that there come great merites by the obſeruing of ſuche follies and abhomination. Of the which number are the poore Papiſtes, and al thoſe that are giuen to their owne ſenses: but to ſerue God wel, it behoooueth vs to applye our ſenſes, exteriour and interiour to the worde of the Lorde, and ſubmit our ſelues his ſchollers and diſciples, as hee hath alreadie often inuited vs by Solomon. And againe nowe, when hee ſaith, *Bowe downe thine eare, &c.* Wherein he ſheweth, that the adminiſtration of the word is verie neceſſarie for vs, & that we ought to be ſubiect to the ſame, as alſo the Apoſtle ſheweth it. For this occaſion Ieſus Chriſt him ſelfe gaue ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, others Euangeliſtes, and others Paſtours and Doctours, &c. Theſe are the wiſemen whereof our Lorde ſpeaketh: whoſe words wee ought to heare, the which are truely the words of Ieſus Chriſt, who is maiſter and doctour of the wiſe: for hee that heareth the the miniſters of the trueth, he heareth Ieſus Chriſt, and it is he that we ought to heare according to the commandement of God his father & we ought to heare him, to yeelde him obedience with hart, as Solomon ſheweth in ſaying, *And apply thy hart to my doctrine*, for wiſe men are giuen vs to the end that by hearing them, we may become wiſe, which cannot be doone, but by beleeuing their words and putting them in practiſe, as Ieſus Chriſt declareth. Note wee moreouer, that thoſe men are wiſe, which by their words doe open vs the knowledge of God, and of Ieſus Chriſt. Theſe are they that we ought to heare, and not the Pope and his adherents, which are but fooles, mockers, ſeducers and murderers of the ſoules of the ſimple, which haue them in admiration. Note wee alſo when Solomon demandeth the appliyng of the hearte to doctrine, that he ſheweth vs, that it is not meete that wee remaine blinde, and ignorant, nor that we be dumbe and idle: for if the heart be truely giuen too doctrine we ſhal ſee & know that, which we haue to beleeue & do, to ſerue God and our neighbours, and of the abundance of the hart, our mouthes wil ſounde out praiſes, praiers, and thankes giuing: And our members wil apply themſelues to the ſeruice of our neighbours, for ſuch alſo is the ende of the preaching of the worde, that being wel inſtructed, we bring foorth good fruites.

Pro.2.1. & 3.1.& 4.1.

Eph.4.11
Hebr.13.17

Mat.17.5
Mat.17.5
Mat.7.24

18 *For it wil be a pleaſant thing, if thou keepe them in thy belly, and order them together in thy lippes.*

We loue to haue ioye, pleaſure, mirth and delectation: but becauſe of the corruption of our nature we are ignorant, and blockiſhe, and haue not the wit to knowe whereto wee ought to giue our ſelues, to obtaine the enioying of true delight, and ſo wee had neede to be taught. Otherwiſe al our pleaſures and delightes are in vanitie and follie, in filth and wickedneſſe, and in al thinges which are to the appetite of our ſenſualitie. For this cauſe, Solomon to withdrawe vs from the luſtes of the fleſhe, hath willed vs to giue eare to the wordes of the wiſe, to the end wee might bee inſtructed and that knowledge might pearce to the depth of our hearts. Hee knewe that the children of God coulde not bee better reioyced, then by the worde of the Lorde: for it ſurmounteth al worldly pleaſures, in them which truely take any ſmacke therein, and ſucke, and ſwalowe it into their heartes. Alſo Solomon thought it a great ioy and pleaſure, to apply the hearte to the wordes of the wiſe, and to doctrine, which is, the worde of the Lorde, ſeeing to yeelde a reſon of the former inuitation, to wit, *bowe downe thine eare, &c.* hee ſaith, *for it wil bee a pleaſant thing, &c.* Heere hee ſheweth that which proceedeth neceſſarily of the true hearing of the wordes of the wiſe, and applying of the heart to knowledge, & ſaith, that it is a thing *very pleaſant*, ſweete, faire, and delectable. Which coulde not be, if one tooke not pleaſure in the former: for one cannot continewe in a thing wherein hee taketh no delight, and if for a certain ſeaſon hee reioyce therein, it is to no purpoſe. As is ſoone ſeene when he is eaſilie turned there from. Therefore Solomon ſpeaketh of continuance when hee maketh mention *Of keeping it in the belly, and ordering the lips:* and couertly he requireth that wee reſemble not the ſeede, caſt in the hye way on ſtony grounde or amongſt thornes. But that we receiue the ſeede in good earth, which bringeth foorth frutes, which conſiſt in the fayth and confeſſion of the ſame principally. As one may gather it by S. Paul, Solomon marketh fayth (which is not without repentance) ſaying,

Rom.10.9.10.

If thou keepe them in thy belly. For wee cannot aſſure our ſelues indeede, that God loueth vs, for the loue of Ieſus Chriſt which died for our ſinnes, if wee be not ſorowful becauſe of the ſame, and deſire not to be deliuered therefro, and take delight in that which God commaundeth vs. Beholde heere howe wee ought to keepe the *wordes of the wiſe*, and the *doctrine in our bellies*, that is to ſay, within our heartes. Hee marketh confeſſion or profeſſion, which is but vanitie and follie, if it bee not ioyned with the good woorkes which God commaundeth vs. Our Lorde Ieſus ſheweth *Mat.7.21.* it wel, Hee marketh (I ſay) this confeſſion, ſaying, *And if thou order them together in thy lippes.* Hee ſaieth, *together.* For it is not meete, that wee make confeſſion by halfes, nor that we chooſe out ſome of thoſe workes, which God commandeth vs, and omit the reſt. But wee ought to giue al our vnderſtanding to that ſeruice which God asketh of vs, and ſtriue with our ſelues to yeelde him whole obedience. Wee ſee then, that hauing heard the woordes of the wiſe, and applyed our heartes to doctrine, wee ought to take pleaſure in fayth and repentance, in confeſſion, and the works which folowe thereof. And thus dooing, wee ſhal attaine to that, which the Prophetes ſpeake of the beautie of Ieſus Chriſt, and his kingdome. *Pſal.45.3.* If wee take ſuche pleaſure to keepe the wordes of the wiſe *Eſai.52.7.* in our bellie, God alſo wil take pleaſure to fulfil our deſires, *Pſal.37.4.5.*

19 *That thou mayeſt put thy truſt in the Lorde: I haue giuen thee to vnderſtande to daye, euen to thee.*

Thoſe which heare not, nor make no account, to giue themſelues to that which is alreadie taught thē in the former verſes, 17. & 18. walke in this worlde at haphazarde, and knowe not what ſhal become of them: as wee our ſelues haue felt when wee were Papiſtes: and ſo they be blinde, and know not to whom to adreſſe them ſelues, to bee aſſured of their ſaluation, but are in continuall trembling. And chiefly when they deeme them ſelues neere temporal death, for they knowe not whether they goe, and expect rather decaie then ſafetie. If wee wil not walke in ſuche vncerteintie,

tie, let vs take good heede, not to deſpiſe the doctrine which wee haue heard in the two former verſes: for it is giuen vs to make vs verie wiſe and ſkilful, and to the ende wee ſhoulde not be afraide of what affliction ſoeuer happen vs, or is ſeene neere and imminent: but that wee bee aſſured that the Lorde loueth vs, and that hee hath care ouer vs, and wil defende, garde, and deliuer vs from al afflictions, and that by his meanes wee ſhal neuer periſhe, but hee wil ſaue vs eternally. Solomon affirmeth it ſo, when he ſaith,

That thou mayeſt put thy truſt in the Lorde, &c. The ende therefore of the doctrine which is ſpoken to vs, is, that we be warie, and that the doctrine pearce euen into our heartes, not to reſt there by opinion, as doeth a profane or worldly hiſtorie: But to the ende wee may learne to knowe, and aſſure our ſelues that God loueth vs, and that hee wil neuer ſuffer vs to periſhe, but wil ſaue vs for euer, giuing vs a bleſſed life in the glorie of heauen. Solomon propoundeth vs this Theologie, *To day*, that is to ſay, when wee haue time to heare it, and applye our heartes theretoo, which is al the time of our life, the which wee ought to imploye, to meditate the doctrine of our God, and to exerciſe our ſelues in the ſame, day and night, and principally, when wee haue the bookes of the holie ſcriptures, and faithful and true Doctours, which buſie themſelues to make vs vnderſtande the ſame. We ought not to be negligent and ſlowe, but prompt, and readie to heare and vnderſtand, to the ende, to beleeue by certeine knowledge and aſſurance which may bee wel rooted in our heartes, and not to ſubmit our ſelues to the fayth of others: as thoſe which delight in their ignoraunce, and ſay, that they beleeue that which the Church beleeueth. For God by his doctrine ſpeaketh to euerie one of vs, and wil that euerie one receiue it, to beleeue therein, and walke according to the ſame. Solomō ſheweth it wel, when he is not content to ſay, *I haue giuen thee to vnderſtand*: But hee addeth, *Euen to thee*. Or alſo, thou, receiue the woordes of the wiſe, and doctrine. So none can vaunt him ſelſe indeede to be faithful, vnleſſe hee be alſo ſkilful: for God ſpeaking of his faithful, ſaieth, I wil giue thee vnderſtanding, *Pſal.32,89* and wil teache thee the way, wherein thou ſhalt walke. Alſo, al thy children ſhal be inſtructed of the Lorde. I wil plant my lawe in them, and write it in their heartes, &c: And wil ſprinckle vpon you cleane water, and you ſhalbe clenſed from al your crimes, &c. and wil cauſe that you ſhal keepe my appointmentes. Nowe that, *To daye*, is al the time of our life, yea, al the time wherein the word of God ſhalbee preached in the Church, it is manifeſt by the ſame, that wee ought to heare it, beleeue it, and obey it at al times. And although the Iewes be warned, To day if yee wil heare his voyce, harden not your heartes, &c. yet the Apoſtle teacheth vs, that the Pſalmiſt hath not onely ſpoken of them of his time, but alſo of vs. And ſeeing that Solomon by his doctrine, ſtriueth to perſuade vs, that wee put our truſt in God, and that we cannot doe ſo, but by Ieſus Chriſt, which is our Propitiatorie, and our Aduocate, it foloweth, that hee ſendeth vs to Ieſus Chriſt, and wil that by the doctrine of trueth, we learne to beleeue in him, to the ende that wee periſh not, but haue life euerlaſting.

Eſai.54.13
Iere.31.33 34.
Eze.36.25
Pſal.95.7.8.
Hebr.3.12 13.14.
Rom.3.25. & 51.& 8. 34.

20 *Haue not I written to thee, three times in counſels and learning?*

To the ende we ſhould not excuſe our ſelues, if we vnderſtand not, howe wee ought to put our truſt in the Lorde: the Lorde hath giuen vs diuerſitie of ſcripture, as the bookes of Moyſes the hiſtories, and bookes of the Prophetes, wherein wee may learne to folowe the counſel of God, and to knowe the loue which he beareth to vs: and not content with this, he hath giuen vs, moreouer, diuers ſcriptures by his Apoſtles, and Euangeliſtes, to the ende wee may ſee more clearly the right way of al righteouſneſſe and iuſtice, of al holineſſe, and religion, and that wee may contemplate more neerely the bountie of God, and his loue towards vs in Ieſus Chriſt his Sonne, which is our aſſurance, and our ſaluation. And nowe againe, hee hath giuen his Church many Paſtours, and Miniſters of his worde, the which is preached purely to many nations, in diuers languages, and giueth vs the olde and newe Teſtament, tranſlated faithfully into many tongues. And ſo he giueth vs counſels & learning, in ſundry maners, as Solomon ſignifieth, *by three times*, putting (according to the manner of the ſcripture) a number certaine, for the vncertaine.

If therefore wee be ignorant, dul, faithleſſe, and doutful, it is our great fault, ſeeing that God hath giuen vs ſo many ſcriptures, and ſo many faithful expoſitours, which are careful and diligent to ininſtruct vs, which ceaſe not to open their mouthes often, and to put their handes to the penne, to make vs the more wiſe and ſkilful. Suche perſeuerance is wel ſignified to vs, when Solomon ſaith, *Haue not I written to thee? &c.* Which thing hee ſpeaketh in the perſon of God, or of the wakeful Doctours: And ſheweth vs that it is not enough to haue care of the Lordes flocke for a certaine ſeaſon, but that wee ought to continue. Alſo, that the people bee not vexed, if one ceaſe not to propounde the ſcripture to them: and that one ſtriue to print the worde of the Lorde ſo wel in his heart, that putting his truſt in God, his continual delight be, to meditate this doctrine, to ſpeake thereof, and to confirme his life thereafter, by good workes, and holie conuerſation. For in as muche as we are enclined to contrarie thinges, and when we are taught, are ſlouthful, and negligent, and eaſily goe out of the right way, which wee are entred into: For this cauſe it is verie needful that one *write vnto vs three times:* which is, that hee ceaſe not to propound vnto vs the holie ſcriptures, which are repleniſhed with counſels, and learning.

21 *To the end, to giue thee to know the aſſurãce of the words of trueth, to anſwere wordes of veritie to them that ſende to thee.*

It is not enough, that wee haue the holie Scriptures and faithful expoſitours: but to the ende wee may make our profite thereby, and doe good to our neighbours, wee ought to read the ſcriptures, and heare the Doctours, to ſuche ende as God hath giuen them vs. Solomon ſheweth vs the ende, ſaying, *To the ende to giue thee to knowe the aſſurance of the wordes of trueth, &c.* Wherein he declareth to vs, that the ſcripture and Doctors are giuen vs to haue a ſure knowledge of the trueth, whereto Saint Paule agreeth. *Ephe.4.11.* Moreouer, it is meete, that hauing ſo profited in this aſſuraunce and certeintie, we knowe howe to render a reaſon of our Fayth, to them which ſhal deſire to bee inſtructed by vs, or which wil impugne the doctrine that wee haue learned.

Solomon wil haue it ſo, when he ſaieth, *To anſwere, &c.* Whereto Saint Peter agreeth, ſaying, And be ye alwayes readie to anſwere euerie one, that demaundeth reaſon of the hope which is in you, &c. The Apoſtle to the Hebrewes ſheweth them wel, that one ought ſo to profite in the worde of trueth, that hee may be able to anſwere, when hee ſayeth. For when as concerning the time, ye ought to be teachers, yet had you neede againe, that one teach you the firſt principles of the beginning of the worde of God, &c. And if wee ought al ſo to profite in the worde of trueth, the Miniſters aboue the reſt, ought to be careful thereof, to the ende, to inſtruct the people in ſound doctrine, and ſtoppe the mouthes of the aduerſaries of the truth. As Saint Paule admoniſheth them therof, chiefly when hee writeth to Timothie and to Titus. But although we ought to anſwere euerie one, yet this is not to ſay, that we may be al Doctours to haue publike charge, nor that wee ought to knowe (of force) howe to expounde the Scriptures point by point. It is enough for the ſimple ſort to knowe that Ieſus Chriſt is their Sauiour, and that they be ſo confirmed therein, that the ſuttleeſt Doctors of the world, nor al the power of hel cannot withdraw them from the hope which they haue in God by Ieſus Chriſt our ſauiour. And as wee haue not to doe, to be ſo ſuttle, ſo it is not meete, that wee be ouer curious to enquire after that, which appertaineth not to the honour and glorie of God, nor to our ſaluation, nor to the edification of our neighbours.

1.Pet.3.15

Hebr.5.12

22 *Polle not the poore, becauſe hee is poore: and oppreſſe not the afflicted at the gate.*

Solomon folowing the lawe and the Pſalmes, hath alreadie often tolde vs of the poore, accuſing and blaming them which doe them wrong. But becauſe the worlde amendeth not, for any time that commeth, but rather waxeth woorſe, and iniquitie encreaſeth daily, as is ſeene by proofe: for this cauſe Solomon perſiſteth to admoniſh vs of our duetie towardes the poore, ſaying, *Polle not the poore, becauſe he is poore, &c.* In commanding this, hee firſt warneth Magiſtrates and Iudges of the earth to haue pitie and com-

Eſai.3.15.

paſſion on the poore, and to yelde them preſently the right that appertaineth to them, without ſuffering themſelues to bee corrupted by giftes or brybes, by friends or parents, to peruert the iudgement, and doe wrong to him, who through his pouertie hath no ſuccour at al. But becauſe experience ſheweth that at al times the world is repleniſhed with wicked Kings, Princes, Magiſtrates, and iudges, which fauoure them whome they pleaſe, to oppreſſe and hurte the poore: and that rightly one may charge them that the ſpoyle of the poore is in their houſes: wee ought alſo to vnderſtande that Solomon accuſeth them of oppreſſion and vniuſtice, of great malice, and crueltie, for when they bee ſet at the gate where anciently they ſate to do iuſtice: wheras for the pouertie & affliction of the needful, they ought to bee moued to pitie and compaſſion, they take occaſion, thereby to polle and oppreſſe them, againſt the duetie of their office, and againſt their conſciences. And this is becauſe they ſet not God before their eyes, nor haue no feare nor reuerence of his woorde, nor force not to bee blamed: For if one ſpeake not according to their wil and pleaſure they haue power: and therfore they reuenge it preſently. And ſo one prooueth in them, the trueth of the prouerbe which ſaith, That if one ſpeake wel of princes hee lyeth: and if hee ſpeake euil, they amende him.

Secondly, by this commandement hee admoniſheth euery one of vs, to beware that wee doe no hurte to our poore neighbours, which are afflicted for lacke of goods or worldly ſuccours. That wee doe them noe harme by diſceyte nor violence, nor vnder ſhadowe of iuſtice. As they doe which by ſutes in lawe, gnawe and eate vp the poore, or by any other ſubtil meanes: but the worlde is like to thoſe great Maſtife Dogges, who when they ſee any little curre that is poore and feeble, incontinently they runne vpon him, and all to byte him and teare him. Euen ſo by how much more one ſeeth a man feeble and weake, by ſo much the more he is readie to pille and polle him, and to doe him all the damage he can: whereas, for his pouertie and affliction, hee ſhoulde ſtudie to doe him pleaſure. And becauſe what meanes ſoeuer is made to forbid theſe theeues & robbers theſe couetous catchpols and vſurers to doe ſo, and yet they bee not moued a whit more to mercie, but harden them ſelues in their diſordinate deſires, in their crabbedneſſe and crueltie. Let vs vnderſtande that this ſentence and others like it, ſerue for their accuſation and condemnation. Wherefore if wee wil not be accuſed nor condemned, as pollers and oppreſſers of the poore, and afflicted: Let vs obey this ſentence or commandement, forſaking al couetouſneſſe, vſurie and rapine, and al inhumanitie and crueltie, and finally, al fraude and deceite: inſomuch, that beeing mooued to pitie and compaſſion towardes our poore neighbours, wee open our bowelles vnto them, in helping them according to our abilitie, and their neede. For ſeeing al goods appertaine to God, and that they which haue them, are ſtewardes to the Lorde, (or at leaſtwiſe, ought to be) not onely wee polle and oppreſſe the poore and afflicted, when we take to our ſelues the ſubſtance which they poſſeſſe, but alſo when we diſdaine to beſtowe vpon them, the goods, which God hath giuen vs. And as (if wee doe ſo) we are without al mercie: ſo we ſhal haue finally a condemnation without al mercie.

23 *For the Lord him ſelfe wil deale in their cauſe: and take away the ſoule of them which doe polle them.*

There is none, but being asked whether one ſhould feare God or men more, wil not anſwere, God: And being asked, whether one ought to chooſe to be in Gods fauour, or mens rather, wil not anſwere, in Gods. But wee prooue that the heart is not like to the mouth, and that one thinketh one thing, and ſaieth an other: ſeeing the euil dealing that one vſeth to the poore, and the flatteries and faire ſhewes that one maketh to the riche, and alſo that one is more readie to pleaſe God then men, and feareth more to tranſgreſſe the
ordinances of men, then the commandementes of God. Many feare *Leuit. 19. 13*
more to fal into the handes of men, then into Gods hands. If men *verſe. 22.*
make any decree, eche one wil take heede, to attempt the contrary: and yet they make no account to tranſgreſſe Gods lawes: hee ſaieth, Thou ſhalt not doe thy neighbour wrong, neyther robbe him, And by Solomon, Polle not the poore, &c.

If earthly Iudges had made ſuche a decree, men woulde haue beene afraide to haue broken the ſame, for feare of purchaſing

their diſpleaſure, and beeing puniſhed for the ſame: and chiefly if they ſhould know that Iudges had poore men in remembrance. But for al the commandementes of God, and for al his threatenings, yet they ceaſe not to polle the poore, and to oppreſſe the afflicted. For although with mouth they ſay, that God is the defendour and protectour of the poore, yet becauſe they ſee ordinarily that the poore and afflicted are polled and oppreſſed, and that they which moleſt and trouble them, are moſt ſtrong and proſper, they think that God hath no regarde to the affliction of the poore, to deliuer them and ſaue them: neither thinke they that the Lorde wil puniſhe them for the ſame. Yea, the poore them ſelues are tempted, to thinke and ſay, that God forgetteth and forſaketh them, becauſe they ſee, that they which oppreſſe them are in proſperitie, which ſeemeth euerlaſting, and that their afflictions haue no ende, as hath beene ſaide heretofore. But the oppreſſours, and thoſe which are oppreſſed, thinke both verie yl. For ſeeing that God is a iuſt Iudge which ſeeth and knoweth al thinges, hee is, and wil be the protectour of the poore, and wil puniſhe them that oppreſſe them. Solomon ſheweth the decree and the protection, when he ſaith, *For the Lord him ſelfe wil deale in their cauſe.* And afterwardes their puniſhments, ſaying, *And wil take away the ſoule of them which polle them.* This is as though he ſhould ſay, The poore neither finde Atturnies, nor Counſellours, nor Iudges for them ſelues, becauſe they haue not wherewith to furniſhe out the matter withal. Men polle them, and gnawe them euen to the bone. Inſomuche that they haue not wherewithal to defende them ſelues, and it ſeemeth that they are loſt and caſt away, and that they ſhal neuer recouer them ſelues: yet neuertheleſſe they ought not to looſe courage, nor to diſpaire: for God, which is iuſt & merciful, and of more might then al the reſt, wil pleade for them, and doe iuſtice in their cauſe againſt the rauiſhers and oppreſſours, whoſe goods hee wil not onely take away, but alſo their liues, and wil deſtroye them for
2.Tim.1,6.7 euer. Saint Paule accordeth heretoo. For let vs not thinke otherwiſe, but that Solomon ſpeaketh namely of the poore which haue the feare of the Lord, and that for loue of the ſame, are afflicted of the enemies of trueth. Alſo God is not the protectour of the Infidels, bee they neuer ſo poore, and afflicted, but rather ſendeth

them miſerie vppon miſerie, and addeth torments to torments, vntill ſuch time as he hath wholy deſtroyed them. And therefore we may wel ſay, that in the 22. verſe he forbiddeth the wicked to afflict the poore faythful flocke, for it is of them that he hath care, as wee ought to vnderſtand by fayth and to aſſure our ſelues thereof, becauſe wee knowe that God is true in his promiſes.

24 *Accompanie not with an angrie wilfull man: and walke not with the furious.*

Seeing wee are called to peace, it is meete that we ſeeke and follow peace, as we are all admoniſhed to doe. Alſo wee naturally loue peace, if we be not ſenſeles, enraged & inſpired with the diuel, Wherefore to the end that we may follow our vocation, and that wee be not fruſtrate of that which we loue, let vs haue no acquaintance with them which are voyde of grace, gentlenes, benignitie, modeſtie, temperance, humble minde, and patience, and are repleniſhed, with pride, crueltie, yre indignation, and wickednes, Solomon ſheweth that we ſhould doe ſo, when he ſayth,

Accompanie not with an angry wilfull man. &c. With them that are of that qualitie we can haue nothing but ſtrife and debate. For eyther they are angry with vs, or elſe they prouoke vs to anger againſt them, through their too greate yre and fury, whereby they are tranſported to do vs iniurie and violence, becauſe we doe not as pleaſe thē. Such is the nature of anger and fury: as Abel hath *Gen.4* prooued it, Ioſeph, Moſes, Dauid, and Ieſus Chriſt, and nowe the poore faythful flocke. Or els we learne alſo to be angry and wrathful, wherevpon enſueth our deſtruction, as Solomon ſheweth vs when he ſayth.

25 *Leaſt thou learne his wayes, and receiue hurte too thy ſoule.*

For twoo cauſes amongeſt the reſt hurte is due too the yreful and furious man, and to him that learneth his wayes. The one is, *Pro.14.17* becauſe he committeth folly, and ſo is incorrigible, and mocker *Pro.1.7.22.* and contemner of al correction and counſell, Whereof wiſedome *15.18.*

complaineth, The other is, that hee maketh debates, whereby he procureth the decay of his neigbours, wherby hee deſerueth wel to hurt himſelfe. Neuertheleſſe this is not to ſay that it is not lawful to bee angrie ſometimes, prouided that it bee iuſtly, and temperately, as Saint Paule ſheweth, otherwiſe anger is not lawful, for it is one of the workes of the fleſhe.

Rom.13.4.
Eph.4.26.31
Ia.1.19.20.
Gal.5.20

26 *Be not thou one them that giue their hande vpon pledge and are ſureties for debts.*

Pro.6.1.11.15

This matter hath beene ſpoken of, and amongſt other things it hath beene ſaide that Solomon ſeeketh not to withdrawe vs from doing pleaſure and ſeruice to our neighbours, whom wee knowe to bee in neceſsitie: but hee wil not, that for the liberalitie which we vſe towardes our neighbours to ſolace and helpe them, wee our ſelues ſhoulde come into pouertie and neede, he ſheweth this now himſelfe, wen he ſaith:

27 *Why wilt thou put thy ſelfe in this danger? for if thou haſt not wherewithal to pay, they wil take away thy bed from vnder thee.*

Saint Paul is agreeable heereto. Now the manner of aiding our neighbours ought to be, that as wee ſhould be content with things preſent, ſo we ſhould alſo helpe them with that which wee haue in hand, and can wel ſpare, and with good wil: for wee knowe not if in time to come we ſhalbe able to ſatiſfie them whome we are pledge vnto, and yet neuertheleſſe in giuing our worde, wee vowe to ſaue them harmeleſſe in the time to come for whome wee are ſuretie: which is to do God iniurie, to whom onely it belongeth to diſpence of things future: and as Solomon ſaith, we put our ſelues *in danger* of pouertie and to haue that thing taken from vs which is moſt neceſſary to vs, which is ſignified by *the bed*.

28 *Thou ſhalt not remooue the auncient land marke which thy fore elders haue ſet.*

Seeing it is commanded, Thou ſhalt not remoue thy neighbors marke, which they of olde time haue ſet in thine inheritance: And acurſe is pronounced for him which remooueth the marke of his neighbour: It might ſeeme that Solomon needed not to put this ſentence in writing, which conteineth nothing els but that which hath been ſaide by Moſes, but becauſe wee are dul and ſluggiſhe, we haue neede to bee waked by many meſſengers: alſo we are ſo giuen to the earth, that wee haue neuer enough of it. And if wee bee let alone, we wil put other mens poſſeſſions to our owne, and vſurpe them to our ſelues. And if wee dare not take al for feare of blame, and reprehenſion, at leaſt wiſe in the abſence of our neighbours, wee tranſport and ſhift the land markes ſomewhat further which were ſet and appointed time out of minde. And ſo wee ſteale and rob the poſſeſsions of our neighbours, and are accurſed, as we haue heard by Moſes: and alſo as Eſay pronounceth ſaying, Curſed bee you that ioyne houſe vpon houſe, and land vpon lande, til there bee no more place left: wil you dwel alone vpon the earth? If wee wil bee free from this curſe, we ought to be content with our iuſt patrimony, or with that which without diſordinate deſire we gain with our labour, or otherwiſe get with equitie. And if it bee not lawfull to tranſgreſſe that which our anceſtours haue ordeined lawefully, touching temporal goods, which ſerue our bodies for this preſent life, much leſſe it is lawful to tranſgreſſe that which the eternal (who is aboue al men) hath ordeined by his worde, for the health of our ſoules without adding or diminiſhing any thing. For as the children of Iſrael through their rebellion and diſobedience, their ſmal truſt miſbeliefe, did wander in the deſertes fortie yeeres, and there dyed, not comming to the limits which God had appointed them in the land of Canaan: So they which tranſgres the lawes of God, ſhal be as Cain, fugitiues & rūnagates in this world, ſo that they ſhal not come to the kingdome of heauen, where our markes are pitched, from before the foundation of the worlde. We haue not to doe, to Allegorizate this ſentence, and principally as the Doctours Sorboniſtes doe, which ſay, Tranſgreſſe not the boundes of the Catholike faith, which haue been ordeined from the beginning by the doctors of the Church, and other learned men, wherein they woulde not ſpeake amiſſe, but woulde giue vs good doctrine, if by the doctours

Deut.19.14 & 17.17

Eſay.5.8.

of the Church they vnderſtoode Moſes, the Prophetes. Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, who to make vs faithful, & obedient, haue taught vs the onely worde of God, without paſſing their limittes, or declining either on the right ſide, or on the left. But theſe ſcholaſticall doctours make heere a double fault: firſt when they thinke that Solomon hath ſpoken Allegorically heere, for ſeeing in this ſentence (as wee haue ſeene) wee finde ſounde and pure doctrine, conformable to the lawe and the Prophetes, and that Solomon ſpeaketh not darkely, nor by ſimilitude, wee haue no neede to ſearch for Allegories heere: for that woulde bee to darken, and corrupt the naturall ſenſe of the ſentence. Secondly, they faile in this, that by the fathers, they vnderſtand thoſe which haue buſied themſelues to teach and write ſince the time of the Apoſtles, whether they haue giuen good doctrine or not. It is enough for them, that they may ſay, our fathers haue doone ſo, or ſaide ſo, not once regarding if they haue followed rightly the worde of the Lorde or no, for they bare more reuerence to men then to God, and to mans doctrine, then to the worde of the Lorde, as may bee ſeene clearely by the articles of the Diuines of Paris.

29 *If thou haſt ſeene a man diligent in his buſineſſe: hee ſhall ſtande before kinges, and not among the ſimple people.*

Albeit the courtes and houſes of kinges and princes, bee ordinarily ſtuffed with the negligent, ſlouthful, and idle perſons: and as much they can, men driue out, and expel thoſe which are careful and diligent to apply themſelues to wel doing according to Gods commaundement: yet neuertheleſſe wee wil not do Solomon ſo much as to reiect this preſent ſentence: for he ſpeaketh not of that which is doone amongeſt carnal and worldly kinges princes and ſuperiours, although ſometimes ſuch men either for ſhame, or neceſſitie to the ende to echewe further damage, receiue into their courtes and houſes, wary & diligent felowes, which wil apply their buſineſſe, and followe their vocation faithfully: as Pharao receiued Ioſeph, Saul Dauid, Nabuchodonozer Daniel: but he ſpeaketh partly of that which one ought to doe in a wel ordered common weale:

and ſheweth kinges and great men of the earth what aſſiſtance they ought to haue in their courtes and houſes, to deale in the affaires of their realme and countrey: and partly hee ſheweth what honour they are worthie of with mē, that apply their buſines faithfully and carefully, partly alſo he ſpeaketh of the account, which one maketh of ſuch perſonages. For if men ſee a felow very cũning in his ſcience or doings, they ſay ſtraightwaies that hee is worthie to ſerue a king, & that it is pitie that he remaineth in baſe eſtate: Although therfore that nowe kinges and great men of the earth, craue not muche the aſſiſtance and ſeruice of honeſt men, which are wakeful and wary to doe their buſineſſe: this argueth not that this preſent ſentence ſhold not be receiued, as true and excellent, ſeeing it inſtructeth kinges of their duetie. Alſo it ſheweth that wee ought not to refuſe great charges, neither ought wee to ſpare our diligence, when the Lorde hath giuen vs the grace to bee nimble and quicke in our buſineſſe: for it is meete that euery one imploy himſelfe according to the talent which hee hath receiued of the Lorde. Thus doing, wee ſhall not ſtande onely before kings of the earth, but alſo before the King of kinges, who wil ſay to euery one that hath well miniſtred, It is wel doone, good and faithful ſeruant, thou haſt beene faithful ouer fewe things, I wil make thee ruler ouer many things: Enter thou into the ioy of thy Lorde.

Mat.25.21.

The xxiii. Chapter.

1 *WHen thou ſhalt be ſet downe to eate with a great Lord, in conſidering, conſider that which ſhall be ſet before thee.*

IT is an ordinary thing that the tables of kings and princes of great lordes and rulers are couered with diuers ſortes of meates, and with diuerſitie of wines, and plentie, to ſhew their magnificence, and ſatisfie their appetite, and thoſe which beare them company at the table. Inſomuch that their ordinary meales are bankets and feaſtes, and there ech one is prouoked, to eate and drinke exceſſiuely : and ſo their tables are as it were ſhops or ſchooles of gluttony and drunkenneſſe. There they forget God, and al ſobriety and temperance, and take al their delight in ſtuffing their bellies, wherof proceedeth the deſpiſing of chaſtitie: & they giue thẽſelues to daunſings & vnſhamefaſt geſtures, to wanton lookes, vnlawful kiſſes, whoredomes & adulteries. Notwithſtãding this is not to ſay, that it is not lawful to eate and drinke in the company of great men, but it is not meete that one aduance himſelfe, and ſtretch foorth his arme to take meate, and ſatiſfie his deſire. There one ought to ſhew al ſobrietie & temperance, contenting himſelfe with a little, to ſhew good example to thẽ which are ſet with him, or which waite about him. It ſhalbe therefore lawful for vs to ſitte downe at the table, and eate with great men, as Solomon ſignifieth ſomewhat, when he ſaith,

When thou ſhalt be ſet downe.&c. Hee ſaith not, flie the tables of great men, and forſake their meates : but he wil that wee be ſo wiſe and wel aduiſed, that wee content our ſelues with a little quantitie of ſome meate, without deſiring great diuerſitie, as hee ſheweth, when he ſaith,

In conſidering, thou ſhalt conſider, &c. Vnderſtand we therfore that wee are admoniſhed of temperance which ought to bee in great eſtimation with al ſortes of people, & at al times: Although Solomon heere make mention but of tables of great Lordes. And this is becauſe it is not lawful to make ones ſelf equal with him that ruleth & hath preheminence, as commonly tablefellowes to maintaine familiaritie, wil not ſeeke preheminence, one aboue another, but keepe themſelues equall : wee wil therefore followe temperance principally in the preſence of great men, and wil ſo eſteeme of it : that wee wil ſooner worke our ſelues violence, then not ouercome our diſordinate appetite, ouer the which wee ought to be maiſters. Solomon wil haue it ſo, when he ſaith,

2 *And thruſt the knife into thy throte, if thou bee Lorde ouer the ſoule.*

By the knife in the throte, he ſheweth wel, that man ought to force himſelfe to followe temperance, and howe to doe himſelfe violence, in mortifiyng his luſtes, which are ſignified by the *throte*, for hee ought not to bee ſo looſe, as to let his ſenſual appetite gouerne him, as Solomon warneth vs ſaying, *If thou bee Lorde ouer the ſoule*. Which is as though hee ſaide, Certenly thou oughteſt to rule thy vnruly appetite: for after the manner of the ſcripture, the ſoule is taken ſomtimes for the appetite, which is not wel gouerned, not onely in eating and drinking, but alſo in other thinges, as to doe wrong to ones neighbours. Therefore that which Solomon ſpeaketh by Allegory (as wee ought to vnderſtande it, for hee biddeth vs not thruſt a knife into our throtes to kill our ſelues) Saint Paule teacheth in many places without figure.

Pſal. 27. 12. & 41. 3. Rom. 13. Ephe. 4. & 5. Col. 3

3 *Deſire not his delicates, for it is a meate of lies.*

Hee ſheweth heere howe one ought to thruſt the knife into his throte, and howe to bee Lorde ouer the ſoule, and principally in the preſence of great Lordes: who although they haue their tables wel furniſhed with meates, ſweete, and delicate, and wee be inuited thereto: yet neuertheleſſe our appetite ought not to bee there too aduance vs, and make vs familiars and fellowes with them: for if they ſhewe vs a good countenance at their table, this argueth not that they are ſuche, or wil remaine ſuch as they ſeeme to bee: but there is much feignedneſſe in them: they ſhewe them ſelues pleaſant and tractable, when they are repleniſhed with crueltie: They wil ſhewe themſelues familiar, and imagine treaſon in their heartes: Solomon declareth it, ſaying, *For it is a meate of lies or diſceit.* Briefly, wee are admoniſhed by theſe three ſentences not to aſſure our ſelues of any thing, although kinges and princes of the earth, ſhew vs a faire countenance: for they are variable, and change very quickly, but that wee bee content with a meane eſtate, liuing by our dayly trauel and labour, according to the vocation whereto we are called. there wee ſhal not eate the meate of lyes, if in true obedience wee followe our vocation, nor ſhal not bee fruſtrate of our attemptes: for when the great men of the earth doe forſake vs vtterly, yet the eternal Lorde of Lordes will ſticke faſt vnto vs.

And therefore wee ought to aſſure our ſelues in him ſaying, The Lorde is on my ſide, therefore wil I not feare what man can doe againſt mee.

4 *Striue not to bee riche, but ceaſſe from thine owne aduiſe.*

The holy ſcripture ſheweth vs that God hath created al thinges
Pſal. 118.6. and that he giueth vs al in plenteouſneſſe to vſe, and hath neuer left
vs without a token of his liberalitie, ſending ſhowres and fertile ſeaſons.
And likewiſe he hath enriched many of his ſeruants as Abraham,
Iſaac, Iacob, Dauid, Solomon, and a great number of others:
and hereby he hath ſhewed vs that riches are good cretures, & that
it is lawful to haue plenteouſneſſe thereof and be rich: Wherfore
it might ſeeme that it is a thing praiſe worthie to ſtriue to be rich, &
1. Tim. 6. 17. to refuſe nothing of that which God giueth, but to reioyce in the
Act. 14. 17. ſame as the Lorde wil haue it, and as hee hath declared by his word,
as is alledged heeretofore. But the worlde hath no regarde to that
which god hath made, but ſeeing the rich to be at their eaſe, to haue
power, credite, and authoritie, and eche one to flatter them, & haue
them in admiration. Seeing I ſay: their courſe of life to bee ſuch, he
coueteth to bee riche, and many trauel earneſtly to hoorde vp ſubſtance,
& he that doth ſo, is eſteemed wiſe, wary, expert & an honeſt
man, chiefly of thoſe that would be rich. But one ought not to buſie
himſelſe after ſuch matters, nor haue ſuch a thought in his head.
as Solomon declareth ſaying, *Striue not to bee riche, &c.* Hee forbiddeth
not to ſtriue or take paine. For as wee haue ſeene heeretofore
God hath appointed that man ſhould applie himſelſe in his buſineſſe,
hee ſaith not, that it is to bee rich, for God which maketh
nothing euil, hath enriched many of his ſeruants. Alſo he forbiddeth
vs not to be wiſe and wary in ordering our goods, and making our
profite thereof, keeping them or diſpoſing them as wee ought to do
but he forbiddeth vs to take care for the goods of this worlde. Hee
wil not that our minds and bodies ſhould waxe weary in hoording
Mat. 6. 19. vp goods & riches: as if without the ſame we were miſerable and of
20. 25. force muſt periſh, whereto Ieſus Chriſt agreeth. Hee forbiddeth vs
1. Tim. 6. 8. alſo to be wittie as the children of this world, who thinke not themſelues
wary enough, if they boyle not after riches of the worlde, as

if their life conſiſted in the ſame: And ſo making ſuch commande- *Luke.12.15.*
ment, he wil that wee keepe our ſelues from couetouſnes, whereof
alſo Ieſus Chriſt admoniſheth vs. And to obay Ieſus Chriſt wel, we
ought to prop our ſelues vpon the prouidence of God, according as *Pſal.37.5.*
we are taught. And in referring our ſelues to the prouidence of God *& 55.23.*
we ought not to be ydle nor negligent. For ſeing that God hath cre- *1.Pet.5.7.*
ated vs in Ieſus Chriſt to good workes, which he hath prepared to *Eph.2.10.*
the end we might walke in the ſame, our regeneration and ſatiſfaction ſhould be nothing, if we were not careful to labour and take paines. But our trauel ought to be free from al couetouſneſſe of worldly riches, and we ought to regarde to what end God hath ordeined the labour, which is, that in him wee fulfil his wil, to put our truſt in him, and yelde him obedience. Thus doing, our labour ſhalbe bleſſed of him which commandeth it, for hee wil giue vs ſuffiſance, and our riches ſhalbe profitable to vs. Whereas if by any other meanes we trauel to get riches, they wilbe vaine and of no profite, and wil vaniſh away, ſo that we ſhal not knowe what is become of them. Solomon ſignifyeth it, ſaying,

5 *Wilt thou caſt thy eyes vpon that, when it is nothing? For in beſtowing, it wil beſtowe wings vpon it ſelfe, like an Egle, and wil flye vp to the ſkies.*

To ſhew the vanitie & vnprofitablenes of riches, & that we ought not trauel to gather heapes thereof, hee calleth it a thing *of nothing*, Or which is not, or which one cannot obtaine to his minde, although he beſtowe great care thereon: the which hee ſignifieth by *caſting the eyes*, or making them flye. And ſignifying this care, hee wil not that one vſe it, as hee wel ſheweth in aſking *Wilt thou caſt thy eyes?* As if hee ſaide, It behoueth thee not to caſt thy lookes on worldly riches to labour after them to obtaine great abundance: for they are nothing: And though they were ſomewhat, yet one coulde not haue thē at his wil no more thā an Eagle which is ſwift of wing, and flyeth aloft. For, as it foloweth *in beſtowing, it wil beſtowe*. An Eagle ſo ſwift, is as nothing to vs, and we cannot take her, for wee cannot fly on hye in the aire: which Solomon ſignifieth by the *ſkies* or heauens: for by the ſame wee ought to vnderſtande the aire, which is high aboue vs: As ſometimes they are taken in the ſcriptures. Inſomuch as a thing being high in the ayre, ſeemeth too touch the ſkies: we ought (I ſay) to vnderſtand it ſo, and not the heauens which are the ſeate of God, and the heritage of his elected. For if it bee as harde for a riche man to enter into the kingdome of heauen, as for a cammel to creepe through a needles eye, the riches that are frayle and tranſitorie cannot come there. When therefore it is ſayde that riches will *beſtowe winges vppon themſelues*, it is giuen vs to vnderſtande, eyther that they are not profitable, and vaniſh ſodainely out of our ſight, as the Eagle doth, or as the ſmoke which aſcendeth into the aire, and no man knoweth what becommeth of it: or that we are not able ynough to obtaine the riches which we deſire after our owne diſordinate couetouſenes. And ſo Solomon ſheweth vs that we labour in vayne, and that we bee not wel aduiſed when we ſeeke to enrich our ſelues, or lifte vs into an higher eſtate then God hath called vs vnto. For riches ordinarily make men proude, ſo that for their riches, they thinke they ought to be choſen to higher eſtate, which bringeth to paſſe, that they fal very lowe: For he that exalteth himſelfe ſhalbe brought lowe. Note we therefore, that we ought to be content, with that which GOD ſendeth, and not giuen to auarice, nor aſpiring to high eſtates to become rich.

6 *Eate not the meate with an euil eye, and couet not his delectable morſels.*

Prou. 22. 9.

If we ſet the euil eye agaynſt the good eye, which hath beene ſpoken of heeretofore: We ought by the euil eye to vnderſtand the niggarde, ſnudge, couetous, vnkinde, cruell, and enuious perſon, which cannot ſuffer to ſee good, but to himſelfe, whereof enſueth that he hath no delight at all to ſuccour or ayde other men with his goodes. Solomon counſelleth vs, that wee ſhould ſeeke no pleaſure nor ſeruice at the handes of ſuch a one, when he ſayth, *Eate not. &c.* By meate we may vnderſtande the thinges which are moſt neceſſarie for this preſent life, as is bread. Alſo the word that Solomon vſeth in his language, ſignifieth, and is moſt commonly enterpreted breade, and our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, teaching vs to demaunde our corporall neceſſities, ſayth, that wee ſhould pray, Giue vs this day our dayly bread. Therefore if of him that hath an euil eye, wee ought not to craue that which wee haue moſt neede of. Much leſſe ought we to deſire him to do vs any pleaſure, which may recreat & reioyce vs. Solomon ſignifieth it wel, ſaying, *And couet not his delectable morſels.* Wee vnderſtande by delectable morſelles, that which is pleaſant and recreatiue, becauſe there is nothing wherein, ſweete lips, Epicures, and gluttons, delight more, then in delicate meates, and ſweete morſels, yea, they make their bellies their Gods. Note we moreouer, that by *meate and delectable morſels*, Solomon declareth couertly, that although the euill eye bee a niggard, ſnudge and couetous, yet neuertheleſſe he handleth himſelfe well, he liueth at his eaſe, and enioyeth his pleaſures. But hee beholdeth not willingly his neighbour to floriſh and doe wel eſpecially at his diſpence. Nabal the huſbande of Abiga was ſuch a one, and ſo was the rich man.

1.Sam.25.
Luke.16.

7 *For as if he had thought it in his ſtomake, he will ſaye to thee eate and drinke, but his hearte ſhall not bee with thee.*

By this reaſon he ſheweth well, that it is true, that the euil eye wil counterfaite liberalitie. He wil bid his neighbours ſometimes to Bankets, and wil preſent himſelfe to them, offring them al ſeruice & pleaſure, and wil proteſt it ſo with his mouth, or ſignifie it by ſome outwarde ſignes, as if he were fully determined ſo to doe, and that his wil and minde were ſuch indeede. This is it that Solomon affirmeth ſaying, *as if he had thought it in his ſtomake*, which is to ſay as if he were wel pleaſed and agreed thereto. So *he wil ſay to thee, eate and drinke:* But hee is an hypocrite and a diſſembler, ſpeaking and making ſhewes and geſture, without al good meaning, as Solomon declareth ſaying, *But his heart ſhal not be with thee.* If a mā haue a noble heart, & can konw that ſuch is the affection of an euil eie, he wil neuer ſeeke to haue pleaſure nor ſeruice at his hand, for he cannot abide that one ſhoulde helpe him againſt his wil. And ſo ſuch ſuccour ſhoulde be more hurtful then profitable to him: and it woulde ſerue him to no purpoſe to giue thankes, or to offer his ſeruice for the ſame, or to requite it Solomon ſignifieth it when hee ſaith, 8 *Thou ſhalt vomit out the morſel, which thou haſt eaten: and ſhalt looſe thy pleaſant wordes.*

He ſignifieth alſo that the euil eye is ſo woe that hee hath done any good deede, that he wil doe ſome hurt afore he can bee recompenced for the ſame. And (as we ſay) he wil cut his throate that hath receiued ought from him, and wil anoy him, ſo that no man ſhal haue peace nor pleaſure about him. And becauſe it is a harde thing that we ſhoulde not ſpeake euil of ſuch fellowes, and vtterly hate them, and that we ſhould not ſeeke to be reuenged of them: Note we that Solomon by theſe three ſentences couertly admoniſheth vs to fly al occaſions, which may moue ill ſpeeches, debates or ſtrife, which are not fit for the children of God, which ought to ſeeke & folow al the meanes of peace, concord, and charitie with al men. He admoniſheth vs alſo to be careful to iudge and diſcerne, betweene the liberal that beare a good minde, and the enuyous which deſire but al miſchiefe, to the end we looſe not our time with the enuious, thinking to recreate our ſelues with them, when they ſhewe vs a faire countenance and ſeeme friendly to vs. And that we put not our ſelues in that danger to haue our throtes cut, & we and our family vndone and deſtroyed by ſuch enuious ſnudges. Wee are therefore heere warned to flie twoo things: The firſt is the ruine and deſtruction of vs, and our family: The ſecond, the occaſion of debates, ſtrifes, hates, and vproares.

9 *Whiſper not in the fooles eare, for he will deſpiſe the wiſedome of thy woordes.*

Prou.17.24. Although Solomõ ſay the fooles haue deſpiſed wiſdom & inſtruction, & that they are threatned perdition, as perſons loſt and caſt away, yet neuertheles wiſdom ceaſeth not to addreſſe her wordes to the fooliſh. And ſo it may ſeeme that Solomõ ſpeaketh now againſt himſelf, when he ſaith, *Whiſper not.&c.* Or at leaſtwiſe, that he one while approoueth one thing & another while diſalloweth it, which thing we ought neither to think nor ſay. For the holy Ghoſt is not variable or chaungeable in meaning. And therfore, ſith we ſee that Solomon knewe wel the deſpiſing that fooles made of the worde of *Prou.8.5.*

God which is our wiſedom and inſtruction, and yet neuertheleſſe he ceaſeth not to vtter his wordes to fooles. And afterwardes he now forbiddeth ſpeaking to them, knowe wee that the woorde of God ought to bee vttered to al manner of people, as wee haue ſeene heeretofore. And as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth it in many parables: and commandeth it to his Apoſtles, and hee himſelfe hath ſpoken in the eares of fooles and contemners of good doctrine. But when men ſhew their follie ſo far, that of ſet malice they reiect that which they knowe to bee good, one ought in no wiſe to talke of wiſedome vnto them. It is that which Solomon meaneth nowe when he ſaith, *Whiſper not in the fooles eare, &c.* Wheretoo that agreeth which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſaith, Giue not that which is holy to dogs, and caſt not your pearles before ſwine. &c. And Saint Paule vſeth it ſo to the Iewes which blaſphemed. One might alſo ſay that Solomon ſpeaketh heere of particular and ſecret admonitions becauſe he maketh mention of *the eares*. And alſo it is a common phraſe of ſpeeche to ſay, I wil tel him in his eare, for I will tell him in ſecret or by himſelfe. Of ſuch admonitions fooles are not worthy: but ought to bee reprehended and corrected openly, to the ende to confute them if it bee poſſible, and to bring others in feare.

Pro.1.20. & 8.1.
Mat.28.19.
Mar.16.15.
Mat.7.
Acts.13.45.
1.Tim.5.20.

10 *Remoue not the ancient Lande marke: And enter not in the fieldes of orphans.*

Wee may ſee in the holy ſcriptures that God hath poore orphans, widowes and ſtrangers in great eſtimation: for not only hee commandeth vs to aide them and doe them good, and himſelfe defendeth them from wrong: but alſo threateneth thoſe which do them iniurie, outrage, and violence. But men make no account neither of the commandement nor of the defence, and threatning. Solomon knewe it wel: and therefore after Moſes to make theſe men more inexcuſable, he vſeth the ſame caueat to forbid them, ſaying, *Remoue not, &c.* Wherein although hee ſpeake but of orphanes for breuities ſake, yet notwithſtanding hee letteth not to comprehende the others therein: as he hath ſhewed by the generalitie precedent. And in the breuitie he hath the rather named the orphanes,

Leui.19.91.
Pſal.82.3.4.
Eſa.1.17.
Exod.22.21.
22.23.24.
Zach.7.9.

becauſe according to their age they are moſt weake and leaſt ſkilful to defende themſelues. The world of the wicked knoweth it well, and therfore it is thē whome they rob & ſpoile willinglyeſt. Chiefly thoſe which are giuen them for tutors and defendours, are they which polle and eate them ſooneſt, making faire items of coſtes, and expences, and getting account-takers which are fauourable vnto them: to the end that thoſe coſtes and diſpences which they bring in, may be eaſilie allowed, as if they were iuſt and reaſonable. They would bee afraide & aſhamed to preſent ſuch accounts before honeſt and ſubſtantial men, and of a good conſcience: and yet they haue no feare of God, who wil neuer forſake the poore fatherleſſe children, but deliuer them from oppreſſion by his power & might, which might the oppreſſers cannot withſtand: and wil performe the office of a good gouernor, as Solomon pronounceth of him ſaying.

11 *For the redeemer is ſtrong: And hee wil pleade their cauſe againſt thee.*

This is as though he ſaid, becauſe Orphans are weake & quyte voide of al humane ſuccour, thou art ſo hardie as to polle and oppreſſe them: but although men haue no care to take their cauſe in hand, & withſtand the outrage & violence that thou vſeſt to them, or that thou thinkeſt thy ſelfe the ſtrongeſt, and none dare nor can reſiſt thee: yet neuertheleſſe they are not voide of ſuccour. They haue a redeemer who not only hath good wil to deliuer them from thy hands and violence, but alſo power, which power he wil imploy againſt thee, and thou ſhalt not reſiſt him. And as Orphans and fatherleſſe children through their weakeneſſe and ſmal ſtrength cannot let thee to eate them, and deſtroy them: euen ſo what valiancie ſoeuer thou haſt, yet canſt thou not let but God wilbee reuenged vpon thee, and wil put thee to perdition. Hee is their father, wherefore hee wil doe his duetie to maintaine his children. The *Play of the ſtrong redeemer* ſhalbe that he wil make knowne the wickedneſſe of the oppreſſours he wil condemne them, and reuenge himſelfe vpon them, and they ſhal not withſtande nor haue any ſuccour at al.

Pſa.68.6.

12 *Apply thy hart to vnderſtanding: and thy eares to words of knowledge.* *Eſa.10.2.8.*

Oftentimes already Solomon hath ſought to make vs attentiue to the doctrine of God, the which hee calleth one while lawe, another while inſtruction, and another while wiſdome ſcience, and vnderſtanding. He doth the ſame againe in this preſent ſentence. And it is becauſe we haue great need to be oftē aduertiſed of that which appertaineth to the glorie, and honour of God, to our ſaluation & the edification of our neighbours: for of our owne nature wee are ſo giuen to the worlde, that wee deſpiſe that which is of God, and it ſeemeth to vs that it is but time loſt to apply our ſelues theretoo, becauſe we be not thereby the more exalted to wordly honours, nor more enriched with ſubſtance, but the rather deſpiſed, and reiected, polled and oppreſſed. Neuertheleſſe if wee wilbe exalted to true and perpetual honours, and enioy the goods which wil not periſh, wee ought to followe that which Solomon hath alreadie often taught vs, and that which preſently he doeth teache vs. And to doe this ſame, we ought to apply al our vnderſtanding to learne to ſerue God, and our neighbours, and therein to ſpare neither bodie nor minde: as God hath created both the body and the ſpirites, and wil that wee bee wholy his and our neighbours. True it is that the harte is the principal, as wee ought to vnderſtande it by many witneſſes of the holy ſcriptures wherein is ſaide that God beholdeth the hartes, and that wee are admoniſhed to feare him, and loue him with al our hart, and that true worſhippers worſhip the father in ſpirite and trueth. And Solomon ſignifieth it heere ſomewhat, when in the firſt place he requeſteth the applying of the heart. And afterwardes ſheweth vs that by the right affection of the heart, the outward ſenſes ought to bee applyed to receiue *inſtruction* which hee calleth *wordes of knowledge*. And in this manner hee ſheweth vs that we are not ſufficiently inſtructed, if wee giue not our hearing to the woorde of the Lorde the which is our knowledge. And ſo, that the preaching of the word is very neceſſary for vs: inſomuch that without this holy miniſtery wee are all ignorant.

Not that God is not ſufficient, and of power to inſtruct vs otherwyſe, without outward meanes by reuelations and ſecret inſpirations. But he wil haue vs to folowe the order which he hath eſtabliſhed in his Churche, and that by mens meanes we be taught.

13 *Withdraw not correction from the childe: if thou beate him with a rod, he wil not dye.*

Prou.13.24. & 19.18. & 22.15.

It hath beene ſpoken of the chaſtizing and correction of children. But becauſe for the moſt parte children are very harde to gouerne, and almoſt vncorrigible, and there are many fooliſh fathers and worſe mothers, which wil neither chaſtiſe nor ſuffer others to correct their children: for they ſtriue to perſuade themſelues that they feare that one wil kil their children, becauſe they are tender and delicate (in which doing they thinke themſelues more wiſe, thē the holy Ghoſt: And yet they loue not their children ſo tenderly as they ought, and haue not that care ouer them which they ſhoulde haue. For perſwading themſelues that they preſerue the bodies of their children, not willing that they ſhould in any wiſe be touched, they ſend (as much as in them lyeth) their ſoules to perditiō, maintayning them in folly and wickedneſſe) for this cauſe, Solomon not content with the former admonitions ſheweth nowe, that they ought not to be afraide, that the rod wil hurt the children when he ſaith,

Withdraw not, &c. He is not content to ſay: Correct thy child: but conſidering how profitable it is to continewe in brydling and correcting children, he wil not that parents hauing once begunne to chaſtice them, ſhoulde leaue of incontinent, and grieue to take the paine and care about them to correct them. As many parents will giue ouer their children, after that for one or two corrections they cannot make them to amende. Either they deſpaire of them, or elſe are afraide to make them dul and blockiſh, or elſe vtterly to kil thē. Solomon wil haue fathers and gouernours of children to continew in correcting and chaſtiſing them, according as they ſhal ſee needful, and therefore hee ſaith, *Withdraw not correction, &c.* And to ſhewe that hee meaneth not correction only of wordes, he addeth. *If thou beat him with a rod, &c.* He knewe that children woulde put no beleefe in woords, nor make no account of verbal ſpeeches & therfore he would haue one to deale with the rod, and promiſeth that the bodie ſhall not be hurt therewith, ſo that death ſhal folow, for he ſayth, *Hee ſhoulde not dye*, Wherein he inſtructeth parents and ſheweth them that they ought not to ſpare the rod, but ſhoulde make their children feele it ſharply, to make them remember to behaue themſelues wel, and not to returne to their wonted folly. And ſheweth them that the markes or little woundes which they ſhall make with the rod vpon the bodie of their children ſhall not bee mortall. Alſo parentes are admoniſhed that in chaſtiſing their children, they ſeeke not to kil them. One may ſay moreouer, that when Solomon ſayth *He ſhould not dye*, That he giueth vs ſomewhat to vnderſtande that thoſe parentes which are carefull too correct their children, doe ſaue them from the gallowes, and doe let them from being executed by iuſtice. Contrariwiſe they which make no account to chaſtice them, ſend them to the galowes, as much as they can, but Solomon ſheweth vs another deliuerance, which is greatly to be ſet by when he ſayth:

14 *Thou ſhalt beate him with a rod, and deliuer his ſoule from hell.*

The temporall gallowes or gibbet deſtroyeth but the body for a certaine time, but hel ſwalloweth the ſoule for euer: yea and the body to after reſurrection, to remayne in perpetual torments, both bodie and ſoule. Wherefore if fathers and gouernours ought to be careful to keepe the bodies from the gallowes by chaſtizing and beating their children with rods: by a farre more reaſon, when by meanes of the rod, one may keepe them from death eternal, they ought not to be negligent to vſe the rodde, and yet neuertheles not thinke that the materiall rodde which one holdeth in his hande, hath ſuch vertue of it ſelfe alone, for it is an inſtrument that GOD maketh to preuaile as he thinketh good. The principall rod to deliuer children from hel, is the woorde of the Goſpell, which is the power of God to ſaue al beleeuers. And ſo it is not ynough, nor yet the principall point of correction and chaſticement, *To beate with the rod*, but with the ſame the principall and moſt neceſſarie,

Ephe.6.4.
Tit.2.12.
Ephe.4.29.

is that fathers,and gouernors bring vp their children,in the knowledge and wayes of the Lorde. And therefore they that haue children in charge,ought to bee careful, to ſhewe them good examples, in liuing ſoberlie in this preſent world,ſo that no filthy worde proceede out of their mouthes,but only that which is good to the vſe of edifying,&c.

15 *My ſonne,if thy heart be wiſe, my heart ſhal reioyce, and I alſo.*

Carnal and worldly fathers are maruellouſly reioiced when they ſee their children increaſe in beautie,or temporal proſperitie, when they ſee their bodies are in good health, and they receiue purſely profit in augmenting earthly goods, and when they haue the craft to maintaine themſelues ciuilly with their neighbours to haue them ſtil at their commandement. And yet they are not careful a whit howe they diſpoſe of their ſoules. They haue no care but of that which is ſeene with the eye, and reioice in no other thing. Likewiſe the children of ſuch men for the moſt parte reſemble their fathers and reioice not but in worldly matters. But the faythful and true Chriſtians reioice principally,when their children inwardly are wel diſpoſed by wiſedome.Solomon ſheweth it when he ſaith,

My ſonne,if thy heart bee wiſe, &c. When Solomon is not content to ſay ſimply,*my heart ſhall reioyce*,but addeth,*and I alſo*, hee admoniſheth vs very wel,that the greateſt ioy of parents ouer their infants ought to be,when they ſee them wiſe,but not after the worlde: for the wiſedome of this worlde is but folly before God: but that they bee filled with diuine wiſedome,although this world reprooue it.Therefore when man beholdeth but the face,and there is none but God which ſeeth the hart,one may aſke how fathers & mothers may reioyce,at the wiſedome of the heartes of their children. The anſwere is,that if the heart be wiſe, it will ſhewe himſelfe ſo,by workes and words which are of God.For the hart which is truly giuen to wiſedome, ſuffereth not the outwarde members to bee ydle, but as much as in him lyeth, forceth them to ſay and doe things,which are to the glory and honour of the Lorde, and to the profite and health of his neighbours.And ſo it behoueth the children to reioyce their parentes, imploying themſelues to ſay and doe things good and honeſt, iuſt, and righteous. Solomon ſignifyeth it, ſaying.

16 *And my reines ſhal leape for ioy, when thy lips ſpeake righteous things.*

See heere how the wiſdome of the hart, is manifeſted by the lips, by the which we ſhal vnderſtand al other members, which we muſt turne from wickedneſſe and apply to wel doing, according as God teacheth vs by his word. But Solomon to ſhunne prolixitie, ſpeaketh but of lips, and the rather of them, than of other members becauſe, they are readieſt to manifeſt the inward partes, and moſt fit to ſhew forth the praiſes of God, and likewiſe to mainteine the heart that it wander not heere and there out of wiſedome, as we prooue: for when wee thinke of any thing, it is ſtreightwaies gone out of our hearts, except we common and talke of it, and ſpeake with our mouthes: And alſo when the lippes ſpeake according as the heart is affectionate, the other members are the more ready to execute that which is vttered. And when he ſaith, *My reines ſhal leap for ioy:* he vſeth repetition which is familiar in the ſcriptures. It is the ſame which he hath ſaid, My heart ſhal reioyce and I alſo. For the reines are taken for that which is moſt profoundly hidden in man, which is the hart, as may bee vnderſtoode, in that the knowledge thereof is reſerued to the Lord: and when he ioineth *ſpeaking of* righteous things *to the wiſedome of the heart*, he ſheweth that wiſedome reſteth not in phantaſies, and good intentions of men, but in true knowledge of the wil of God, the which he declareth to vs by his word, which is the perfect rule to guide vs to wil, thinke ſay, and doe, that which is right and equitie which reſteth onely in this, that we yeelde the honour to God which appertaineth to him, and that wee aide one another in true charitie and brotherlie loue. This thus conſidered, wee ſee whereof it is that parentes ought to reioyce principally, in regarding the conuerſation of their children: The ſuperiours in ſeeing their ſubiectes: And the miniſters in conſidering the flocke that they haue to feede.

Iere. 17. 9. 10.

Prou.22.15. Therefore ſith folly is bounde in the heart of the childe, it foloweth wel that al they which haue any gouernement of youth, ought very carefully to obey that which Solomon commandeth them ver.13.14. Otherwiſe they cannot haue true ioy: for folly remayneth: And ſo the lips ſpeake not of righteous things: where at all faythful and Chriſtian gouernours ought greatly to reioice. And therfore according to the eſtate that they occupy, they ought to vſe correction, to driue away folly which is bound in the harts of children, the magiſtrates in one ſorte, the miniſters in another, and the fathers in another, for they haue not al one and the ſame power. The miniſters force conſiſteth onely in the worde: Magiſtrates haue the ſworde, and fathers the rod: and alſo they may vſe warnings and admonitions by the worde. For although it appertaineth onelye to miniſters, to preache the worde publikely, yet neuertheleſſe as magiſtrates and parents ought to gouerne themſelues by the ſame, ſo ought they to vſe it towardes them which they haue in gouernement.

17 *Let not thyne hart bee enuious againſt ſinners: but let it bee in the feare of the Lorde continually.*

It ſeemeth wel to yong folkes that they are wiſe ynough, if they folowe the multitude, and ſeeke to raiſe themſelues vp and bee of value, in aduauncing themſelues, and working their owne profit: although it bee to the damage of their neighbours: and ſo they are *ſinners*, that is to ſay, hauing their hartes infected and corrupted with malice and wickedneſſe, and ſhewing it in their conuerſation with the which they are wel pleaſed. And vſing themſelues in this ſorte they floriſh and proſper in outwarde apparance, they haue their deſires, and wiſhes and liue at their eaſe: as it is ſeene, and hath beene alledged by the ſcriptures. Contrariwiſe they which are wiſe indeede, and folowe righteouſneſſe, haue often miſerie and calamities, whereby it commeth to paſſe that they are tempted too doe as the fooliſh and wicked doe, to haue part of their proſperity. But Solomon ſheweth them, that if by the wiſedome of the hearte they will ſpeake of righteous thinges as belongeth to them, they ought not to obey ſuch temptations, ſaying: *Let not thy heart be* *enuious agaynſt ſinners*. Heere Solomon teacheth vs in brieſe, that which Dauid treateth amply, in the.37. Pſalme, wherein wee haue to note, that *to be enuious againſt ſinners*, is, in regarding their temporal proſperitie to be agreeued at our owne miſerie, and not to care what wee doe ſo we may attayne to their eaſe and doe as we thinke they doe. And ſo vnder this worde of enuie, or zeale, or affection, wee vnderſtand, that Solomon comprehendeth the proſperitie of the wicked, and ſignifieth that they are happie according to the outwarde apparance, for why one ſeldome enuieth the poore and miſerable, neither coueteth to be in their eſtate, but rather deteſteth them, & flyeth their companie as much as is poſſible. For it ſeemeth that one ſhal come thither but too ſoone. Alſo by this worde *Enuie* or affection, Solomon ſheweth that hee ſpeaketh to them which are miſerable according to the worlde: for they which are at their eaſe, thinke not on other mens eſtates to deſire them, except they bee vnſatiable gluttons, which knowe nothing what they ought to doe. Note wee ſecondly, when hee putteth the *feare of the Lorde* againſt enuie, or zeale, that they which ſuffer thẽ ſelues to bee caried away by ſuch enuie or affection, haue no feare of the Lorde: for by the ſame they withdrawe themſelues from euil. And when one deſireth to proſper as the wicked doe, there is no euil whereto he giueth not himſelſe to come to his deſires. And when after hauing ſpoken heere afore of the wiſedome of the heart and ſpeach of righteous things, hee admoniſheth vs to the feare of Lorde, hee ſheweth that if wee doe not feare the Lorde, wee are voide and naked of all wiſedome and righteouſneſſe, and although it bee neceſſary, and that otherwiſe it cannot bee, but the feare of the Lorde is permanent, yet neuertheleſſe when Solomon addeth, *Continually*, hee ſaith no ſuperfluous thing, but expoundeth to vs more clearely the true nature of the feare of the feare of the Lorde, and ſheweth vs that if wee feare the Lorde truly wee ſhoulde continue in wiſedome and righteouſneſſe. And although according to the outwarde apparance, ſinners flooriſhe and proſper, and that miſeries aſſaile on al ſides them which feare God, as though they ſhoulde periſhe without redemption, and that there were no ende of their calamities: Notwithſtanding thoſe which feare the Lord haue an hope, of the which they ſhal not be fruſtrate.

Prou.16.6.

18 *For ſurely there is an ende, and thyne hope ſhal not bee cut off.*

Albeit the ſenſe be very true, that the calamities of the iuſt men which feare God ſhal haue ende, and that without al fault: as one may confirme it when Solomon ſaith, *And thyne hope ſhall not bee cut off:* Yet notwithſtanding it is no inconuenience to ſay that Solomon yeeldeth a reaſon why one ſhould not enuie ſinners, when he ſaith,

For ſurely there is an ende, &c. The cauſe why one is enuyous againſt ſinners, is becauſe at al times hee hath ſeene them proſper and yet ſeeth them: and it ſeemeth that they ſhal doe ſo ſtil. But there wilbe an end, and that ſhortly, as (Pſal.37.) it is wel declared vnto vs. Whereto Solomon accordeth ſaying, *For ſurely, &c.* Which thing might wel afray ſinners, and make them looſe their courage, if they had any ſenſe at all. For if there bee (as it is very true) an ende of their proſperitie, it followeth that they periſhe without redemption, ſeing that all their endeuour is in that which is of no indurance. And ſo *the ende* ſhalbe taken heere, for depriuation of al proſperitie: as alſo one may vnderſtande it when Solomon putteth the *hope of the iuſt* a contrary to *the ende* and ſaith:

That it ſhal not be cut off. When hee attributeth hope to him which feareth God, he ſheweth that thoſe which walke in doubt & diſtruſt are nothing worth: although they make a faire ſhew of holineſſe and iuſtice, as doe thoſe which feare God by the commandements of men. He ſheweth alſo that it is the common vſe of them which feare God, to haue afflictions: in that that hope is ioyned to patience which proceedeth of tribulation. What afflictions then ſoeuer happen vs, let vs bee patient, *And our hope ſhal not bee cut off.* For dooing ſo, wee ſhal not bee of the number of the wicked, which are threatened to bee cut downe as the graſſe: but wee ſhalbe borne anewe of ſeede incorruptible, which ſhal remaine for euer.

Eſa.29.13.
Rom.5.3.4.
& 8.25.
Iam.1.2.3.
Pſal.37.2.
1.Pet.1,23.

19 *O thou my ſonne, heare and bee wiſe, and guide thyne heart vprightly in the way.*

When our wiſedome and vnderſtanding, conſiſteth not but in the worde of God, as hath often beene ſaide, and as it hath beene alledged: It is not without cauſe that Solomon inuiteth ech one of vs to heare, deſiring that by hearing we may become wiſe. And that we may be the more careful to obay him, hee is not content to ſay, Thou whoſoeuer thou art, heare: but, *O thou my ſonne, heare.* In calling eche one of vs his ſonne, hee ſheweth his greate charitie towards vs. And by the ſame he preſſeth vs to giue him our hearts, inclyning our ſelues to folowe, willingly his admonitions and inſtructions. Hee ſheweth alſo with what affection, Paſtours and Miniſters of the Church ought to be led towardes the Lords flock: which is that they beare themſelues as fathers towardes their children ſo to leade them the more eaſily, to the obedience of the word. As S. Paule likewiſe doeth it in many places. He wil, that hauing heard, we become wiſe: for he ſaith,

Dent.4.6.

And be wyſe, As hee hath admoniſhed vs heeretofore. And afterwardes that by this *wiſedome* wee doe our duetie as wee ought to doe. For hee ſaith, *And guyde thy heart vprightly, &c.* And ſo, wee vnderſtande that the worde is not preached vnto vs, to liue in negligence and ydleneſſe, but that by the ſame, hauing learned to bee wiſe, wee may bring foorth the fruites of wiſedome, which is to guyde our ſelues vprightly in this worlde, yeelding God the honour which hee aſketh vs by his lawe, and dooing pleaſure and ſeruice to our neighbours, according as hee commandeth vs by the ſame, See heere the way in the which wee ought vprightly to guide our heartes. Solomon ſpeaketh expreſly of the guyding of the heart: for if it be not well affectionate, al that wee goe about is manifeſt wickedneſſe: or if we doe any thing which profiteth, wee are led by hypocriſie: And that which wee doe fairely before men is but abhomination before God, who beholdeth the hearts.

20 Keepe not company with wine bibbers, nor with deuourers of fleſh.

We deſire naturally to haue wherewith to maintaine our ſelues in good order in this life, and to be cloathed honeſtly. Such deſire is not to be deſpiſed nor blamed, when it is without auarice and agreeth with that which Ieſus Chriſt teacheth vs, when he ſaith that we ſhould aſke of God our father, that hee woulde giue vs this day our dayly bread. Wherein as wee are taught to fly auarice, and not to eate the bread of others for nothing: ſo alſo wee are taught to content our ſelues with a litle nouriſhment and meates which are not of an hye price nor curious dreſſing, and apparel, which is not ſumptuous. Wherfore let vs neither be gluttõs, nor deintie mouths, nor drunkards, nor couet the bankets and feaſtes of ſuch perſons, who are neuer at their eaſe, but when they are bibbing and ſwallowing. *1.Tim.44. & 6.17.* Solomon warneth vs thereof ſaying, *Keepe not company with wyne bibbers, &c.* He ſaith not, keepe not company with them which drinke wine and eate fleſhe. For euery creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refuſed when it is taken with thanksgiuing. And the liuing God giueth vs al things abundantly to vſe. But he ſaith,

With wyne bibbers, &c. Hee wil not that wee bee hoate nor haſtie to fil our ſelues with wyne and fleſh, not conſidering wheretoo al things are created. And ſheweth howe it is not meete that wee ſhoulde fill wyne downe our throtes, as into a veſſel which hath a large mouth, nor that wee deuoure meate lyke hungry wolues: but that in ſobrietie and temperance wee ſauour our fleſh and our wyne, not ſo much to take our corporal delight thereof, as to acknowledge the bountie & liberalitie, which our Lord God vſeth towards vs, to giue him thanks for the ſame: as we are boundẽ theretoo, hauing nothing but by his grace and mercie. Thus dooing although in this worlde, we cannot chooſe, but wee muſt bee amongſt drunkardes and deuourers of fleſh, yet neuertheleſſe wee ſhal not bee with them: for wee ſhal not bee partakers of their vnfruiteful woorkes of darkeneſſe. *Eph.5.119.* As Saint Paule telleth vs.

Note wee beſides, that there is gluttonie, not onely in eating too much, either of Beeſe, Mutton, or foule, but alſo of fiſhe: for that is fleſhe, although it bee not named ſo amongſt the Papiſts. S. Paul is witneſſe of it. Wherefore the Papiſts are much abuſed, when to abſtaine from that which they cal fleſh, they perſwade them ſelues that they faſt, and yet they fil themſelues once a day with fiſhe and wine, ſo ful as the belly wil holde, ſo that they haue no appetite againſt euening. But it ſo much lacketh that they faſt and are ſober, that they are rather wine bibbers, & fleſhly gluttons, wherby they deſerue wel to haue that pouertie which Solomon threatneth to them which are gluttons and drunkardes, ſaying. *1.Cor.15.3.*

21 *For the drunkard and the glutton ſhalbe poore: and the too much ſleeper ſhalbe clothed with rags.*

Solomon giueth vs heere the reaſon, for the which he wil not haue vs to keepe company with wine bibbers, and in this reaſon he ſheweth, that of drunkenneſſe and gluttony proceede pouertie, the which wee naturally doe feare. Gluttons and drunkardes merite it wel, for they are not onely ſpendethriftes, and wealthwaſters, but alſo they are ſlouthful, as Solomon marketh it, when he addeth here *the too much ſleeper* whereof Solomon hath blamed the ſlouthful, *Pro.6.9.10 11.* and as hee hath threatened the ſlouthful of pouertie, ſo doeth hee now heere, when he attributeth rags to him that ſleepeth too much and if we ſee not this happen before our eies, yet let vs knowe that they which continue in drunkenneſſe and ſleeping, ſhal not eſcape Gods hand: for if they be not reputed worthie of temporal goods, they are not capable of heauenly ſubſtance.

22 *Heare thy father which begot thee: and diſpiſe not thy mother when ſhe waxeth old.*

Subiection is a very harde thing, and thoſe which are moſt bounden to yeeld obedience, flie from it as much as they can. There is no ſubiection nor obedience which is more eſteemed amongeſt men thā that of children towards their fathers & mothers, but children haue no care to doe their dueties, and principally when their

fathers

fathers and mothers bee olde, then the children which couet to liue at their owne pleaſure, perſwade themſelues that their fathers and mothers are too ſeuere and rigorous, or ſtriue to make them beleeue that they dote and are mad, and that they knowe not what they ſay or doe. For this cauſe they haue great neede to be ſtil tolde of their duetie, as Solomõ warneth them thereof: and here againe, ſaying,

Heare thy father, &c. Wherein hee teacheth children nothing but that which they woulde ſhoulde bee doone vnto them, if they had children, as one may perceiue, when there are neither fathers nor mothers ſo young, which wil not bee ſo honoured of their children: It is meete therefore that children haue regarde to doe their duetie to their parents, as Solomon exhorteth them in this verſe. Although hee attribute great authoritie to parents: firſt when hee ſaith, *Heare*, In this hee will that children holde their parentes for maiſters & true techers, & as bearing words in the name of Chriſt: for it is him of whom the father ſaith, Heare him. Alſo by this word *Heare*, he ſheweth parents in what ſchole they ought to ſtudie: that is, in the heauenly fathers ſchoole, by the meanes of Ieſus Chriſt: otherwiſe they can ſay nothing that their children ought to heare. This is not to ſay notwithſtanding, that fathers & mothers ought to cõmande their children nothing which is not expreſſed word by worde in the ſcripture. It ſufficeth that they commande them nothing, wherein they offende if they obey. Then children ought to heare and render to their parents, the honour which God commandeth. It is that which the Apoſtle Saint Paule commandeth, ſaying,
Col.3.20. ing, In al thinges &c. And to the Epheſians, hee expoundeth what
Ephe.6.1 al theſe thinges are, ween hee ſaith, According to the Lorde: for it behoooueth vs to obey father and mother in al that which is not contrary too the honour and ſubection which wee owe vntoo God. Secondly, he attributeth authoritie, when he ſaith, *thy father* for ſeeing that God doeth this honour to men, which are but his organs and inſtruments, to communicate his titles too them: it is no reaſon that children ſhoulde diſdaine them, or once enterpriſe to diſobey them: for their diſobedieuce woulde not bee againſt men, but againſt God. Alſo fathers are taught too bee the imitators of

that onely great father, which is the father of bodies and ſoules: for hee hath created al, and hath care ouer al. Euen ſo fathers ought to haue care both of the bodies & ſoules of them which God hath giuen them. Thirdly, when hee ſaith, *which begot thee*, hee attributeth great authoritie to fathers, for he putteth them as it were in the place of God, to whome onely it belongeth to bring foorth children into the world, making the mothers fruiteful, as Iacob proued it. And therfore when it is ſaid: *which begot thee*, let fathers & mothers, know that they are the inſtruments & organs of God: & let children acknowledge, that they ſhoulde haue beene nothing, if God had not made their fathers and mothers fertile, and that they haue al by their meanes, for the which cauſe it is good reaſon, that they yeelde themſelues ſubiects and obedient to them: and that fathers bee careful ouer their owne workes, and let them not goe to perdition for fault of inſtruction, teaching, correction, and chaſtiſement. But although vnder the name of the father, wee ought alſo to vnderſtande the mother (for the commandement importeth, honor thy father and mother:) yet neuertheleſſe Solomon knowing the worlde to bee ſo depraued and bad, that men make no account of their mothers, becauſe they are women (as thoſe children tell them, which haue no feare of God) he hath made expreſſe mention of the mother, ſaying,

Gen. 30. 1. 2.

And deſpiſe not thy mother when ſhe waxeth olde. Solomon knew that in an houſe or family they made no account of mothers, when they brought no profite to the houſe, which commeth to paſſe, when for age they can doe no handy worke: for this cauſe hee maketh expreſſe mention of their age, and wil that in the ſame one make as much account of mothers, as they did when they were ſtrong and luſtie, and not to reiect them as doting & old fooles: as is the vſe of wicked children, which ſeeke but their owne profite or pleaſure. Suche people loue not to ſee thoſe which ſhew them their faultes and rebuke them: nor thoſe which ſerue them too no vſe, but to ſpende. Nowe as Solomon wil not, that principally in age, one ſhoulde deſpiſe his mother, euen ſo hee couertly admoniſheth mothers to gouerne thēſelues ſo well by the worde of God in their youth, that in their old age they be honorable before their children, inſomuch that they reteine authoritie to cōmand, & their children bee they neuer ſo olde, feare their diſpleaſure.

23 *Buy trueth, and ſel it not, wiſedome, inſtruction, and vnderſtanding.*

Albeit this preſent ſentence may bee applyed to al men becauſe al men haue neede to poſſeſſe trueth: as wee are inuited dayly to the ſame by the preaching of the Goſpel: yet notwithſtanding because the former ſentence was ſpoken to children, and alſo ſome which followe touch them (as wee may ſee) it is very requiſite too ſay, that Solomon continueth his purpoſe, & teacheth children that which they haue to doe in hearing their fathers: for although hee ſpeake as it were commanding, yet neuertheleſſe wee may wel ſay that hee expreſſeth the deſire which hee hath too haue children profite.

Nowe ſeeing hee commandeth, or deſireth that children ſhould ſo wel heare their fathers, that thereby they ſhoulde *buy trueth, wiſedome, inſtruction, and vnderſtanding*, hee ſheweth that parents ought to bee poſſeſſours of trueth, otherwiſe their children cannot buy it of them: for one cannot buy of any one thing which hee hath not: hee wil therefore that parents bee a good example to their children, walking without fraude, iniurie and violence, and ſpeaking continually the trueth. In this wiſe children may buy of them, that which Solomon commandeth or deſireth heere. But becauſe children obteine commonly of their parents eche thing liberally, and without exchange, which is neceſſary for them, it may bee ſaide that Solomon ſpeaketh vnproperly, when he ſaith, *Buy*. Seeing alſo that in al the worlde there is nothing which is ſufficient to exchange for *trueth, wiſedome, inſtruction, and vnderſtanding*. And when hee admoniſheth vs to buy, it is as if hee ſaide: It behoueth children to be careful and diligent to learne of their parentes to bee true, wiſe, humble, obedient, & wel aduiſed: and to refraine frō al lying, fraude, deceite, and couſonage: to renounce al vanitie and folly, and to flie from al perſwaſions which tende to pride and diſobedience: and deteſt al folly and ignorance. Thus doing, they ſhal *buye*, that is to ſay, they ſhal obteine trueth, wiſedome, inſtruction, and vnderſtanding. Nowe as they which buye any landes or inheritance for the moſt parte determine to keepe that which they buy,and will in no caſe depart from it for feare of want: for wee ſee it commeth to paſſe that they which ſell their lands,doe not liue by the gaine of their mony, but diſpende it fooliſhly, or haue it taken from them and loſt: ſo Solomon wil that one keepe trueth,wiſedome, inſtruction and vnderſtanding wel, and not depart from it,as hee ſheweth when he ſaith, *And ſell it not*. And ſo hee wil that children perſeuer in the former vertues, not giuing them ouer in any cace: for according to the cuſtome of the world, hee which ſelleth,defeateth himſelfe of that which he ſelleth, and another ſeaſeth vpon it. Meane while let vs not thinke that Solomon is againſt that wee ſhoulde make our neighbours partakers of the giftes and graces, that God hath beſtowed vpon vs, either by the meanes of our parents or by others: for in communicating them we diſinherite not our ſelues, nor diminiſh them at al, but rather augment them: for the reſt, there are ſome which take this ſentence generally,and by *buiyng trueth*, they vnderſtand that one ought to vſe liberalitie towardes them which diſtribute ſpiritual thinges. And by *not to ſell*,they vnderſtande that doctours ought not to be giuen to gaine,but to teache freely.

Rom.15.27.
1.Cor.9.11.
Gal.6.6.
Mat.10.8.
1.Pet.5.2.

24 *The father of the righteous, in reioyſing, ſhal bee glad: and hee that hath begotten a wiſe childe, ſhall haue ioy of him.*

It is no inconuenience to ſay that Solomon in this ſentence, and in the next,intreateth of that which in the 15.and 16.verſes he hath doone,but in an other maner of ſpeaking. Repetition(as hath beene often ſaide)is familiar in the ſcripture,in the which the holy Ghoſt ſheweth the great care which he hath ouer vs,as is needful it ſhold bee ſo: for wee make no great haſt to awake our ſelues,and ſtudie to doe our duetie by one onely warning, it vaniſheth away eaſily out of our vnderſtanding becauſe wee are vaine and carnal, and by nature enimies to iuſtice and wiſedome: and ſo wee cannot reioyce our ſelues in the ſame, but in folly and iniquitie, according as we are conceaued and borne: Dauid reknowledgeth it, and S. Paul maketh great complaint thereof. Now therefore ſeeing by na-

Pſal.51.7
Rom.7.14.
Ephe.2.3

ture, none is wiſe and righteous : and it is very harde to come to it, when Solomon ſaith, *The father of the righteous ſhalbe glad, and he that hath begotten, &c.* hee meaneth not that by their firſt and carnal birth, children bee wiſe and righteous, as one may gather it by diuers ſentences of his Prouerbes: but hee ſheweth firſt of all *Pro. 12. 15.* to fathers, and mothers, that they ought greatly to loue righteouſneſſe, and wiſedome, and in the ſame to haue al their delight, aſwel in liuing after the ſame, as ſeeking to print them wel in the heartes and mindes of their children, for if they take no pleaſure to followe righteouſneſſe and wiſedome, and to obteine the ſame, and alſo too make their children partakers thereof by ſounde doctrine, by good admonitions, corrections, & chaſtiſements, they wil make no great account, to ſee them wiſe and righteous, nor cannot reioyce a whit in the ſame: much leſſe wil they haue that great ioy which Solomon requireth of them, as hee ſheweth when hee is not content to ſay ſimply, that hee ſhalbe glad, but he doubleth the worde, ſaying, *In reioyſing ſhalbe glad.* And yet againe hee repeateth it ſaying, *Hee ſhall haue ioy of him.*

Secondly, hee ſheweth children that they ought to bee careful to take good heede, to the honeſt manners and holy conuerſation, to the doctrine and admonition of their fathers and mothers: and that they ſeeke to mortifie their vaine and fooliſhe concupiſcences, their carnal and diſordinate affections, ſo that by the good reformation of their hearts they may ſhewe in their liues and conuerſation, righteouſneſſe and wiſedome, and may ſtudie to giue by this meanes recreation to their fathers and mothers: So that (as Solomon requireth it) their *parents in reioyſing may be glad.* This is the duetie of children to ſtriue to giue ſuch ioy to their fathers & mothers. And alſo Saint Paule giueth them expreſſe admonition thereof.

25 *Let thy father reioyce in thee, and thy mother: and ſhee that bare thee, be glad.*

It is not meete therefore for children to ſay that they are too young to doe wel, and bee wiſe: for it is by wiſedome that one reioyceth his parentes. Contrariwiſe hee bringeth but ſorowe and ſadneſſe to his parentes by folly. Pro.10.& 15.20. Pro.17.21

26 *My ſonne, giue mee thine hearte, and let thine eies delight in my wayes.*

Wiſedome warneth vs not onely to take away al vanitie and folly from our hearts, but alſo renouncing our ſelues to giue al our whole affections to her, for ſhee ſaith not, my freend, or my neighbour, but ſhee ſaith, my ſonne, ſhewing vs, ſeeing wee are her children, that wee ſhoulde be wholy at her commandement. For ſeeing we haue our carnal fathers in reuerence, ſhal we not be much more ſubiect to the father of the ſpirite? Shee ſaieth not, Drawe neere thy heart to mee, But, *Giue me thy heart*. And ſo ſhee wil not that wee be to our ſelues: for that which is giuen, is no more his which giueth it. Whereto agreeth ſomewhat, that which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt teacheth vs: If any man wil folowe mee, let him forſake him ſelfe, and folowe mee. To giue our heartes wel to wiſedome, it behooueth vs not to folowe our owne phantaſies, and good intentions, Hebr.12.9 nor that our delight be in that which wee thinke and imagine of our ſelues, and which wee deſire by nature, but that wee take Mat.16.24. pleaſure in that which wiſedome teacheth vs, and that her gouernment be our delight: as ſhee admoniſheth vs thereof, conſequently, ſaying, *And let thyne eyes delight, &c.* Wherein we haue as it were a repetition, or expoſition *of giuing the heart*. For one can take no pleaſure but there where his heart is. It is meete therefore that wee giue our ſelues to our God, hauing all our delight in his woorde, to followe ioyfully the way which it teacheth vs. This dooing, our eyes ſhall delight in the wayes of wiſedome. That is to ſay, that our ſpirites and vnderſtanding, take great pleaſure to vnderſtande that which wiſedome teacheth, and alſo to thinke on it well, to conduct willingly al our ſenſes both exteriour, and interiour to the obedience of the woorde. That is it which we ought to vnderſtand, when it is ſaide to vs, *And thyne eyes, &c.* For if one ſee the wayes of wiſdome but with corporal eyes, he cannot delight therein: but it behoueth our inwarde eyes to ſee it, and regarde it ioyfully, ſo that they may ſtir vp the outward partes to giue themſelues thereto, and that we be wholy both ſoule and body giuen to to the ſeruice of our God. Alſo Solomon requireth firſt of all the hearte, and then the eies: wherein hee comprehendeth al the man, the conduct of whome proceedeth from the heart and the eies. Therefore as our celeſtial father is holy, and by good right requireth that his children bee holy. So it is meete that fathers of this worlde bee of an holy conuerſation, to giue good example to their children, to the ende to draw them to the like maner of liuing, and that in this ſort they poſſeſſe the hearts of their children, which followe their ſteppes not againſt their will, but moſt willingly.

27 *For a whore is as a deepe ditch: and a ſtrange woman as a narrowe pit.*

To giue our heartes to wiſedome, and delight in her wayes, we haue to reſtraine our ſelues from many ſortes of wickedneſſes: the which are natural to vs becauſe of our corruption and malice. Notwithſtanding, Solomon inuiting vs to giue our heartes to wiſedome, ſeeketh not at this preſent, but to reſtraine vs from whoredome and drunkenneſſe, whereof whoredome proceedeth, as hereafter ſhalbe ſeene. One may think that it is becauſe the greateſt part of the worlde at al times hath made no conſcience, nor yet doeth not, to vſe whores, and be dronke: or that of theſe twoo, proceede many other vices, yea almoſt al wickedneſſe. By whoredome and drunkenneſſe one commeth to ydolatrie, and to blaſpheme God, and deſpyſe al religion, one commeth to rebel againſt his parents and ſuperiours, to kil, robbe, lye, backbyte, beare falſe witneſſe and to ymagine and doe other wickedneſſe. Therfore to withdrawe vs from whoredome, he compareth the whoriſhe perſon, (whome alſo he calleth a ſtrange woman) to a deepe ditch, out of the which one cannot recouer, when he is once falne in. And alſo hee compareth her to a narrow pit, wherein if a man fal and his head before, hee cannot bowe himſelſe, to bring his legges beneath, and lift vp his head, but muſt of force bee ſtiffled in the water, and ſo periſhe. And ſo by ſuch compariſons he ſheweth vs, that thoſe which hauat whoores deſtroy themſelues. As hee hath ſhewed it

Prou.2.16. & 5.3. & 6.24. & 7.7. Pſal.7.16. & 57.7. Eſa.24.17. Iere.18.10. Mat.15.14.

heere-heretofore: where hee treateth amply of the ruine and deſtruction of whoremaiſters, and harlots. Wherfore it is no neede to ſtay long thereon nowe, nor to tel why the whore is called a ſtrange woman, for it hath bene ſhewed. Onely note we, that the *Ditch*, and *Pit*, are often taken in the ſcripture, for ruine and perdition. Alſo Solomon compareth the whooriſhe perſon to a hunter, which lyeth in waite for the beaſt to bring him into his ſnares, and kil him, when he ſaieth:

28 *Alſo ſhee lieth in waite as for a praye: and ſhe encreaſeth the tranſgreſſours amongeſt men.*

Theſe Ambuſhments haue beene declared here aboue, where it is ſaide, That a woman hunteth for the precious life of a man: ſhee is not content to lye in waite for one man, but ſhe allureth many to her: Not thoſe which keepe them ſelues firme and conſtant in veritie and loyaltie, and wil in no wiſe breake the promiſe made to their lawful choyce, but thoſe which feare not God, and make no account to lye, and deceiue their beloued. It is that, which Solomon meaneth, when he ſaieth, *Pro.6.26. & 7.10.*

And encreaſeth the tranſgreſſours amongeſt men. That is to ſay, that they which are of an euil fayth, are eaſily allured to whoredome, be they men or women. For that which is ſpoken of the whoriſhe woman, ought alſo to bee vnderſtoode of the man giuen to whoredome, which ſuborneth and entiſeth by flatteries & lyes, or other ſuttle, or violent meanes, many maydes, and wiues, which are not of a good Fayth and loyaltie towardes God and men. For the reſt, if we wil vnderſtand theſe two ſentences of ſpiritual whordome, which is farre more dangerous then the bodilie: or at leaſtwiſe, take an admonition by the ſame, to wit, that if it behoueth vs to be careful to flye from whoredome, to giue our heartes to our father, by a farre more reaſon we ought to abhorre idolatrie, which is a whoredome, not onely dangerous, but alſo greatly diſpleaſant and abhominable, before the eyes of our father, before his Angels, and al his elected, which knowe the trueth. Wee may take allegorically the harlot, and ſtrange woman, for the gouernours & heades of the people, which haue not the true religion: for ſuch gouernors are wel like to the *deepe ditch and narowe pit*: ſeeing they leade al

thoſe to perdition whom they gouerne in ſuperſtition & idolatrie; yea, what zeale or good intention ſoeuer be in the leader, or in them
Mat.13.14. which are ledde. For if the blinde leade the blinde, they fal both into the ditch. Of ſuche whoremaiſters and whores, the Papaltie is ful. Likewiſe there are in the ſame many hunters, which lye in waite, and laie ambuſhes for the people, by falſe doctrine, and traditions of men and the Deuil, and allure to them great multitude of thoſe which keepe not fayth and promiſe with their Creator as they ought. It behoouéth vs to bee verie warie to take heede of ſuche hunters, to the end we may be a chaſt virgin to Chriſt. To doe this ſame wel, we ought to holde the ſimplicitie of the Goſpel, and to refraine our ſelues from al other faire apparance of holineſſe and religion.

29 *To whome is woe? To wham is ſorewe? To whom is ſtrife? To whome is mourning? To whome are woundes without cauſe? and to whom is the redneſſe of the eyes.*

Becauſe wee feare incommodities, and reioyce when al thinges come to our wiſhe, and yet neuertheleſſe we ceaſe not to ſleepe ſtil in vices and diſſolutions, which are moſt commonly cauſe of the incommodities which we feare, and are yrkeſome to vs: For this cauſe Solomon to waken vs, and bring vs in minde to flye the diſſolutiõs from the which this yrkſomneſſe proceedeth, vſeth many interrogations, ſaying: *To whome is woe?&c.* And this is as though hee asked: who are they which merite by their exceſſe & diſſolutions, to haue ſo great incommodities & miſeries, that they are conſtrained to crie out, we are woe. Who are they, which come by good right to ſo muche pouertie, that they cannot but haue care and vexation, and that greatly? Who are they which come iuſtly to ſuche brutiſhneſſe, that they force neither of peace nor concord, but ſtirre vp ſtrife with euerie one? who are they which are conſtrained to grone, and weepe, and to ſhead many teares? who are they which ſeeke to bee wounded for a thing of nothing, for the which they ought not to ſtriue, but rather leaue off, ſeeing it bringeth no profite but hurt, for they receiue ſtripes for it? who are they which merite to haue red eyes? Heere Solomon maketh mention of many corporal and temporal incommodities and aſketh to whom they are proper, who are they to whome they happen commonlyeſt, and who well deſerue them: when he maketh ſuch a demaund, it is not for ignorance, but to awake vs from ſleepe, for he giueth by and by after the anſweare ſaying.

30 *Euen to them that tarry long at the wine: and to them that goe and ſeeke mixture.*

Heere hee noteth drunkardes, which loue to ſit long about the cuppe, and to emptie it often, and are careful or rather greedie and couetous to enquire out tables where they fill out wine abundantly that they may drinke exceſſiuely: ſuch prodigal diſtribution, or exceſſe in drinking, is heere called *mixture*. Eſay vſeth the ſame word, rebuking the vntemperancie of drunkardes. Solomon therefore anſwereth that the miſeries and incommodities aforeſayde are well due to the drunkard. And alſo we ſee them come to paſſe vppon them oftentimes, and they are greeuouſly vexed. Wherefore to the ende we may wel giue our heart to wiſedome, and ſhunne the miſeries aforeſaide, wee ought to obey this woorde of wiſedome, when ſhe ſayth to vs:

Eſay.5.22.

31 *Regarde not thou the wine when it is red, and when it ſheweth his coulour in the cuppe, or goeth downe pleaſantly.*

He will not haue vs to reſemble franke drinkers, which are not content to take and drinke wine with ſobriety and temperance, and to delight therein moderately (as to this ende God hath created wine and other drinkes for man) but they giue themſelues ouer wholly to drinking, and vſe therein great libertie, the which they thinke to be delight, and place there affection wholly thereon: As they ſhewe wel, when they employ their time to conſider of the coulour of the wine in the cuppe, and ſtande a greate while to taſt and ſauour it, and let it goe downe ſoftly, and cannot bee content but when they drinke largely thereof.

Solomon ſheweth vs that ſuch faſhions are not good, when hee biddeth, *Regarde thou not,&c.* This is not to ſay that the colour of the wine ſhoulde not be good, or that it is ill done to ſee if the wine bee whyte or red, if it bee cleere or troubled: nor alſo that one doeth ill when he taſteth his wyne, to the ende to vſe it if it be good and neate, and to refuſe it if it bee corrupted. But it is not meete to bee ſo curious as the drunkardes are, which haue no other good but drinke, as they wel ſhewe, when they are ſo much giuen theretoo. When they ſpende ſo much tyme in drinking, and drinke ſo exceſſiuely, they finde it very ſweete, and thinke that nothing is better then to drinke wel. They perſwade themſelues, that in this manner they keepe themſelues wel in this life, and to liue long there is nothing elſe to bee done but to bee merie: and ſo they thinke not on the ende, vnleſſe they perſwade with themſelues that if they haue liued at their eaſe to day, they ſhalbe to morrow better: ſo that one may put them in the number of thoſe which *Eſa. 56. 12.* ſay. Come I wil bring wine, and wee wil fill our ſelues with ſtrong drinke: and to morowe ſhalbee as this day, and much more abundant. Heerein they are farre deceiued: for although the wine goe downe pleaſantly, and that they finde it of a good taſte, yet neuertheleſſe when they vſe it not ſoberly it is mortal poyſon: as Solomon pronounceth it ſaying.

32 *In the ende thereof it will bite like a ſerpent: and hurte like a Cockatrice.*

Hee vſeth heere twoo ſimilitudes to ſignifie one thing. And it is to affirme the danger which is in wine, when one is giuē too much theretoo. And ſo he imployeth himſelfe to reſtraine vs from drunkenneſſe, and ſeeketh to perſwade vs that as the byting of a ſerpent, and hurte of a Cockatrice are venemous and mortal: euen ſo drunkardes by too much drinking poyſon themſelues, and kill themſelues, yea more mortally then if they were ſo hurte with the Cockatrice: for ſuch hurting toucheth but the body: but the olde ſerpent and that greate Dragon, which is the Diuell, ſtingeth the ſoules of drunkardes, alluring them by diſordinate affection, to vſe wine exceſſiuely: and ſo obaying the Diuel, they are depriued of the kingdome of God, and by conſequence, goe to death euerlaſting. And ſo let vs knowe, that Solomon according to the maner of the ſcripture, by corporal ſimilitudes ſheweth vs in what danger the ſoules of them are, which giue themſelues to drunkenneſſe: Not that drinke which is a good creature of God, and verie neceſſarie, bringeth with it damage to the ſoule: but that by diſordinate concupiſcence, man is hurt and bitten. Afterwards whẽ concupiſcence hath conceiued, ſhee bringeth forth ſinne, and ſinne being perfourmed, engendreth death. 1. Cor. 6. 10

33 *Thine eyes ſhal looke vpon ſtrange women, & thine heart ſhal ſpeake leude thinges.*

He continueth here the matter which he began with, of drunkardes, and ſo wil doe til he come to the ende of this Chapter. And in continuing, hee ſheweth that of drunkenneſſe, enſueth whoredome and other miſchiefes. Whoredome is noted, when he ſaieth, *Thine eyes ſhal looke vpon ſtrange women*, So that by ſuch loking, one commeth to ſoile and pollute him ſelfe, as is ſeene by common experience, and we haue many examples thereof: as of the children of God, of Sichem, of Iuda, & Thamer, of the wife of Ioſephes maiſter, and of Dauid and Bethſabee. And though the effect folow not, yet ſuch lookes are notwithſtanding vnchaſt, and it is whoredome. The other miſchiefes that folowe dronkenneſſe, are marked, when he ſaith, *And thine heart ſhal ſpeake lewde thinges.* He attributeth pronunciation to the heart, becauſe of the abundance of the miſchieuous and wicked infection of the ſame, the mouth ſpeaketh thinges infected and filthie, wicked and vniuſt: and the other members are forced to doe thinges contrarie to al honeſtie, and religion iuſtice, and righteouſneſſe. Then ſeeing it is a verie dangerous thing to giue ones ſelfe to whoredome and other miſchiefes which proceede of drunkenneſſe: It foloweth wel, that drunkenneſſe is verie perillous, as alreadie hath bene ſeene: and yet Solomon ſetteth before vs ſome danger, ſaying.

Gen. 6. 2. & 34. 1. 2. & 38. 15. & 39 7.
2. Sam. 11. 2.
Mat. 5, 28.

34 *And thou ſhalt be as hee that ſleepeth in the heart of the ſea, and as he which ſleepeth in the toppe of the Maſt.*

To ſhew the great danger wherin drunkards put themſelues, hee compareth them to thoſe, which haue no regarde to the perils of the ſea, nor thinke on them. And although they be in the *heatt*, or midſt of the ſea, verie farre from the ſhore, and likewiſe in the higheſt part of the ſhip, *as in the toppe of the Maſt*, expoſed to the windes, yet neuertheleſſe, through the litle care that they haue, they let them ſelues fal a ſleepe: and ſo the tempeſt riſing and raging, hurleth them downe eaſily without al remedie. So they which perſeuer, and fal a ſleepe in dronkenneſſe, fal and periſhe not in the depth of the ſea, but in the gulphe of hel: for they are depriued of the kingdom of God. And in tarying til ſuche deſtruction happen them, they are toſſed with many miſchiefes: to the which they haue no regarde as they ought, and thinke not that thee doe betide them for their drunkenneſſe, ſo dul and blockiſh they are made by ouermuch drinke. Whereto they are ſo much addicted, that what euil ſoeuer they indure, yet they purpoſe no way to abſteine, but rather to perſeuer in exceſſiue drinking. Solomon ſetteth foorth ſuche blockiſhneſſe and lewde affection, when he ſaith,

35 *Then ſhalt thou ſay, They haue ſtricken me, but I was not ſicke: They haue beaten mee, and I haue not felte it: when I ſhal awake, I wil put my ſelfe forth, and ſeeke it ſtil.*

Although we adde heere, *Then ſhalt thou ſay*, To declare that it is a drunkardes talke to ſay, *They haue ſtriken mee, &c*. Yet neuertheleſſe, Solomon expoundeth to vs heere, rather the diſpoſition and affection of drunkardes, then theſe wordes. They are ſo tranſpoſed by the wine, that they fal aſleepe ſo ſoundly and ſo deepely, that although one thumpe them, toſſe them, and torment them with great blowrs, or though they fal from high, yet they haue no hurt thereby, nor feele nothing. They are ſo giuen to drinke exceſſiuely, that although they perceiue well that the wine hath done them hurte, yet neuertheles as ſoone as they are againe awake, they goe to ſeeke out good drinke, and to drinke agayne. And feeling them ſelues yl at eaſe with the wine which they haue drunke the day before, to heale themſelues they ſay that they muſt haue a heare of the ſame dogge which bit them. In this we may ſee that drunkards are leſſe ſenſible then brute beaſte, for although they ſleepe, yet one can come neuer ſo little neere them but they perceiue him: then much more will they feele him that toucheth them any way. One may ſee alſo that they are leſſe reaſonable: for beaſtes wil neyther touch meate nor drinke , which they perceiue to be hurtful for them But whoordome , wine, and muſt, take away their heartes. Such drunkardes are wel woorthie of curſes. And ſo it is not without cauſe that we haue many admonitions, by the which we are taught to folowe ſobrietie, and flye gluttonie and drunkenneſſe.

Oſe.4.11.
Eſai.5.11
Luk.21.34
Rom.13.13
Ephe.5.18
1.Theſ.5.6

The xxiiii. Chapter.

1 B*E not thou enuious againſt euel men, neither deſire to be with them.*

IT is a temptatiõ which greatly preſſeth the feeble and weake, to deſire the eſtate and condition of the wicked, when the poore faithful ſee thẽſelues in affliction, and to bee as it were a deſpiſing and mocking ſtocke of men, and as the filth and ſkumme of the worlde. And therfore they haue great neede to be often admoniſhed to be patient: as alſo the holie Ghoſt is verie carefull to doe it in

Pro.23.17. many places of the ſcripture, as hath bene alledged heretofore : and it is not yet long ago ſince this matter was treated of. Yet notwithſtanding for al this, Solomon knowing that wee haue great neede to be awaked, and reſtrained from ſuche temptation, letteth not to admoniſhe vs of the ſame, ſaying, *Be not thou enuious,&c.* Thoſe which hee called ſinners, hee nowe calleth according to the maner of his ſpeech, *men of malice*, or euil men. Wherin one may ſee, that the ſinners of whome he hath ſpoken, are not thoſe which ſinne by ignorance or infirmitie, or by lightneſſe and vnaduiſednes, but which of ſet purpoſe giue them ſelues to doe euil, and are ſo attached with wickedneſſe, that al theire delight is therein, wee muſt not be enuious againſt ſuche men, nor deſire to haue alliance or felowſhip with them : but rather flying them as a deadly peſtilence, it behoooueth vs to haue our heartes ſet on the feare of the Lorde al the day long, and by the ſame, to be content with our eſtate, be it poore, or be it riche, happie or miſerable. If ſuche ſinners and men of malice, or wicked men, haue temporal proſperitie, it is not of a good and iuſt getting, but rather by rauine, and outrage : becauſe they haue payned & moleſted their neighbors, by wrongful wayes, as by fraudes, vſurie, theft, proceſſe, and by other vnlawful meanes. Solomon expreſſeth it briefly, when he ſaith.

2 *For their heart imagineth rauine, and their lippes ſpeake moleſtation.*

Becauſe the faithful ought to loue iuſtice and benignitie, (and in deede if we be true faithfulles, wee wil continually meditate iuſtice and benignitie, whereto our wordes and our woorkes ſhalbee conformable, and we wil hate the contrarie, and flye from it.) For this cauſe Solomon yelding vs a reaſon, why wee ſhould not be enuious againſt euil men, nor keepe company with them, attributeth to them an heart infected with euil thoughtes, and wicked affections, when he ſaieth,

That their heart imagineth rauine. And as they thinke wickedly, ſo they execute it, as Solomon ſignifieth by the words of the lippes, ſaying, *And their lippes ſpeake moleſtation.* For as the wicked ſpeake in wronging and threatning the innocent, ſo alſo they are ardent to purſue and put in practiſe their wicked thoughtes and determinations, and their threatnings, if they meete with no lets which keepe them from it. If hauing regarde to this reaſon, wee be not carefull to participate of the proſperitie of the wicked, nor make no account of their familiaritie and acquaintance, but flye from them, giuing our ſelues to meditate the lawe of God, for to folowe it, and continue in the ſame, wee are bleſſed, and our proſperitie ſhalbe of long continuance, whereas that of the wicked ſhal paſſe away lightly. This is amplie expreſſed throughout al the 37. Pſalme. When wicked men imagine *rauine*, and moleſt others, they think to aduance them ſelues, and it ſeemeth them, that by this meanes they ſhall make a good houſe, and heape great riches together, which ſhal be woorth much to them, whereby they ſhal haue their pleaſures and delightes. But they are muche deceiued, as the foreſaide Pſalmes ſhewe it, and as was ſeene by experience at the flood, and in Sodom and Gomorra, in the land of Canaan, and in Babilon. And one ſeeth alſo (if he haue the patience to looke on it) that not only the goods of the wicked periſhe, but alſo they them ſelues vade and vaniſhe away. Wherefore if wee wil haue goods which ſhal tarie by vs, and a houſe wel builded, firme and ſtable, wee ought to reſtraine al our ſenſes from follie and wickedneſſe, and giue our ſelues wholie to thinke and folow that, which God teacheth vs by his word, which is our wiſedome and vnderſtanding. Thus dooing, wee ſhal proſper in houſes, and wealth, which ſhal be of great value and pleaſure, for as Solomon ſayeth conſequently, *Pſal.1.3.*

3 *The houſe ſhalbe built by wiſedome, and eſtabliſhed by prudence.*

4 *And by ſcience ſhal the chambers bee filled, with al riches precious, and pleaſant.*

For from the beginning God hath made al by wiſedome, and continueth to gouerne and guide, and alſo to eſtabliſhe al thinges by the ſame. This was wel giuen to vnderſtande, by the Prophet Nathan to Dauid, ſaying, And the Lorde ſheweth thee that the Lorde wil builde thee an houſe. Alſo Dauid hath wel vnderſtoode it, as hath beene clearly ſhewed. Moyſes gaue this wel to vnderſtande to the children of Iſrael, when hee pronounceth the bleſſings of the Lorde vpon the obedient, and curſes vppon the rebelles, and amongeſt other places, when he ſaieth, Thou ſhalt builde a houſe, &c. It behoooueth vs therefore, to giue our ſelues to wiſedome by the obedience of the worde. And when wee haue goods, not to attribute them to our owne induſtrie and wiſedome, nor to our owne deſertes. For as wee can not merite that God may giue vs wiſedome, ſo can wee not deſerue that which commeth thereby. Wherevpon enſueth, that wee haue to acknowledge that al commeth from the liberalitie of our father, and for the ſame, giue him continual thankes.

Pro.3.19.20 & 8.14.28.
2.Sam.7.11.
Pſal.127.1
Deut.28.30 31.32.

5 *The wiſe man is mightie, and the man of knowledge fortifieth his vertue.*

It ſeemeth that the fooles and wicked which are giuen to rauine and moleſtation, are mightie and ſtrong, becauſe that according to outwarde apparance, they doe what they wil, and haue ſuche authoritie, that there is none which can nor dare reſiſt them. And contrariwiſe, it ſeemeth that there are no kinde of people ſo weake, nor ſo miſerable and abiect as the good and wiſe are. As they them ſelues are tempted, to thinke alſo when they regarde not but that which is preſent before their corporal eyes. But withdrawing our ſelues from ſuche regarde, which is falſe and deceiueable, wee ought to beleeue in the ſpirite of al trueth, which ſpeaketh to vs by Solomon and ſaieth,

The wiſe man.&c. And ſo hee teacheth vs that wee ought not to conſtitute our power and might in thinges which are preſent vnto vs corporally, but in the wiſedome and knowledge which wee learne by the worde. For alſo Solomon ſaieth not the man ſimplie, who of him ſelfe can not bee ſtrong and fortified. But the wyſe man, and the man of knowledge. As if hee ſaide, It is by wiſedome and knowledge, that a man is ſtrong, and encreaſeth more and more in force: not bodily force which is a verie ſmal thing, but force of the ſpirite, which conſiſteth in conſtancie and patience, which ſurmounteth al mundane force, and eſcapeth the dangers wherein the ſtrong men of the worlde periſhe. This ſame was ſeene at al times in Noe, and the Giants which were of his time, in Moyſes, and Pharao: In Ioſeph, and his maiſtreſſe: In Daniel, and his enuyers: In Dauid and Saule, and in many others: as in the Prophetes and their enemies: the Apoſtles, and their perſecuters: and nowe in the poore faythful, and their aduerſaries, which are the great ſages of the worlde: as the Pope, and his Suppoſts, Kings, & their flatterers, and tormenters.

Wherefore wee ought to vnderſtande that wee ſhoulde not aſpire to the puiſance aud force of this worlde, which maketh a man proude: and ſo of force hee muſt periſh, ſeeing hee hath God for partie againſt him: but being feeble and abiect according to the worlde wee ought to fortifie our ſelues in humilitie of ſpirite, and then wee ſhal haue the Almightie on our ſide.

6 *For thou ſhalt make warre by good aduiſe: and ſafegard is in the multitude of counſellours.*

It is very needful for a man to bee wiſe and ſkilful: otherwiſe if warre riſe againſt him, he hath no power or force which is woorth any thing. For as wee haue ſeene, power is in the wiſe man, and force in the ſkilful: without wiſedome a man is not wel aduiſed, and deſpiſeth al good counſel that one can giue him. And ſo, as hee is without power and force: euen ſo hee knoweth not on what ſide to turne him to fight with his enemie and ouercome him, or put him to flight, and keepe him that he hurt him not. But if a man by the conduct of wiſedome and prudence, aduyſe warily and neerely that which he hath to doe, and ſeeke to haue the opinion of men of good counſell, if warre aryſe, or hee muſt begin it, he ſhal knowe howe to guide it, as Solomon ſaieth,

For thou ſhalt make warre by good aduiſe. And obtaine victorie, as Solomon ſignifieth, ſaying, *And ſauegard,&c.* Abraham was a ſtranger in the lande of Canaan, and had no great might, according to outwarde apparance, and yet hee made warre by good aduiſe againſt foure Kinges. Moſes, Ioſua, & ſome of the Iudges and Kings Gen.14.14 of Iuda haue made warre, by good aduiſe, to wit, according to the commandement of the Lorde: and haue not only eſcaped dangers, but alſo obtained victorie. Wherein we ought to learne, that if by the worde of the Lorde, we print in our heartes his feare, which is the beginning, or principal pointe of wiſedome: if it chaunce that we muſt go foorth to battel, wee ſhal handle it wel. And although wee periſhe, or die in the purſute, yet neuertheleſſe wee ſticke not to obteine victory ouer our enimies: the which Solomon calleth *ſafegard*: for our fooes obteine not that againſt vs which they pretend: ſeeing wee periſhe not for euer as they deſire, but our ſoules are in conſolation, and our bodies reſt for a ſeaſon in the duſt, I ſay namely if it chaunce that they muſt goe out in battell, for it woulde not be good aduiſe nor counſel, if by ambition or couetouſneſſe to raigne and enlarge our limites, or for deſire of reuenge, wee make warre as doe the great men of this worlde, which haue no true knowledge of God, and make no account to learne him by his worde. In the ſame only one findeth good aduiſe, and it is made common to vs by *multitude of counſellours*, as Moſes, Dauid, Solomō, the Prophets, Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and alſo the great number of faythful miniſters and teachers of the truth. If we wil beleeue them, we ſhalbe wiſe, and men of knowledge, we ſhal haue power and force, and by good aduiſe ſhal make warre when it ſhalbe needful, and not otherwiſe. And yet afore we inſinuate our ſelues therein, wee ſhalbee carefull to reſtraine it: and as much as is poſſible and lawefull, wee ſhal ſearche the wayes of peace. As Saint Paule admoniſheth vs. Rom.12.18. If ſuperiour powers doe not gouerne and guyde themſelues, there is no good aduiſe, and by conſequence, no ſafegarde, but deſtruction: for where no knowledge is, the people falleth. Prou.11.14. And if by good aduyſe and counſell wee muſt make temporal and bodily warre, by a further reaſon, when we haue ſtrong, ſuttle malitious, and cruel enemies, which are hurtful to vs, and ſeeke to ſuppreſſe vs, to make warre againſt them, wee haue neede of wiſedome and ſkil, of power and ſorce fortified with good aduiſe and counſels. For this cauſe Saint Paule ſeeketh wel to munite vs, as appertaineth, ſpeaking of the preaching of the Goſpel, wherein Chriſt is communicated, ſaying, That he teacheth euerie man in all wiſedome, to the ende, to make euerie man perfect in Ieſus Chriſt. We are alſo admoniſhed to enterpriſe nothing raſhly, but as it were Organs or inſtruments of our God, wee permit that he finiſhe his worke. *Ephe.6.10.* *Col.1.28.*

7 *Wiſedome is haughtie to the foole: wherefore he ſhal not open his mouth at the gate.*

There is not ſo wicked a man in the worlde which ſeeketh not to perſuade him ſelfe that hee is an honeſt man, and there is none ſo fooliſhe, which eſteemeth not him ſelfe wiſe: and yet neuertheleſſe they are al naked of wiſedome, neither wil they, nor can they attain thereto: for they are carnal, and ſhe is ſpiritual: they are earthly, yea helliſhe, and ſhe is heauenly, yea, aboue the heauens, and there is none that can be partaker of her, but by the worde of God, the which is deſpiſed and reiected by fooles, and they haue no vnderſtanding thereof. This highneſſe is ſignified to vs, when Solomon ſaieth, *Wiſedome is haughtie, &c.* Wherein hee approcheth to that which Dauid ſaieth, Thy iudgements are farre from his preſence, O Lorde, for thy lippes are great: and thy thoughts verie deepe, &c. But it ſeemeth to withſtande that which Moyſes ſaieth, That commaundement which I commaund thee to day, is not hid from thee, neither is it farre of, &c. For Moſes ſpeaketh to the people of Iſrael, whom he rebuketh of corruption, frowardneſſe, and follie. The anſwere is: That Moſes in the firſt place ſpeaketh properlie to them which yelde them ſelues eaſie to be taught, although his worde bee addreſſed to al the people. This is notorious by the promiſe, The Lorde thy God wil circumciſe thy heart, and the heart of thy ſucceſſours, &c. the which appertaineth not, but to the faithful and obedient: as it behoooueth vs well to vnderſtande for the wicked *Pſal.10.5.& 92.6.7.* *Deut.30.11.*

Iere.9.25. and obſtinate are vncircumcized according as the ſcripture calleth
Eze.44.7. them. In that then, that one hath a circumcized heart, he yeldeth
Act.7.15. him ſelfe obedient to the Lorde, and his doctrine is eaſily found, and
not otherwiſe. Alſo although that in the ſeconde place he addreſſe
his ſpeeche to al the people, reproouing them as is ſaide, yet notwithſtanding
the reprehenſion or blame is laide properly againſt the
ſtubborne & incorrigible, amongſt whom were mingled the humble
and obedient: and ſo they were ſomewhat polluted, and blotted
with the vice of the ſtubborne: not that God imputed it to
them. Although therefore that the worde of God, which is our
true wiſedome and vnderſtanding, is neere to them which yeelde
them ſelues eaſie to be taught, yet ſhee letteth not to bee haughtie
to the foole. And therefore hee cannot deuiſe of her, nor talke of
her amongeſt men that are honeſt, nor in aſſemblies: but babbling
muche of vaine thinges and wicked, amongſt his commapions, hee
is dumbe amongeſt the wiſe, for he can ſpeake nothing which they
allowe of. Solomon giueth it wel to vnderſtande, ſaying, *Wherefore
he ſhal not open, &c.* In olde time men made aſſemblies at the
gate, and helde there the ſeate of iuſtice, and the Prophetes went
thither to pronounce that which God commanded them. And when
by nature we are al fooles, and are neuer made ſo wiſe, but there is
left in vs many relikes of follie, wee ought not to preſume to thinke
Iere.17.19. that we are fit to comprehende the wiſedome of God in perfection:
but hauing it in great admiration, we haue to holde our peace,
and acknowledge our imbecillitie with Saint Paul, O the deepenes
Rom.11.33. of the riches both of the wiſedome and knowledge of God! howe
vnſearchable are his iudgements, and his wayes paſt finding out?
&c.

8 *They ſhal cal him an imaginer of miſchiefe, which thinketh to doe euil.*

Wee wil not that men haue an euil opinion of vs, nor that
they ſpeake euil of vs: and therefore they which are malicious, and
practiſe to moleſt the innocent, or they which weigh it not, manifeſt

ſeſt not them ſelues incontinently what they are, for feare leſt they ſhould be letted to execute their enterpriſes. But thinke and determine a certeine time, that they may afterwardes put their counſels in effect: and to doe this ſame, they vſe craftes and ſuttleties, by the which they thinke to perſuade that they are honeſt men, what euil ſoeuer they doe: but their fruites by ſucceſſion of time, diſcouer them, and by the ſame, they ſhewe them ſelues to be *imaginers of miſchiefes*. And therefore they deſerue wel that one cal them ſo, for ſuche is their name, as Solomon pronounceth, ſaying. *They ſhal cal him an imaginer of miſchiefe.* When it is ſo, that man ſeeth but the face, hee can not cal him imaginer of miſchiefe, which hath but a certaine light thought in his heart, and putteth it not in execution. And therefore knowe we, that Solomon ſpeaketh here of thoughtes, which are ſo aſſociate with counſels, determinations, affections, and willes, that one can not, nor will not forbid to put them in effect. Whereupon alſo, hee deſerueth to be called an imaginer of malice, as hee manifeſteth him ſelfe to be: although hee ſtriue by certaine faire wordes to giue to vnderſtande the contrarie: but God diſcouereth them, and ſheweth their hypocriſie and malice, mawgre their heartes. For although that willingly they commit euil, yea manifeſtly, yet neuertheleſſe they woulde, that men ſhoulde knowe nothing thereof. For if one cal them by their name, they craue ſtraight, that their honour may be repaired, and that hee may make them a large amendes: or els they are readie to maintaine, and defende their honour by iniuries and outrages, by violence, & oppreſſion. And ſo againſt their conſciences, they reuenge them ſelues wrongfully againſt them that ſay the trueth.

9. *The thought of a fooliſh perſon is ſinne: and the mocker is in abhomination with men.*

Wee are naturally framed in ſuche ſorte, that wee perſwade our ſelues, and wil haue other men to thinke that wee are wiſe and good. And therefore wee pleaſe our ſelues in our owne counſels and determinations, in our affections & willes, and make great account of the thoughtes of our heartes, as if they were good and righteous. But ſeeing we are fooles, and deſpiſe wiſedom and inſtruction, and doe vtterly hate knowledge, reiecting al counſel, and correction, it is vnpoſſible that our thoughtes ſhould bee ſuch as wee eſteeme them to bee, but of force they muſt bee altogether ſtarke naught, what good intent or meaning ſoeuer we haue. Solomon pronounceth it thus, ſaying,

The thought of a fooliſhe perſon, is ſinne. Whereupon enſueth, that of our ſelues wee cannot be acceptable to God, whome ſinne diſpleaſeth, bee it neuer ſo hidden. And ſo what faire ſhewe ſoeuer wee make before men, yet are we abhominable before God: and it is verie harde, yea vnpoſſible, that by ſucceſſion of time, in continuing in follie, our ſpirite become not ſo proude and malicious, that wee cannot endure to haue any man reforme vs, but take pleaſure to reſiſt openly al diſcipline & correction. In this maner we ſhal be alſo abhominable before men, as Solomon pronounceth it, ſaying,

And the mocker is in abhomination with men. When he ſpeaketh ſo, he ſheweth principally the leſſon to them which haue the ſworde in hande, and telleth them that they ought to puniſhe the mockers and contemners of al religion, which are paſt correction. And afterwardes hee ſheweth the common people, that they ſhal take heede of ſuche men, and flie them as an euident plague, and likewiſe procure to haue them rooted out, to the ende they corrupt not others. Otherwiſe if we ſpare them, we make Solomon a lyer, as muche as we can, for we haue them not *in abhomination:* and ſo we are not men, but beaſts without reaſon, and without zeale towardes God, and his religion, and without pitie and compaſſion towardes the ſimple and ignorant, who may bee eaſily corrupted by ſuche mockers.

10 *Art thou negligent in the day of tribulation? thy vertue is feeble.*

Wee haue alwaies good courage when wee haue none to reſiſt vs, and when we are at our eaſe, and al thinges happen to our wiſhe, and we dare wel vaunt our ſelues that wee are ſtrong and valiant, and we dare alſo promiſe our ſelues, when we are far enough off from the blowes, that there is no aduerſitie ſo great, which can breake or abaſe our vertue, ſo that wee ſhal not purſue our enterpriſes manfully. But as experience ſheweth it, man braggeth of that which hee cannot doe: Beholde the children of Iſrael in the deſert of Sinai. Anſwere, That hauing good courage, wee wil doe all that which the Lorde hath commanded. But afterwardes, when they had not the thinges that they deſired, they loſt their courage, and murmured. When S. Peter ſaw not the army againſt Ieſus Chriſt, Exo.19.8. hee ſeemed to bee very valiant: but ſeeing the ſturre that they kept afterwardes hee loſt courage, and denied his maiſter: Thoſe which doe the like, ſhewe wel that they are diminiſhed of vertue, as alſo Solomon pronounceth it, ſaying,

Art thou negligent, &c? For they which are vertuous in deede, haue care to mainteine themſelues, what tribulation ſoeuer they haue. To doe this wel, it is neceſſary that wee knowe certainly that al things come to paſſe, not by chance, nor by the wil of any creature, bee it heauenly, earthly, or infernal, but by the eternal prouidence of God, which is immutable, bee wee certaine and aſſured that hee loueth vs, and therefore what tribulation ſoeuer happen to 1.Cor.10.13 vs, bee it neuer ſo greeuous, yet he will not forſake vs, but wil apply al his power to defende our cauſe: for hee is faithfull, and wil not ſuffer vs to bee tempted aboue that wee bee able, &c. Alſo to keepe wel that our vertue waxe not feeble, let vs not tarry too meditate theſe thinges vntil the trouble bee come vppon vs, but let vs watch Mat.24.42. at al times, foreſeeing calamities, as Ieſus Chriſte admoniſheth vs Mar.13.33. thereof, and arme our ſelues with the harneſſe of God, as S. Paule Ephe.6.10. biddeth vs.

11 *Deliuer them that are drawne to death: and wilt thou not preſerue them that are led to be ſlaine?*

God hath giuen many commandements by the which he ſhe- Gen.9.6. weth that hee wil that the wicked be not ſpared, but that they bee Deut.24.14

Exod.21.12 put to death. Then ſith that the commandements of God bee ſuch,
Num.35.16 it foloweth that we ought to obay them, and that we ſhoulde in no
Deut.13.8. caſe let them to bee executed. And likewiſe he hath ordeined ſuperiour
Rom.13.1. powers to be his miniſters, and ſhewe vengeance and yre vpon
them which doe euil. And they which reſiſt this, reſiſt the ordinance
of God. Wherefore it might ſeeme at the firſt ſhewe that
Solomou repugned the lawe and the ordinance of God, when hee
ſaith,

Deliuer them that are drawen to death, &c. The anſwere is
that as God wil yeeld death to the wicked and that the magiſtrates
puniſh them, yea with death if the cace require it: Euen ſo hee will
that one haue pitie of the innocent, and that wee ſuffer none to
doe them violence, but deliuer them from the handes of thoſe that
oppreſſe them and vexe them: this is firſt the office of them which
are placed in preheminence, and holde the ſeate of iuſtice. Moſes
vnderſtoode it wel as one may ſee it by the Sermon of Saint Stephen,
Act.7.23. and therefore hee ſmote the Egyptian. Alſo the Lorde raiſed
Exod.2.11. vp to the people of Iſrael many iudges, for to deliuer and ſaue thẽ
12. from the hands of thoſe, which moleſted and vexed them, as one
Pſa.82.2. may ſee by the booke of Iudges. And God ſheweth Iudges wel
Eſay.1.23. that ſuch is their office, when he reprehendeth them for the fauour
that they beare to the wicked, and commandeth them to doe right
to the miſerable, and Orphan, &c. It is ſecondly the office of euery
one of vs, in aſmuch as hee can, not vſurping the authoritie of the
Magiſtrate, or reſiſting him, which turneth to a ſcandale, and euil
example. It is alſo to euery one of vs that God ſpeaketh. Waſhe
your ſelues then, bee yee cleane, take away the euil of your workes,
Eſay.1.16. from before myne eyes, &c. Doe iuſtice and iudgement, and deliuer
Iere.22.3. him which is oppreſſed, from the handes of him which wrongeth
him. But it is chiefly the office of Magiſtrates, which are placed in
the ſeate of God, who attributeth to himſelfe this office of deliuering.
Gen.15.13. Alſo the ſcripture calleth him the only Sauiour, and by good
14. right: for they which deliuer their neighbours from oppreſſion, are
Pſa.50.15. but the Organs, & inſtrumẽts of this great Sauiour, who doth this
Eſa.49.25. honor to his creatures, to conſtitute thẽ in his place: meanewhile (as
26. it is ſaid(euery one of vs ought to apply himſelf to aide the oppreſſed

ſed not going aboue,nor againſt the magiſtrate,no although he exerciſe tyranny, Dauid ſhewed it wel, when hee ſuffered not that they ſhoulde trouble Saule, which was a wicked man, and woulde not himſelfe trouble him,although hee were the annointed of the Lorde. Ieſus Chriſt alſo ſheweth it wel to Saint Peter. Notwithſtanding this is not to ſay that one ſhoulde not reſiſt and ſtande againſt vniuſt and cruell magiſtrates,but then the ſwoorde that they ſhoulde vſe muſt bee ſpiritual,to wit,the worde of God,which the Prophetes and Apoſtles vſed in admoniſhing, reprehending and threatening by the ſame thoſe kinges and princes of the earth, which were wicked and cruel: this is the way that they ſhoulde vſe which are not in authoritie to deliuer thoſe which are drawne to death.

1.Sam.24. &.26. Math.26. 52.

12 *If thou ſay, behold,wee knewe not of it: hee that pondereth the heartes, doeth not hee vnderſtande it? and hee that keepeth thy ſoule,knoweth hee it not? and will not hee alſo recompence euery one according to his workes?*

Saint Paule warneth vs that wee ſhould not euery one regard the thinges which are our owne, but alſo thoſe which are other mens,and complaineth greatly that al men ſeeke the thinges that are their owne,and not thoſe of Ieſus Chriſte. which complaint may bee vttered almoſt to al kinges,princes, and magiſtrates of the earth which are led by ambition, and care not but to make them ſelues great,and make no account to miniſter true iuſtice, they force not if the innocent,the poore and feeble, bee oppreſſed. For although the wrong which men doe to the innocent bee wel knowne vnto them,and that the bruite thereof bee ſpread al abrode, yet neuertheleſſe as though they were blinde,and deafe,they make ſemblant to know nothing therof,if one come not and make great plaints to thẽ,and furniſh thẽ out with money to make information of that which they knowe wel enough. And yet to fauour the wicked the more,they wil not informe themſelnes as they ought. They which can ſpeak of it beſt, & which would tel the truth ſhal not be heard, nor they wil not examine them, and yet they wil bee ſo impudent lyars,

Phi.2.4.21.

Lyers that they wil ſay, wee haue inquired diligently, but wee cannot finde it ſo as they report it, they may wel make excuſes before men, to appeare honeſt: but that wil ſerue them but for more condemnation before God, who knoweth al, and can wel at time conuenient render ech one his hyre. Therefore let no man make himſelfe blind nor deafe: but let euery one according to his power deliuer his neighbor from the violence, and oppreſſion which is doone to him, & let vs not ſeeke to finde excuſes, when we haue not doone our dueties as wee onght: for it is not good that wee ſhould ſtriue to deceaue God with our falſhood, no although it coulde bee, yet we ſhoulde not wil it. Solomon telleth vs that we ſhould not make excuſes when he ſaith,

If thou ſay, behold, we knewe not of it. This is as though hee
ſaide, thou ſhalt not ſay, wee haue not knowne this ſame. And by &
by hee ſheweth vs by three reaſons that wee ought not to vſe ſuche
excuſe, & that it wil ſerue vs to no purpoſe. And to giue theſe three
reaſons he maketh three interrogations, the firſt is, *He that pondereth
the heartes, doth not hee vnderſtande it?* Hee ſpeaketh heere
briefly, but it is conformable to that which is treated more at length
Pſa 94.5.11 els where. It is therefore a friuolous excuſe to ſay that they knowe
Eſay.29.15. not the violence & oppreſſiõ which their neighbor endureth, when
Pro.16.2.& they knowe it, and are bounden to know it. If men receiue ſuch excuſe,
21.2. yet God, which pearceth the heartes and trieth them, and diſcerneth
the thoughtes and affections be they neuer ſo deepe, vnderſtandeth
wel that ſuch excuſe is wicked. And ſo hee argueth by the
knowledge of God, which is certaine and infallible, and whereto
nothing is hid, be it neuer ſo ſecrete, wherefore it is not meete to
thinke that we can deceaue him, neither ought we to wil it, though
it were in our power, but wee ſhoulde honour it, and haue it in admiration,
Pſal. 139. 6. as Dauid admoniſheth vs. And wee ought to keepe our
& 73.11. ſelues wel from ſaying as the wicked doe, Howe doeth God know
it? and, there is no knowledge in the Lorde. Solomon by this firſt
reaſon ſignifieth that they which ſay that they haue not knowne the
violence and wrong which is doone to their neighbours, ſpeake in
their heartes as theſe wicked doe. And ſo they attribute ignorance
to God, and by conſequence deny that hee is God. The ſecond reaſon
is, *And he that keepeth thy ſoule, &c.* It is not a thing which we

ought to bee certaine of, that God hath care ouer his creatures, and likewiſe hee keepeth the wicked, otherwiſe they would be ſoone deſtroied, for the Diuel ſeeketh but the deſtruction of men, and ſoone taketh and deuoureth that which God hath doone withal. And therefore the holy Scripture attributeth to the Lorde the title of keeper, and ſauiour: as alſo it is good reaſon: for there is none other but hee: Then ſeeing it is ſo that God is the keeper of ſoules, it followeth, that there are neither thoughts nor affections in the ſame ſoules, but hee knoweth them wel: as alſo Solomon noteth it when he asketh ſaying.

Knoweth hee it not? as if hee ſaide one ought in no wiſe too doubt that God which keepeth the ſoules, knoweth not thoſe excuſes of thē which ſay, that they haue not knowne the afflictiō of their neighbours to bee friuolous and vaine leaſings. Hee diſpoileth them therefore of excuſe, and alſo taxeth them of ingratitude towardes God. For ſeeing that God which keepeth their ſoules, recōmendeth to them the ſoules of their neighbours, they acknowledge not wel the grace that God hath doone them, when they are not careful to deliuer their poore neighbours, as the Lord demandeth it, and not content heerewith they lye, not onely to men, but alſo to God, as Solomō ſignifieth it by the preſent interrogatiō, But to the end that we be not abuſed thinking that Solomon ſpeaketh heere of a perpetual keeping: knowe wee that often God keepeth the wicked temporally, for the health and proſperitie of his elect, as one may ſee by the kinges of the Perſians and Medians, which were idolaters and infidels, and by their handes God hath giuen deliuerance to his *Tim.8.1.* people of Iſrael: And Saint Paule wil that wee pray for ſuche men, meanwhile if they remaine obſtinate, euerlaſting deſtruction is prepared for them, and they are kept for the ſame. The thirde reaſon is, and wil not he alſo recompence? &c. In the firſt, and in the ſeconde reaſon, hee argueth by the diligence and care of the Lorde, and alſo by his knowledge and goodneſſe: and nowe in this thirde reaſon *Rom.2.6.* hee argueth by the ſame thinges: for if God were ignorant and negligent, and if hee were ſlouthful and il willing, *hee coulde not recompence euery one according to his workes*. Neuertheleſſe hee argueth principally by his iuſtice, for it is the office of a iudge to doe right to euery one, rewarding eche one according as hee knoweth him to haue doone, puniſhing the wicked, and preſeruing the good not that the good, bee they neuer ſo good, may merite that God may benefite them, but of his pure grace and liberalitie, and mercy, hee accepteth their workes, although they bee vnperfect, and rewardeth them according to his free promiſes, and according to his eternal election. But to the wicked which are obſtinate and harde harted, hee rendereth them the hyre which they haue deſerued, ouerthrowing them in his yre and vengeance. Let them therefore that ſeeme not to ſee the oppreſſion which is wrought too their neighbours, not looke to eſcape vnpuniſhed. And if we ought to be careful to preſerue the temporal life of our neighbours, by farre more reaſon wee ought to be diligent to deliuer them from death & damnation eternal as much as in vs lyeth, which thing wee ſhall doe by ſound doctrine, warnings, exhortations, corrections, threatnings and chaſtiſements.

13 *My ſonne eate hony, for it is good: and the hony combe is ſweete to thy mouth.*

It is a thing notorious and wel knowne by experience that hony is good, and the hony combe very ſweete in taſt. Alſo the holy ſcripture, being willing to drawe vs to take the taſt and ſauour of ſpiritual things, as in the worde of God, (which is our true wiſdom and vnderſtāding) compareth them to hony, & to the hony combe, notwithſtanding preferring the ſpiritual before the terreſtrial, as is very good reaſon. Alſo now when Solomon ſaith,

My ſonne, eate hony, &c: It is not to commande vs or admoniſh vs to eate hony ſooner then other good meates: for he hath not written his ſentences for the care that he had of our bodies: but his intent was to inſtruct our ſpirites and our vnderſtanding. And therefore note wee that hee ſpeaketh ſo, to make a compariſon, the which hee addeth conſequently, when he ſaith,

14 *So ſhall the knowledge of wiſedome bee vnto thy ſoule, if thou finde it ? and there ſhalbe an end, and thine hope, ſhall not bee cut of.*

To prooue and try the goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe of wiſedom, &
to haue ioy therof, it is not ynough to haue the knowledge of it. Solomon
ſheweth it wel, when he is not contẽt to ſay, that the knowledge
of wiſdom ſhalbee ſweete & good to the ſoule as hony: but
he addeth a condition ſaying, *If thou find it, &c.* To enioy therefore
the goodnes & ſweetnes of wiſedom, it behoueth vs to finde
her. And for to finde her: it behoueth vs to ſearch her diligently: as
Solomon warneth vs therof heeretofore. And he hath declared the *Prou.2.1.*
goodnes & ſweetnes of her. But one may ſay that thoſe which are *& 3.13.*
wiſe after God, & after his word, are ordinarily euil handled, & endure
many vexations and moleſtations. For this cauſe it may ſeeme
that there is no goodnes nor ſweetnes in wiſedome, but rather bitternes.
Anſwere. Solomon attributing goodnes & ſweetnes to wiſdome,
exempteth not the wiſe from afflictions & miſeries: but hee
ſheweth that they ſhould not be grieued therat, but beare it out patiently,
for they ſhalbe of no long indurance. Hee ſignifieth it when
he ſaith, *and there ſhalbe an end, &c.* Nowe that hee meaneth the
end of tribulations, he ſheweth it wel when he addeth, *And thyne
hope ſhal not bee cut off.* For hope is linked to patience, the which
proceedeth of tribulation. Wee glorifie our ſelues in tribulation,
knowing that tribulation ingendreth patience, & patience experience,
& experience hope. If we hope for that which we ſee not, wee
looke for it by patience. Although therfore that the wiſe becauſe of
their wiſedom, endure outwardly greate euils & bitter: yet neuertheleſſe *Rom.5.3. 4.*
they ſticke not to feele the goodnes and ſweetnes of wiſedom: *& 8.25.*
for hoping that their tribulations ſhalbe of no long endurãce,
and that finally by wiſedom they ſhal obtaine great reward they reioice
themſelues, according as Ieſus Chriſt biddeth thẽ. Wherefore *Mat.5. 10.*
being trulie inſtructed in the word of the Lorde, which is the true *11.12.*
wiſdom, let vs ſay with S. Paule, We wil not faint: but although our *Iam.1.1.12.*
outwarde man bee corrupted, yet the inwarde man is renewed
day by day, &c. And to ſay ſo truelie, let vs take heede to *2.Cor.4.16.*
will to flee afflictions, in following wickedneſſe: according *Prou.23.*
as Solomon warneth vs thereof, making vs the ſame promiſe *17.18.*
that hee nowe doeth. Note wee moreouer that it is not
without cauſe that I haue ſayde, that for to try the goodneſſe
and ſweeteueſſe of wiſedome, and to enioy the ſame, it is not

ynough to haue knowledge thereof, if we doe not finde it. For many are lightned with the knowledge of trueth, which is the true wiſdome (as are they which receiue the ſeede, by the hye way, or in ſtonie places, or amongſt thornes) and yet neuertheleſſe they finde not wiſedome, neither yet prooue of what goodneſſe or ſweetneſſe ſhe is: but after ſuch knowledge they are in worſe eſtate then afore. Such men haue had the knowledge of wiſedome, but they haue not founde her, becauſe they haue not ſet their minde and affection thereon: which it behoooueth them to doe that wil finde her, and haue the true ioy of her goodneſſe and ſweeteneſſe. Wherein wee may vnderſtande that it is not ynough to bee illuminate with the knowledge of trueth: but that wee ought to bee regenerate and made newe creatures to walke in newneſſe of life. Beholde, Iudas the traytour knewe the trueth, but he was not regenerate: and therfore he hath not founde wiſedome, neither did hee enioy her goodneſſe, and ſweetneſſe. *Mat.12.43.* *2.Pet.2.20.* *Prou.2.3.*

15 *Lay no wayte as a wicked man, againſt the houſe of the righteous: and ſpoyle not his reſting place.*

As the wicked are neuer in peace, firſt in their conſciences: Secondly, without, becauſe they haue not ſuch proſperitie as they deſire: euen ſo, aſmuch as is poſſible for them: they put the good & iuſt to trouble, waſt and deſtructiō. And to doe this ſame, they haue craftes and cautels, ſubtil wayes and fetches, outragious and violent, vngodly, and cruel. Solomon ſignifieth the crafts that they goe about by *laying of waite*, and the outrages, and violences, by *ſpoyling* when he ſaith.

Lay no waite as a wicked man, &c. Wherein wee haue to note that wee eſteeme that, which is gathered togither in the houſe or reſting place, to bee in ſuretie, and commonly there is that which is beſt and moſt precious. Alſo we our ſelues drawe thither to be in couert and ſafetie. Wherfore knowe wee that Solomon forbidding vs to *lay waite as the wicked againſt the houſe of the righteous*, ſignifieth that the wicked ſpareth not the iuſt a whit, but doeth him the greateſt damage that he can,and the moſt trouble that is poſſible and when in this point hee woulde not haue vs too bee like vnto him,hee admoniſheth vs,that (as much as wee can) wee put our neighbours,and their goods in ſafetie,and let them liue in reſt and peace,not ſeeking any way to trouble them. And although hee name but the iuſt,yet this is not to ſay that it is lawful for vs to doe damage,or trouble,or moleſt them,which wee know to be wicked: but he forbiddeth namely the *iuſt*,becauſe the wicked wil rather do it to the iuſt then to their likes: And alſo becauſe by our nature we reſemble God,which when they ſee any little curre to bee aſſayled, they al runne vppon him: So doe they commonly againſt the iuſt, which are the moſt weake and feeble before the worlde. This ſimilitude is not vnproper, as it appeareth by the complaint which *Pſal.22.17. 21.* Dauid maketh,and by his prayer. Now the feebleneſſe of the iuſt is wel marked,when Solomon attributeth to them one onely little houſe,and not a realme wel defended,nor a ſtrong caſtle: And when hee attributeth to them a *reſting place*,and not chambers wel garniſhed with Tapeſtrie,and beddes of Parament. Meane while what feebleneſſe ſoeuer bee in the iuſt man, Solomon wil not that wee lay wayte againſt him,to trouble him,and put him to deſtruction: as the wicked ſtriueth to doe, to the ende hee may make him ſelfe great,mightie and rich by the deſtruction of the iuſt man. But the wicked abuſeth himſelfe farre,and wee alſo,if wee bee of his opinion,and followe his order of doinges,for it is vnpoſſible to ruinate, and deſtroy the iuſt,and the wicked cannot ſtande, but deſtroyeth and vndoeth himſelfe by his awaites and practiſes. Solomō ſignfieth wel this ſame,ſaying,

16 *For the iuſt man falleth ſeuen times,and riſeth againe: but the wicked fall into miſchiefe.*

Although the wicked are hote to purſue the iuſt,and neuer ceaſſe to afflict them,to ruinate and deſtroy them, and that oftentimes the iuſt bowe vnder the burden, inſomuch that it ſeemeth that they are diſpatched,and paſt remedie,as likewiſe they themſelues are tempted to thinke,as one may ſee by the complaintes of *Pſal.18.5.6. & 22.3.4.& 44.10.*

the holy ones in the ſcripture, yet neuertheleſſe they bee not abaſed nor ouerthrowne, according to the deſire of the wicked, but as, *ſeuen times*, that is to ſay, often, they fal : euen ſo they riſe againe and recouer their falles, not by their owne proper vertue, but by the aide of God, which heareth the complaints of the holy. Contrariwiſe although the worlde fauour the wicked, and ſuſteine them, and that they themſelues mainteine themſelues wel, as it ſeemeth too them, and that they thinke and ſay in their heartes, that no euil wyll euer come to them : yet neuertheleſſe the euil which they worke againſt the innocent, ouerthroweth and deſtroieth them, ſo that they can neuer riſe againe, Solomon pronounceth it in briefe, when hee ſaith,

Pſal.3.5.& 6,9.10.& 18 7.&.22.24. 25.& 34.18

But the wicked fall into miſchiefe, or by miſchiefe: to wit, that which they imagine, and worke. And it is that which is ſaide, Beholde, hee trauelleth to bring foorth iniquitie, and hath conceaued affliction, but wil bring foorth lying. Hee hath digged a pit, and made it hollow, but hee is falne into the ditch which he hath made, &c. The Heathen are ſunke into the pit which they haue made, &c. And ſo the ruine of the wicked is mortal, and without recouery, but there is remedy for the iuſt mans fal. Wherefore when wee are in affliction and aduerſitie, and wil knowe if wee may bee deliuered and raiſed vp from the ſame, let vs take good heede to put our affiance in God our father, and aſſure our ſelues, that he loueth vs, for the loue of his ſonne Ieſus Chriſte, and giue our ſelues to yeelde obedience to his commandementes. Thus doing, wee are on a ſure grounde that God accepteth vs for iuſt : and therefore hee wil not ſuffer vs to periſh in our afflictions, but wil raiſe vs vp againe. Some expounde the two former ſentences otherwiſe, to wit, as though Solomon ſpake to the wicked, ſaying, Let it ſuffice thee to bee wicked, entangle not the iuſt man with thee in thy wickedneſſe. Put no lets before him, ſeeke not occaſion to ſlaunder him, nor trouble not his reſt. Prouoke not the anger of God againſt thee, who loueth the iuſt, and reſtoreth the decayed. Take no pleaſure in the fal of the iuſt man, for hee falleth oftẽ, becauſe he is enuironed with the infirmitie of the fleſh. And there is not a iuſt man on earth, which doth good and ſinneth not. But the iuſt ſinne ſomtimes greeuouſly. And God permitteth it to the ende that being brought lowe, they may

Pſa.7.15.& 9.15.

loue him more feruently, and may become better aduiſed, and more gentle to their neighbours. The iuſt man in falling, looſeth not his faith, hee acknowledgeth quickly his fault, and repenteth incontinent: and al and euery time that hee falleth hee riſeth againe. Hee falleth not to deth, becauſe the Lord holdeth him vp with his hand, God ſuffereth him to fal, but not to lye there ſtil. But the wicked fal in their miſchiefe. Their fal ſerueth them to no good: for they repent not, nor they conuert not, nor haue no remorſe: They are naked of confidence, and perſeuer in their wickedneſſe. And likewiſe, that which is good, turneth not them to good. Now although ſuch ſenſe conteine good doctrine, yet the firſt is better for the woorde which Solomon vſeth, which ſignifieth *to fall*, is hardly founde in the Scripture, for, *to ſinne*, but ſtil to ſuffer aduerſitie.

17 *Bee not thou glad when thine enimie falleth: and let not thine heart reioyce, when he ſtumbleth.*

It is ſaide, that God hath not made death, and that he taketh no *Sapi.1.13*
pleaſure to ſee the liuing periſhe, and it is conformable to that which *Ezech.18.32*
the Prophet Ezechiel ſaith, I couet not the death of him that dieth, *& 33.11.*
ſaith the Lorde, &c. I am liuing, ſaith the Lorde, I couet not the *Eſay.59.2.*
death of the infidel, but that hee conuert from his way, and liue. *Rom.5.10*
Nowe when it is ſo, that by our ſinnes wee are enimies to God, hee *Col.1.21*
declareth and ſheweth himſelfe very merciful, when hee ſeeketh not
our deſtruction, but calleth vs to him againe, & giueth vs acceſſe by
Ieſus Chriſt his ſonne, by whome hee hath reconciled vs to him, to
giue vs life and ſaluation for euer. And as hee is ſuch a one towards
vs, who are his enimies by nature (for the affection of the fleſhe, is
enmitie againſt God) euen ſo wil hee that wee be pitiful and charitable towards them which are our enimies: as he declareth it vnto *Ro87.8.*
vs ſufficiently by the benefites which he ſheweth vpon vs dayly, of
the which we are not once worthie. But not content herewith becauſe we are as it were blinde, dul, and ſluggiſh, not caring to conſider his meruellous workes, ful of great benignitie and bountie, hee
declareth it vnto vs by his worde. He hath alſo declared it vnto vs

Exo.23.4.5.
Leui.19.17.
18.
Mat.5.44
Rom.12.17.

by examples, as of Ioſeph towards his brethren: of Dauid towards Saul: of Ieſus Chriſt towardes mankinde, and very manifeſtly towardes them which put him to death: and of S. Stephen towards his perſecutours. And therefore it ought to bee manifeſt that it is not without cauſe that Solomon admoniſheth vs ſaying,

Bee not thou glad when thine enimie falleth, and let not thine heart reioyce when he ſtumbleth. And as it is manifeſt vnto vs, euen ſo wee ought to followe it: otherwiſe wee are not the children of God our heauenly father, which maketh his Sunne ſhine on the good, and on the euil. But ſome wil ſay, that the children of Iſrael ſang a ſongue to the Lord for the deſtruction of Pharao, and his people. And Debora, & Barac ſang to the Lorde for the diſcõfiture of their enimies. And Dauid reioyced at the fal of his enimies. And God ſaide, I wil ſolace my ſelfe with my aduerſaries, & reuenge mee on mine enimies: and therefore that it is laweful to reioyce at the fal of the enimie. I anſwere, That wee may reioyce at the fall of our enimies, when it ſerueth to the glory of God, and that by the ſame fal, wee learne to feare the Lorde, and magnifie him, and exalt him. But if wee haue regarde to followe our proper iniuries, and ſearch our particular profite, if wee mingle our affections therwith, which are ordinarily il gouerned: and if becauſe we loue our ſelues, wee are the ſwifter to reioyce at the ruine of our enimies, our ioy is not righteous. And alſo it is that which Solomon forbiddeth vs in this preſent.

Mat.5.45
Exo.15.1.
Iud.5.1.
Pſal.9 18
& 3.8.
Eſay.1.24.

18 *Leaſt peraduenture the Lorde ſee it, and it diſpleaſe him, and hee turne his wrath from him.*

Hee putteth foorth to vs three reaſons to reſtraine vs from the ioy and pleaſure that one taketh in the fal and ſtumbling of his enimie. The firſt is, that God ſeeth it: whereon they thinke not, which reioyce in the euill of their enimies: neither wil they becauſe in pleaſing themſelues, they proceede with an euil conſcience, bearing hate & rancor againſt their enimies, & becauſe it ſeemeth to thẽ that they are wel reuenged of thẽ, whẽ they ſee that the euil hapen to them which they wiſhed for. And therefore they thinke not in their thoughts that God ſeeth them, although it bee ſo, for al thinges are plaine and manifeſt to the eies of the Lorde, yea afore their being: as alſo Solomō knew wel, but he ſaith, *Leaſt peraduenture, &c.* for they which ſet not God before their eies as they ought, regard not the care and prouidence, the knowledge and vnderſtanding of the Lord: but attribute al to fortune and chaunce, And ſo hee ſpeaketh according to the ſenſe and apprehenſion of worldlings and carnal men: and in the meane whyle telleth vs that God knoweth al our thoughts, although we think it be not ſo. Seeing then that wee will not haue God to ſee the pleaſure that wee take in the fall of our enemies, let vs haue pitie and compaſſion on their fal, helping to raiſe them vp againe aſmuch as wee can. The ſecond reaſon is, that ſuch ioy is wicked in the Lordes ſight, that is to ſay, diſpleaſeth him, for it is contrary to the lawe of charitie, the which is agreable to him aboue al things, as he ſheweth it wel, whē he declareth that he wil haue mercy and not ſacrifice. And alſo they which reioyce in the fal of their enimies are cōuinced in their owne conſciences, that they are repleniſhed with hate, in that of determinate malice they take pleaſure in other mens harmes: and ſo in ſpite of their heads, they condemne themſelues. The third reaſon is, that God wil *turne his wrath from him*, that is to ſay from the enimie, in whoſe fal wee take pleaſure. And in this manner hee which taketh pleaſure in the fal of his enimie, ſhalbe confounded, ſeeing God wil pacifie him, & raiſe him vp in his fal: for commonly the enuious, which reioyce in the harmes of other men, and are greeued at their proſperitie, are confounded, when they ſee it happen wel to them whom they hate. For the reſt: let vs know that Solomon ſheweth vs heere ſomewhat, that aduerſities, ruines, and deſolations come to men becauſe of their ſinnes: for God is not angrie with vs but becauſe of our ſinnes. And therefore if hee turne away his wrath, he pardoneth the ſinnes. Note wee alſo, that ſeeing hee turneth away his wrath from him, at whoſe harmes wee reioyce, that hee which hath ſuch ioy, ſinneth. And ſo the anger which is turned from his enimie falleth vpon him: wherefore let vs vnderſtande that it is very daungerous to take pleaſure in the fal of ones enimie.

19 *Frequent not thy ſelfe with the malicious: neither bee enuious at the wicked.*

Becauſe it is a temptation very dangerous, and which greatly ouerpreſſeth the feeble and weake, Inſomuch that it is very harde for them to keepe themſelues from being brought into the ſame, that is, to ſearch the familiaritie and acquaintance of the wicked becauſe that they ſee them proſper with the eye according to outward apparance, and too bee vexed and greeued when they are not in ſo good eſtate as they are. For this cauſe, Solomon knowing the neceſſitie that we haue to be wel and often admoniſhed, that we take no heede of the proſperitie of the wicked for to luſt after it, and adioyne our ſelues to them) is not content with theſe former admonitions: but now agayne he admoniſheth vs of the ſame, ſaying,

Pro.1.10. & 2.12.& 3.31.& 4.14.& 23.17 & 24.1. 1.Cor.5.7. 2.Cor.6.14. Ephe.5.11.

Frequent not with &c. This is not to ſay, that we can exempt our ſelues from the preſence of the wicked: for the Darnel ſhalbe amongſt the good wheat, euen to the conſummation of the world: But that wee purge the olde leauen, that wee couple not our ſelues with Infidels, and that we be not pertakers of the vnfruitful workes of darkeneſſe. Wherefore let vs reioyce when wee are often warned of ſuch thinges: ſeeing that otherwiſe wee goe vnto vtter deſtruction with the wicked. For by our nature wee are of the ſame affection that they are, and incline to their manners, and wil not be withdrawne thefro. Wee ſtudie on the outwarde face temporall and tranſitory: wee regarde that ordinarily the wicked flooriſh and proſper, and it ſeemeth to vs that they are exempt from all dangers, al afflictions, and al aduerſities, wherewith the iuſt are as it were ouerthrowne: inſomuch that it ſeemeth they ſhal neuer recouer it. But the iuſt at the laſt ſhalbe raiſed vp, as they hope: for there ſhalbe an ende of their euils: as wee haue ſeene it.

Pro.23.18. & 24.14.

Contrariwiſe, miſchiefes ſhal aſſayle the wicked of the which they ſhal neuer rid themſelues, and ſhal bee ouerwhelmed therewith, that there ſhal remaine no worke of their proſperitie, Solomon pronounceth it ſo, when hee ſaith.

20 *For there ſhalbe no ende to the euill man : the light of the wicked ſhalbe put out.*

When heere before he hath ſaid, that there ſhalbe an end for the iuſt and wiſe, which hope in the Lord, he meaneth not that they ſhal periſh: but that their afflictions ſhal haue end, we haue to note, that when he ſaith, now that *there ſhalbe no end of the euill man:* hee meaneth not that the wicked ſhal bee permanent, and that their proſperitie ſhalbee of long indurance : but that there ſhal bee no end of the plagues which ſhal aſſaile them. Hee himſelfe ſheweth that wee ſhoulde vnderſtande it ſo, when hee addeth, *The light of the wicked ſhalbe put out.* For by the light hee vnderſtandeth the glory, the eaſe and proſperitie of them, as hath been ſaide aboue.

21 *My ſonne, feare the Lorde, and the King, and meddle not with them that are diſguiſed.*

Solomon ſheweth vs heere the office of a good Paſtour: for firſt hee calleth them, whō he teacheth, *his ſonnes.* In that he propoundeth vnto them the worde of God, which is the ſeede of life, by the which he formeth and begetteth them to the Lorde, as much as is poſsible for him. Whereby Miniſters ought to learne that their dutie is to take care ouer the flocke which is committed to them: as ouer their children, yea to bee more careful of them : becauſe the charge of them is more difficil, more great, & more excellent, then of carnal children, becauſe the ſpirites are more excellent then the bodies, and more harde to rule, guide, and gouerne. Secondly hee teacheth that which God hath demanded at al times to bee honoured and ſerued as appertaineth to him, when he ſaith, *feare the Lorde, &c.* Now that at al times God hath demanded to be feared, it appeareth firſt, when he woulde that Adam ſhould obey his worde, & threatened him of death if hee did it not. Secondly, when Abel by faith offered Sacrifice, which was agreeable to the Lorde: and that in the time of Enoch ſonne of Seth, men began to cal vpō the name of the Almightie. And Enoch walked according to God : and Noe was a iuſt and an vpright man, walking after GOD. *Gen.2.17. & 44.26.& 5.24.& 69.*

This coulde not bee, but that theſe men were taught in the feare of the Lord. Thirdly, when the Lord ſaid that he knew that Abraham ſhoulde commande his children and his houſe after him, that they ſhoulde keepe the way of the Lorde, &c. Moſes alſo ſheweth it in his writings: as alſo doeth the Pſalmiſt plainely and in many places. Solomon hath greatly praiſed this feare, and hath inuited vs thereto: and yet preſently admoniſheth vs of the ſame. Then ſeeing wee ſee that the ſcripture ſpeaketh ſo often of the feare of the Lorde, and that they recommende it to vs ſo carefully, knowe wee that it is the principal thing that God requireth of vs, for by the ſame wee are turned from al euill, and followe the good that hee commandeth vs. Knowe wee alſo, that wee are ſo obſtinate and ſtiffnecked in our diſobediences and rebellions, that it is great neede to mollifie our heartes by often admonitions of the feare of the Lord. Fourthly, becauſe in this worlde, with religion, we haue need to liue in peace and tranquilitie to keepe ciuil order, Solomon teacheth vs howe we ought to keepe it when he warneth vs too feare the king: not as the wicked criminals which feare the gibet more then the men of iuſtice, who are comprehended vnder the name of King, but as Saint Paule and Saint Peter teach vs. And ſo although Solomon ioyne the feare of the king, with the feare of the Lorde, yet neuertheleſſe wee ought not to feare iudges and rulers as God, but according to God and for his ſake: and wee ought to know that who ſo deſpiſeth the Magiſtrate, hee hath no feare of the Lorde, but is diſobedient and rebellious to him. Know wee alſo, that ſeeing the feare of the king is ioyned with the feare of the Lorde, that Magiſtrates are as aſſiſters, or Liefetenants of God, that they ought to repreſent him, and haue his image ſo imprinted in them, that it may bee ſeene in their adminiſtration. And therefore when Solomon teacherh vs to feare the king, he ſheweth couertly that mē of iudgement ought to bee wiſe, vertuous, true, holy, and iuſt. Fiftly, becauſe there are many which deſpiſe both God and the king, and ſcorne all religion and ciuil order, and that it is right dangerous to bee familiarly conuerſant with them, leaſt one ſhould bee in the way to reſemble thē, for this cauſe Solomon forbiddeth vs their company and acquaintance, ſaying,

Gen.18.19.
Deu.4.& 6. & 10.
Pſal.34.
Rom.13.
1.Pet.2.13.

Meddle not with them that are diſguiſed. They which haue not that apparel which they ought to haue, and weare that which is not conuenient for them, are *diſguiſed:* and men cal them ſo. Now it behoooueth vs al to be clothed & apparelled with the feare of the Lorde: as wee may vnderſtande it by many places. They therfore which deſpiſe the feare of the Lorde, and of Magiſtrates, are by good right, called *diſguiſed.* Some cal them vnconſtant and mutable: and it is not without cauſe: for the worde that Solomon vſeth, ſignifieth ſo. And alſo indeed, they which feare not the Lorde nor the Magiſtrate, are neuer firme in a good purpoſe, but turne to vanitie, follie, wickedneſſe, and diſſolutions. For ſeeing that by the feare of the Lorde one refraineth from euil, and that it is the beginning or principal point of wiſedome, it cannot be, but they which reiect it, muſt be vaine, fooliſhe, wicked, and by conſequence, vnconſtant and mutable. Others cal them ſeditious, becauſe they reuolt from the commandement of God, and of the Magiſtrate, and doe the contrarie. Of ſuche men the acquaintance and familiaritie is verie dangerous, not onely becauſe in folowing them, one is rebellious to the Magiſtrate, who beareth the ſworde to puniſh corporally the rebels and ſeditious, but alſo hee is in danger to looſe his ſoule: ſeeing that ſuch diſguiſed, vnconſtant, and ſeditious, and with them, their adherents, goe to perdition ſooner then they are aware of, or then they would, as Solomon ſheweth it, ſaying,

Pſal.2.& 5
Pro.1.

22 *For their deſtruction ſhal riſe ſodeinly: and who knoweth the ruine of them both?*

Becauſe we haue ſeene at al times, and yet doe ſee, that the wicked contemners and ſcorners of God, and of al good policie, flouriſhe and proſper, and that according to carnal ſenſe, and humane apprehenſion, it ſeemeth that their glorie and triumphe indureth long. For this cauſe, if wee wil beleeue Solomon, or rather the holie Ghoſt (as we ought to doe) let vs renounce our ſenſe and vanquiſh it, to the ende that it let vs not to knowe and vnderſtande, that the wicked are not long in glorie, triumph, and proſperitie, but that ſtraightway they come to perdition, and ſooner then they or others can perceiue it, or knowe it. As Solomon ſignifieth, when he asketh, *And who knoweth the ruine of them both?* That is to ſay, of the

wicked, malicious, & peruerſe, of whom he hath ſpokē here aboue,
of the diſguiſed, vnconſtant, & ſeditious, of whō he hath alſo ſpokē:
Or of the two, that is to ſay, of them which feare not God, and
which feare not the Magiſtrate. Noe knewe not the ruine of the
worlde by the flood to come, but that God reuealed it to him, and
Mat.24. the worlde thought not of it: as Ieſus Chriſt pronounceth it. Lot
38.3. alſo looked not for the ſubuerſion of Sodome to be ſo neere, nor
Luk.17.28 the inhabitantes of the ſame. Solomon therefore ſpeaketh truely,
19. when he ſaieth,

Exo.33.5. *For ſodeinly, &c.* Hee ſpeaketh according to the threatning
Pſal.73.18 of the Lorde, yee are a ſtifnecked people, I wil come ſodeinly
19. vpon thee, and deſtroy thee, &c. And to comprehend this wel,
Pſal.30.12 it behooueth vs not to regarde the ſpace of time, wherein the wicked
13.& 47.9 proſper, but wee ought to conſider and knowe, that al thinges
10.11. be they neuer ſo farre off, are nowe preſent with the Lorde. Alſo
Mat.24. it behooueth vs to beleeue, that as the ſufferances of times preſent,
44.48. are not worthie of the glorie to come (for our tribulation is of ſmal
1.Theſ.5.2.3 indurance and verie light, and bringeth foorth meruellouſly in vs a
Pſal.9.4.5 weight of eternal glorie) alſo the glorie, triumph, power, and eaſe
2.Pet.3.8. of the wicked, their delightes and proſperities, are not of long indurance,
Rom.8.18. and are nothing in reſpect of their ruine and perdition,
2.Cor.4.17 which ſhal be for euer. For the Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſhal appeare in
2.Theſ.1.7 heauen with the Angels of his power, and in flames of fyre: working
vengeance on them, which knewe not God, &c. Who ſhall
ſuffer payne, that is to wit, eternal perdition, &c. There is great
difference betweene the longeſt ſpace of time that men can imagine,
and a perpetuitie which is incomprehenſible to vs, inſomuche as
it hath no ende. Notwithſtanding neither ſeeing it, nor comprehending
it by our humane ſenſe, and natural reaſon, it behooueth
vs to beleeue it: for God which is veritable, reuealeth it
to vs by his worde.

23 *Alſo theſe thinges appertaine to the wiſe: It is not good to knowe any mans face in iudgements.*

Solomon heeretofore hath put foorth to vs many ſentences ſo excellent, that we ought not, nor may not iudge, but that they are proceeded from great wiſdom: and as they are proceeded therefro, ſo they are alſo profitable to teache wiſedome to them, which giue their mindes and willes theretoo, and take pleaſure therein. Nowe although they be a great number, as wee haue ſeene, and that they ought wel to ſuffice to make vs wiſe, yet neuertheleſſe Solomon adioyneth to them others, which are of no leſſe wiſedome then the former, as he declareth by a preface, ſaying,

Alſo theſe thinges appertaine to the wiſe. That is, that the wiſe doe teache them, or that they are knowne to the wiſe. Hee vſeth ſuche a Preface to awake vs, and ſhewe vs that wee ought not to be greeued for the great multitude of his Prouerbes, which are not ſuperfluous, but verie profitable and neceſſarie: ſeeing that the wiſe approoue them, and teache them to make the ſimple and ignorant more wiſe. Nowe, that it is to awake vs, that hee vſeth ſuche a Preface, it is manifeſt, when after the ſame, hee ſayeth no newe thing, but that which Moyſes taught long time afore: for it is ſaide,

Leuit.19.15.
Deu.1.16.
17 & 16.19.

It is not good to knowe any mans face in iudgement. And this is agreeable to that which is ſaide in the lawe: ſeeing that GOD, which is onely good, yea al goodneſſe, maketh ſuche an edict, it behooueth the wiſe to teach that it is not good to doe the contrarie: and that they which deſire to bee, and ſhewe them ſelues wiſe, reſt in the ſame, and beware to goe againſt it. Wherein we ought to learne, that it is meete for Kinges, Princes, Iudges, and gouernors of the earth to bee wiſe, ſeeing that it is to them principally that this edict is addreſſed, as they are the lieſetenantes of God, who hath no acception of perſons. As therefore God, regardeth not the ſtate and condition of men, which is ſeene outwardly, whether they be male or female, ſtrong or weake, poore or riche, ſkilful or ignorant, ſimple or craftie, noble or vilaine, to doe right to euerie one, but hee iudgeth iuſtly: Euen ſo behooueth it the Superiours and Rulers of the earth to doe. Otherwiſe God which hath appointed them goods on earth, wil take vengeance on them as they deſerue, and as hee threatneth them thereof. Solomon therefore ſayeth no newe thing, but that which Moyſes hath taught, and hee him ſelfe heeretofore. But although we haue ſo many aduertiſementes and threatninges of it, yet they ceaſe not

Eſai.1.23.
& 28.14.
Pro.18.5.
& 19.6.7.

to *knowe faces:* as Solomon complaineth. And as it is not meete to knowe faces, ſo is it not good that any man ſeeme to corrupt the Iudges, by gifts and brybes, by faire ſpeech and flatteries, by honors and reuerences, by kindred and familiaritie: but that ſolicitating his buſineſſe with modeſtie, and without greedineſſe, hee attende with patience that which it ſhal pleaſe God to pronounce by the mouth of the Iudge.

24 *Hee that ſayeth to the wicked, thou art righteous, him ſhall the people curſe, and the multitude abhorre him.*

It is a common thing in the worlde, that men flatter the wicked, and haue them in admiration, that they eſteeme them, and cal them honeſt, and that they are welcome euerie where, & haue ſuch credite, authoritie and might, that if one blame them rightly, and for good cauſe, yet they ſhalbe conſtrained to vnſaie it againe, and make them ſome recompence for touching their honour, and holde them for honeſt men, if they wil not lye in priſon continually, or els be baniſhed. Whereby it ſeemeth wel (as it is true indeede) that they which holde vp the wickedes chinne, giue plainly to vnderſtande, that they ſay to the wicked that they are iuſt. For in cauſing by their vniuſtice, that one repaire the honour of the wicked, they condemne the innocent, and iuſtifie the wicked. Then if it bee ſo, that men bleſſe the wicked, it may wel ſeeme, that they wil not curſe thoſe that iuſtifie them. And indeede, if wee regarde the outward apparance, and moſt common dealing, we ſhal finde that the wicked Iudges, the falſe witneſſes, and ſlanderers, are greatly prayſed and honoured amongeſt al people and nations, and that men feare much to ſpeake euil of them. And ſo according to our viewe, and humane ſenſe, wee ſee not that accompliſhed which Solomon pronounceth, ſaying,

The people ſhal curſe him, &c. One may ſee it come to paſſe, that they which ſuffer by the malice of wrongful Iudges, can not keepe them ſelues ſometimes from murmuring againſt ſuch Iudges, and that they muſt needes curſe them. One may ſee alſo, that the holie ſeruantes of God, the Prophetes, curſed and pronounced miſchiefe againſt wrongful Iudges. Yet neuertheleſſe this preſent ſentence letteth not to be true: for though there be hardly founde any man, if hee be not verie impudent and bolde, which wil ſay to him, that he knoweth to be wicked, *Thou art iuſt*: but wil ſpeake in his heart by the affection which hee hath to gratifie the wicked, and alſo by the workes which proceede of ſuche affection in wronging the poore and innocent, to pleaſure the wicked. Alſo, although with worde of mouth one curſe not him which iuſtifieth the wicked, becauſe they wil not bring them ſelues in hate with the mightie and honourable, and be their enemie: yet neuertheleſſe, there is none ſo ignorant, nor none ſo wicked, which is not conuinced in his conſcience, that hee which iuſtifieth the wicked, is accurſed, and deteſtable. There is alſo none but he wil ſay, that it is yl done to iuſtifie the wicked: and ſo by the iudgement of the conſcience, and by a certaine natural light, *The people curſe*, and the *nations* abhorre him which ſayeth to the wicked, *Thou art iuſt*. Euerie one may iudge this in him ſelſe: for if hee thinke that one doeth him wrong to fauour his aduerſarie, incontinently hee thinketh euil of his aduerſaries fauourer: and if he thinketh him ſelf ſtrong enough, hee wil come and tel him his minde. But although moſt commonly men flatter the fauourers of the wicked, and dare not curſe them as they deſerue: yet by the iuſt vengeance of God it commeth to paſſe, that they purſue them as wicked and abhominable. And this is done by them, which haue had them in great reuerence, & haue liued and made good cheare at their diſpence. Vproares, mutinies, diſſentions, and ſeditions are mooued againſt them which fauour the wicked, deciding cauſes that men know manifeſtly to be wrong, and againſt the common ſenſe of al equitie and lawe. In this maner, they ſhewe them ſelues violent, outragious, and tyrantes, and ſo they are inſupportable.

Deu. 27.19.
Eſai. 5.23.

25 *But in them that rebuke him, hee ſhall haue pleaſure: and vppon them ſhall come the bleſſing of goodneſſe.*

As according to the common eſſence and ordinarie dealing of
the worlde, we ſee not that men curſe and haue in deteſtation the
euil Iudges and gouernours which fauour and iuſtifie the wicked:
euen ſo it is not ordinarie that one ſhoulde take reprehenſion in
good parte, nor ſeeke to ſpeake wel of them which argue and rebuke
him, nor to doe them any good turne, but rather to hate and ab-
Gen.19. horre them: Lot hath prooued it: Moyſes, Ioſeph, and the Pro-
Exo.2.13. phetes alſo, who make complaintes and threatninges for the ſame.
Gen,37. Wee alſo prooue the like at this preſent, in ſome which vaunt them
Eſai. 29.20. ſelues to be reformed according to the Goſpel. For there is none
21. that they hate more then them, which ſhew them the truth. Wher-
Amos.5.10. fore when Solomon ſaieth, *But in them that rebuke him, he ſhal
haue pleaſure.* Knowe wee that he ſpeaketh not of the common vſe
of the worlde, but of the iudgement of the conſcience, which none
can flye, be he neuer ſo wicked and repugnant to the ſame. For ſee-
ing we iudge it wel done, to rebuke, chaſtiſe, & correct thoſe which
are of diſſolute maners, we are ouercome in our owne heartes to
take pleaſure in them which rebuke vs, and to take it in good part,
and to allowe of their zeale, and prayſe their affection and ſtudie.
Nowe although the wicked iudge it ſo, wil they nil they: yet neuer-
theleſſe they are greeued and vexed at corrections and reprehenſi-
ons. And therefore they force them ſelues, as much as they can, to
ſhake of the pleaſure that they ought to take in thoſe that rebuke
them. And ſo it is principally of the good, wiſe, and iuſt, that Solo-
Pro.9.7.8. mon ſpeaketh, when he ſaith, *But in them that rebuke him, he ſhall
haue pleaſure.* For as we haue ſeene, he that chaſtizeth the ſcor-
ner, receiueth ſhame, &c. One might according to the opinion of
ſome, ſay, that it is God who hath in fauour them which reprehend
the wicked, as it is true indeed. For ſeeing hee commandeth by his
worde, that one ſhould reproove and correct them which offend: it
foloweth, that they which obey him in this, are pleaſant and agree-
able to him, and that hee loueth them, This expoſition is verie
agreeable to the promiſe folowing, *And vppon them ſhal come,
&c.* For God rewardeth them largely, whome hee loueth and ac-
cepteth. The great largeneſſe is ſet downe, when Solomon is not
content to ſay, *Bleſſing ſhal come*: But hee ſayeth, *Bleſſing of
goodneſſe.*

goodneſſe. Alſo wee can not obtaine any goodneſſe, but by the liberalitie and bountie of our God. When therfore bleſſing is ioyned with pleaſure, it is verie requiſite to attribute the pleaſure to God, from whome onely proceedeth al bleſſing. Neuertheleſſe, if wee regarde the former ſentence of the 24. verſe: where it is ſaide, that the people wil curſe him that ſayeth to the wicked, *Thou arte iuſt*: The firſt ſenſe ſhalbe agreeable. And though al bleſſing come from onely the Lorde, yet it is no inconuenience to ſay, that of them which take pleaſure in thoſe that rebuke them, ſhal come, *the bleſſing of goodneſſe*: becauſe they ſhal prayſe, bleſſe, and thanke the rebukers, and be at their commaundement, and doe them al the good that they can poſſibly. One may alſo ſay, that *bleſſing of goodneſſe* ſhal come vppon them, which take pleaſure in them that rebuke them. And becauſe the ſenſe may be ſo diuerſe, it is beſt to ſay imperſonally, but in them that rebuke him, *ſhalbe* pleaſure. And it is good reaſon, that the rebukers which argue and reprooue vs in the name of God, and by his worde, be pleaſant and agreeable to vs, and that wee wiſhe them al goodneſſe, ſeeing that in admoniſhing and reprehending vs, they vſe the ſcripture, to aduance vs, and make vs the more perfect. Al the ſcripture is diuinely inſpired, and profitable for doctrine, for reprehenſion, for correction, for inſtruction, which is in iuſtice, That the man of God may be abſolute, beeing made perfect to al good workes, &c. And to deliuer vs from our ſinnes, that we may be ſaued. They therefore which rebuke, are wel woorthie to be bleſſed, when by their meanes wee obtaine not onely amendment of life, but alſo remiſſion of ſinnes, and ſaluation of the ſoule. Meanewhile it behoooueth them greatly, which buſie them ſelues to reprehende, that they be pure of ſpirite to rule, and maiſter: and that they be voide of ambition and hereſie, as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt teacheth vs. Otherwiſe, although that they which rebuke vs, are wel worthie of reprehenſion, yet neuertheleſſe, wee are more culpable, and woorthie of more condemnation.

2.Tim.3.16.

Iam.5.19.20

26 *They ſhal kiſſe the lippes of him that anſwereth vpright wordes.*

Gen.27.26
27.& 29.
11.13.& 31
55.& 33.4
& 45.15.
2.Sam.20.9.
Gen.50.1
Exo.18 7.
Luk.7.38
Pſal.2.12

They vſe to kiſſe in diuers ſortes. Some kiſſe their neighbors in ſigne of peace and amitie, but the ſigne is not alwayes ioyned with true meaning. Others kiſſe for delight and voluptuouſneſſe: as doe the carnal and wanton worldlings: And others kiſſe in ſigne of reuerence and ſubiection or obedience: as Ioſeph caſt him ſelfe vpon his fathers face, and wept ouer him, and kiſſed him: And as Moyſes yſſued out before his father in law, and kneeled downe and kiſſed him: And as the woman of euil lyfe, beeing behynde our Sauiour Chriſt, wept, and began to waſhe his feete with teares, and kiſſed them. To ſuche maner of kiſſing wee are inuited: Kiſſe the Sonne, &c. Wee are ſo bidden, becauſe it is meete that wee ſubiect our ſelues to the Sonne of God, which hath al power & rule in heauen and on earth. And therefore when the Lorde hath made vs ſubiect to Superiour powers, and to them which are placed in preheminence, it behoooueth vs to kiſſe them, which is, that wee ought to doe them homage, and ſhewe them honour and obedience, as God commandeth vs. The ſeconde maner of kiſſing is filthie and infamous, amongeſt thoſe to whome it belongeth not, and alſo, amongeſt thoſe to whome it doeth belong, it is not without fault, becauſe they vſe it not in ſuche ſobrietie and tempearance as is requiſite: and it is becauſe our affections are neuer ſo pure and wel gouerned as they ought to be. But betweene Ieſus Chriſt & his Church, the kiſſe of delight and pleaſure is holie, pure, and cleane, and is moſt neceſſarie for vs, aboue al things: & therfore the church requireth but her ſpouſe to kiſſe her. As for the firſt kinde of kiſſing, it hath bene at al times in vſe, and good eſtimation, as we may ſee by the ſcriptures, Nowe it behoooueth vs to ſee howe one ſhal kiſſe the lippes of him that anſwereth: That is to ſay, hee ſpeaketh and ſaieth *vpright wordes*, which are of trueth, iuſtice, and edification. It may wel appeare, that men wil not kiſſe them on the firſt maner: for they haue in hate, and perſecute them which are true and iuſt, and which carie ſounde doctrine, and vtter iuſt iudgement, as the heathen them ſelues haue knowne and confeſſe it: alſo ex-

Can.1.2.
Act.26.37.
1.Cor.16.20
2.Cor.13.12

perience hath ſhewed it al times, and in the ſcripture there are many complaints thereof. They wil not kiſſe them on the ſecond manner: for commonly they take no pleaſure nor delight in honeſt, iuſt, & righteous men. They are no better nowe then were the children of Iſrael of whome God complaineth, it is a people prouoking to anger: lying children, children which wil not heare the law of God, which ſay to the ſeers, doe yee not ſee, &c. They wil not kiſſe them on the thirde manner, but rather will deſpyſe them and caſt them downe, they wil make them captiues, and bring them in ſubiection and harde ſeruitude, and wil impriſon them. Ioſeph hath prooued it, Ieremie alſo and Micheas. Men doe noweadaies the lyke or farre worſe to the poore faythful flocke: as alſo they haue done to the Apoſtles. Then ſeeing it is ſo that the world kiſſeth not the lips of him that anſwereth vpright wordes, it behoooueth vs to ſee howe one ſhal kiſſe them, and whome it is that kiſſeth them, for the holy Ghoſt, which hath ſpoken by the mouth of Solomon, and guyded his hande to wryte, is true, and cannot lye. If wee ſay that it is God which wil kiſſe them, in that he hath peace and loue towardes them which anſwere vpright wordes, and that he taketh pleaſure and delight in them, it ſhalbe true. It is wel giuen vs to vnderſtand, when the ſcripture telleth vs, how God behaueth himſelf towardes them which are righteous. And as God, who is right and iuſt kiſſeth them which ſpeake *vpright words:* Euen ſo they which loue vprightneſſe, wil liue peaceably and in loue with them which ſhal ſhew thẽſelues rightful in their conuerſation which is comprehended vnder *the word.* But it is ſpokẽ here principally of the word, inſomuch that it behoueth vs to kiſſe the lips of magiſtrates, which vtter vpright iudgements, not only according to the two firſt manners of kiſſings, but alſo according to the thirde. For they ought to doe homage as God commandeth them. Alſo it behoueth to kiſſe the lips of them which purely and faythfully preache the goſpel, becauſe they vtter the glad tydings of ſaluation: and we muſt not kiſſe them in the two firſt manners only, but alſo in the third, not hauing regarde to their perſons, but to him that ſent them. And ſo Solomon pronounceth that rather which we ought to doe, then that which we doe ordinarily.

Pſal.11.2. & 35.11.12. & 37.14.
Mich.3.9.
*Eſa.*30.9.10.11.
Gen.37.
Iere.38.6.
1.Kings.22.26.27.
Acts.4.23. & 5.17. & 12.2. & 16.22.
Rom.13.
1.Pet.2.
Eſa.52.7.
*Heb.*13.*17.*

27 *Prepare thy worke without, and make ready thy thinges in the field which is thyne, and after builde thyne house.*

God hath ordeined from the beginning that man ſhoulde trauel to the end to liue by his labour. But by the corruption wherein man is falne and hapned: he hath gone aſtray, & yet erreth from this holy ordinance, by fraude, couſonages, violences, outrages, rauines, theftes and ſpoiles: and by ſuch meanes hath ſought to builde him a good houſe. This hath bene from Noes time. The earth was corrupted before the Lord, & filled with extortion: And it hath continued til Abrahams time as we ſee it by the warre & pillage wherof mention is made. And after Abraham, it hath not ceaſed, as wee may ſee by the ſacred hiſtories, and by the complaints of the Prophets: and yet they continue to doe the lyke or worſe. And thoſe which wil be reputed the moſt holyeſt (as the Pope, the prelacie, & the munkery) are the greateſt deceiuers, and the moſt wicked theeues. For vnder ſhadowe of deuotion they ſucke the blood of the poore, ſimple and ignorant. After them come they which aide themſelues with Iudges fauours to deſtroy their poore neighbors. They which proceede therein appertly by outrage, violence, & tyranny, are nothing worth: but they are not ſo culpable. Nowe to the end that we bee not ioined with ſuch wicked men: Solomon warneth vs to doe euery one his owne buſineſſe, to the which God hath called vs, whē he ſaith,

Gen.6.11. & 14.
Eſa.3.13.
Iere.5.26.
Amos.5. 11.
Mat.2.1. & 6.10.
Haba.2.9.

Prepare thy woorke without, &c. Hee ſpeaketh heere but of one kinde of worke, to wit rurall, and vnder that hee comprehendeth al other buſineſſes which are lawful, and by the which one may gaine iuſtly his dayly bread. Hee ſpeaketh but of one worke to ſhunne prolixitie, and principally of huſbandry: for with that that God hath ordeined it firſt, it is the moſt neceſſarie for the body, and from the ſame come al our other goods corporal, and temporal, and there is nothing neither in towne, nor village, nor houſe, the which commeth not from the fielde. And wee haue nothing without labour of the earth. It is the cuſtome of Solomon vnder one kinde to

Gen.2.

comprehende the reſt, as heeretofore. And when hee ſaith, *Which* Prou. 12. 11.
is thyne, wee may heere learne twoo thinges. The firſt that wee
ought not to leaue and abandon our buſineſſe to do another mans.
For thus dooing wee put both our ſelues and our familie in danger
to begge our bread: but yet I wil not forbid one to do his neighbor
al the pleaſure, and ſeruice he can: and chiefly him which is poore
and feeble, and hath neede to be holpen. Thus dooing one leaueth
not of his buſineſſe. For the office and duetie of euery one is, to
aide him cheerfully and without conſtraint which hath neede of it.
The ſecond is that wee content our ſelues with that which is ours,
not coueting to order our affaires at another mans coſtes. As doe
they which ſhift their neighbours landemarkes, and encroche vpon
his grounde. Otherwiſe wee are accurſed. Curſed is hee which remoueth 2.Cor.8.& 9
the markes of his neighbour.

Moreouer Solomon in this ſentence ſheweth vs, that we ought
not to eate our bread for nothing. Wheretoo that agreeth which S. Deut.27.17.
Paule teacheth vs: If wee obay the ſame, wee ſhal not want an Eph.4.28.
houſe. As Solomon promiſeth vs ſaying, *And after* thou ſhalt 2.Theſ.3.6.
builde thyne houſe. Whereby hee ſignifieth, that if wee wil haue an
houſe to be ours by iuſt title: it behoueth vs to apply carefully our
buſineſſe, and get our bread in taking paines, according as the ſtate
wheretoo God hath called vs, requyreth. Contrariwiſe, that they
which make no account to labour, can neither make nor poſſeſſe
an houſe which is theirs, but vſurpe as theeues and robbers, all that
they haue, by what title ſoeuer they poſſeſſe it. But if we take the
ende of this ſentence for a forme of admonition, as the beginning
is, according as ſome thinke, it is meete to ſay that Solomon teacheth
the father of the houſholde, howe he ought to gouerne himſelfe,
to proſper in his affaires: that is to wit, that hee bee careful
to imploy himſelfe, firſt of al in things moſt neceſſarie, and that
when hee hath done one thing, he doe not deſiſt, but labour dayly,
and in good order, leaſt one thing let the other to bee done, ſuch
ſenſe is not vnconuenient: but the firſt agreeth right wel with the
ſcriptures, as may be ſeene: and containeth large doctrine, and of
good edification.

28 *Bee not a witneſſe without cauſe againſt thy neighbour: for wilt thou deceiue with thy lips?*

To fauour the wicked which they loue carnally, and to bee welcome amongſt thẽ, alſo to hurte, & indamage the innocent whome they hate vniuſtly, and of whome they looke for no ſupport or fauour, men make no difficultie nowedayes to ſpeake againſt their conſciences, in lying ſlaundering, and laying falſe reproche againſt them. Solomon ſheweth wel that it is againſt conſcience, and of ſet purpoſe when they doe ſo. Firſt when hee ſaieth, ſimply, *Bee not a witneſſe againſt thy neighbour.* For alſo it is not ill done to beare witneſſe, againſt the iniurious and wrong workers, the diſſolute and reprocheful: But it is neceſſarie to accuſe them, and purchaſe their correction and puniſhement. As wee ought to vnderſtande if wee haue any ſmacke of natural ſenſe, and alſo the ſcripture ſheweth vs it in many places. Solomon (I ſay,) ſaieth not ſimply,

Leuit. 5. 11. Num. 35. 30 Deu. 17. 6. Mat. 18. 16. 17. Iohn. 18. 23.

Bee not a witneſſe againſt thy neighbour, &c. but hee addeth, *without cauſe.* And heerein as it is ſaid, he ſheweth that the ſlanderers and falſe witneſſes doe ſinne againſt their conſciences, & of malice deliberate. For there is none, bee hee neuer ſo wicked, which wil not iudge it to bee very ill done to hurt, or ſeeke to hurt his neighbour, when hee giueth him no occaſion. Likewiſe if the wicked indure euil for iuſt occaſion, and that he ſeeketh to perſwade himſelfe that hee hath giuen no occaſion thereof, he wil complaine and ſay that men do him wrong to puniſh him: which is a very ſure argument that ſlaunderers and falſe witneſſe bearers doe ſinne againſt their conſciences, and of ſet purpoſe: ſeeing they knowe well ynough, that thoſe whome they witneſſe againſt, haue giuen them no occaſion of the wrong which they doe vnto them. Secondly, when hee aſketh, *And wilt thou deceiue with thy lips?* For no man ſeeketh to deceiue, but hee which proceedeth of ſet purpoſe, and is reprooued by his owne conſcience that hee doeth euill, and that hee would not that others ſhoulde do the lyke vntoo him. Alſo Solomon doeth pricke the conſcience of the falſe witneſſebearer more neerely, when hee vſeth interrogation,then if hee vſed a ſimple affirmation. And rebuketh him more ſharply of his malice which is not little,but great and very deteſtable: for men are not therewith only indamaged, but alſo God is greatly wronged thereby , by the malicious hypocriſie of ſuch people,when vnder ſhadowe of religion, they ſeeke to vndoe their neighbours for to be hollow in witneſſebearing,they bragge themſelues to bee honeſt men, as one may ſee,when they make no difficultie to ſweare that they ſay true , and they knowe wel that they lye,and that they ſhal lye falſely. In this manner they wrong God greatly. For they take his name in vaine, in forſwearing themſelues, and they recke not if God bee the author of lyes: and aſmuch as in them is poſſible they diſpoyle God of his trueth and by conſequence of his deitie, which is to adnihilate him wholy: for he cannot be God,if he bee not veritable. We ſee then that it is for good cauſe that Solomon attributeth fraude to them,ſeing they counterfaite honeſt men ſwearing,and promiſing to ſay the trueth, and their hart is otherwiſe bent: to wit,ful of treaſon and diſloyaltie. And ſo the diſceite is in the heart,as God wel ſeeth it: and the periured himſelf wel knoweth it. Neuertheleſſe in the ſight of men, which ſee but the outward ſhape , the diſceit is in the lips, when they promiſe one thing,and doe another quyte contrarie. It is thus that they deceiue men. And therefore Solomon ſaith, *And wilt thou deceiue with thy lips?* Wee ſee then that it is a very wicked thing to backbyte and beare falſe witneſſe . But yet the worlde maketh no difficultie of it,as hath bene ſaide heretofore. And although the ſcripture admoniſh vs often to withholde vs from falſe witneſſe bearing,yet neuertheleſſe men amende not . This is done becauſe they thinke not that God is witneſſe and iudge thereof , and that they loue not their neighbours.

29 *Say not, I wil doe to him as he hath done to mee, I wil recompence euery one according to his worke.*

Albeeit the world,deuoide of good ſenſe, and right iudgement, ſay,that a man is worth nothing if he haue not blood in his nailes, and if he reuenge not himſelfe on them which haue offended him, yet neuertheleſſe one cannot ſo much abuſe himſelf in ſpeeche, but his conſcience wil ſhewe him in ſpyte of his head, that one ought to bee peaceable, and not to reuenge himſelſe on his enemie according as he deſireth. For let vs take the moſt wicked man in the worlde, who if he haue done iniury to any one, whome he eſteemeth ſtronger then himſelf, he wilbe content that he which is offended, ſhould holde his peace and diſſemble the iniurie which is done to him, and not reuenge it, he will not thinke him for this, a man of no value. Likewiſe if he whom the wicked hath offended, goe about, & force himſelf to be reuenged, the wicked man wil ſeeke to appeaſe him, & ſhew him that the offence is not ſo great, that he ought ſo to couet to be reuenged. Caine ſheweth vs this ſomewhat: for hauing offended God by the murther which hee had committed, his wil was good, that GOD who was the ſtronger ſhoulde haue left him vnpuniſhed. And ſeeing that he coulde not ſhunne the iudgement, nor flye the vengeance of God, he complaineth ſaying, my puniment is greater then I can wel beare. Wherein one may ſee that the conſcience of a man teacheth him, that one ought not to be reuenged ouer his enemy. And when Saule who was a wicked reprobate at diuers times iuſtifieth Dauid in that he had the power and opportunitie to reuenge himſelſe, and yet neuertheles had ſpared, him: he ſheweth vs that a man be he neuer ſo diſordinate hath witnes in his conſcience, that he ought not to reuenge himſelſe ouer his enemie according to his owne deſire and pleaſure. But although we haue ſuch natural light, yet neuertheles we are ſo peruerſe, that wee ſeeke to extinguiſh and quenche it. And therefore wee haue neede to be admoniſhed elſe howe, that is, by the woorde of the Lorde. Alſo for to ſhewe the right way of clemencie and peace to them which ſhewe themſelues tractable and eaſie to be taught and to make culpable and guiltie the proude and highminded, the furious and inraged, the Lord giueth vs many commaundements which haue beene heretofore alleadged, by the which hee ſheweth vs that it is not not lawful for a man to reuenge himſelſe, nor doe the like to him that hath offended him. He ſheweth it vs alſo by many examples of holy men, which haue bene before vs: and principally of Ieſus Chriſt our Sauiour, and we may and ought to beholde the charitie of God towardes vs which were his enemies, and yet aſmuch as in vs lyeth are his enemies, and prouoke him too anger by

Gen. 4.

1. Sam. 24. & 26.

ous

our ſinnes: for ſo much was he abſent from reuenging himſelfe on vs, that hee is come to ſeeke vs by his ſonne Ieſus Chriſt to reconcile vs to him, and make peace and aliance with vs, to the ende that wee ſhoulde not be loſt, but ſaued and kept vnto life euerlaſting. Then ſeeing wee haue ſo many commandementes and examples, let vs take heede that in al gentleneſſe and humanitie wee followe them. Otherwiſe if wee bee ſo rigorous or rather furious and mad, that we wil not recōcile our ſelues with our enemies, we ſhal haue for aduerſarie againſt vs the Lorde, which wil ſende vs into vtter darkeneſſe. *Mat.18.38* Nowe becauſe the effect of reuenge proceedeth from the heart, which is ill affectioned, and that the threatenings which proceed from the ſame, ſerue alſo to inflame it the more, for this cauſe Solomon ſeeketh not only to correct the effect, but alſo to reforme our tongues and lips, and to reſtraine them from al threatening woordes, ſaying, *Say not I wil doe to him as hee hath done to mee*. And if it bee not laweful to ſay ſo, it followeth wel that it is not lawful to doe ſo. But in this manner it may ſeeme at firſt bluſhe that Solomon giueth vs a doctrine contrary to the lawe of God, or more ſtraight, for it ſeemeth that the lawe permitteth vs to doe to our neighbours as they haue done to vs, and to recompence euery one according to his worke, according as it is written, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, foote for foote, bruſe for bruſe, wounde for wounde, murther for murther. *Exod.21.24* But the lawe ſpeaketh to iudges to whome it appertaineth to doe to the wicked, as they haue done to *Leuit.34.19* their neighbours, and recompence them according to their works, *Deut.19.25* and not to the parties to reuenge their owne iniuries. *Mat.5.58.* And as in the time of Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde, there haue beene falſe expoſitors of the lawe, whome hee rebuketh: Euen ſo wee ought to vnderſtande that Solomon hath done the lyke in his time, & hath ſpoken to the parties when he ſaith, *Say not, &c.* And not to iudges, & ſo he ſaieth nothing contrary to the lawe, and is not more rigorous then Moſes was. For he hath not taught that one ſhoulde reuenge himſelfe of his enemie, but that he ſhoulde aide him. *Exod.23.4.5*

30 *I paſſed by the field of the ſlouthful, and by the vineyard of the man voide of heart.*

Solomon cannot but hee muſt needs ſpeake oftentimes of the ſlouthful, to blame him, rebuke him, & threatẽ him, to the end that we ſhould remember it, and take inſtruction thereby to hate & deteſt the ſlouthful and ſluggiſh, and to be careful and diligent to doe euery one our owne buſineſſe. And to begin nowe to blame the ſlouthful, hee maketh himſelſe lyke to a man which goeth by the way, and in paſſing conſidereth howe the fieldes and vineyards are diſpoſed and ordered, and according to the order that hee findeth, enquireth whoſe is this or that. He ſignifieth the inquirie, when he affirmeth that it is by the *fielde of the ſlouthfull* and by *the vineyarde of the man voyde of heart* that hee paſſed. For a traueller cannot tel whoſe this or that is, vnleſſe hee haue made inquirie. He vſeth heere a repetition or expoſition: for *the ſlouthful* and *a man voyde of heart* is al one. For why a man is not at any time ſluggiſh, but becauſe he hath not courage to apply his buſineſſe. Moreouer we are here inſtructed, that we ought not to be haſtie to blame any one, but that to blame rightly it behoueth to haue ſeene or heard it by witneſſe worthy credit. Otherwiſe we ſhalbe raſh and ouerhaſty iudges and defamers. To blame the ſlouthful and man void of heart he telleth the order of his fielde and vineyarde, ſaying.

31 *And loe, it was al growne ouer with thornes, and nettles had couered the face therof, and the ſtone wal therof was broken downe.*

The ſlouthful, and man voide of heart is very worthy to be blamed, when he ſuffereth by his negligence & laſineſſe the good creatures of God to goe out of kinde, and, aſmuch as he can, maketh them vnfruiteful and profitleſſe. For God hath giuen the earth to the ſonnes of men, and hath appointed them to labour it continually, to the end that it may fructifie and be profitable to vs. The gift is marked. Gen. 1. ver. 28. 29. and Pſalme 115. ver, 16. The ordinance is written. Gen. 8. ver. 22. And ſo with negligence there is alſo contempt, when we apply not our ſelues according to Gods ordinance. There is alſo ingratitude, when we vſe not the creatures that God hath giuen vs, with acknowledgement, & thanksgiuing, which thing the ſlouthful doe, when they let thornes and nettles growe in their fields and vineyardes, and giue them ouer to wilde beaſtes.

As Solomon ſignifieth it by the *breaking downe of the wal.* Therefore when wee ſee that Solomon blameth the ſlouthful, *For the thornes and nettles which had couered, &c.* Wee haue to note, that although the earth bee curſed through mans occaſion: yet neuertheleſſe man is not forbidden, to ſeeke to ſhunne this curſe by *Gen.3.17.*
toyle and diligence, but hee is commanded to trauel, and bleſſing is promiſed him, if he labour, in obaying the voice of the Lorde. It is meete alſo that the man which ſeeth the diſorder in the field & vineyarde of the *ſlouthful* and *man voide of hearte,* that is to ſay, *Leuit.26.*
in his goods and eſtate, conſider and way the ruine and deſolation, *Deut.28. 8.*
to the end he may take heed not to imitate the ſlouthful, but learne *Pſalm.12. 8.*
to bee better aduiſed, and apply himſelfe to his buſineſſe. Solomon teacheth vs by his example that wee ought to doe ſo, when hee telleth vs what he did, ſaying,

32 *Then I beheld, and conſidered it wel: I looked vpon it, & receaued inſtruction.*

When hee is not content to ſay, *I behelde:* but addeth, *And conſidered it wel and looked vpon it:* He ſheweth that to bee well taught to take care and diligence, it behooueth to conſider attentiuely and neerely, the deſolation, which is in the eſtate of the ſlouthful, and voide of heart, to the end we be not partakers of their ſlouth, laſineſſe, and negligence, and that wee praiſe them not nor flatter them in any caſe, but that wee reprehende them, ſhewing them whence the deſolation commeth that is in their goods and eſtate: as Solomon doeth ſaying.

33 *Yet a little ſleepe, a little ſlumber, and a little foulding of the handes to ſleepe.*

Hee rebuketh the ſlouthful, flouting them, and ſpeaking according to their opinion and phãtaſie. For although the ſlouthful ſleepe too much, yet he hath neuer ſlept ynough, neither ſpeaketh hee of any thing but to ſleepe a little, when he hath no wil to awake. Solomon expreſſing the wordes and phantaſie of the ſlouthful, ſheweth alſo very plainly that he ſleepeth too much, and that the deed is not according to the worde for hee is not content to ſay, *yet a little ſleepe*. But he multiplyeth the woordes and ſaieth one thing three times, vnder diuers phraſes of ſpeech. And heerein he rebuketh the ſlouthful ſharply of his too much ſleepe: and threateneth him afterwards with pouertie, which ſhal come ſodainely vpon him, and hee ſhall not withſtand it, ſaying.

34 *So thy pouertie commeth walking on: And thy neceſſitie as an armed man.*

Although he haue attributed field & vineyard to the ſlouthful: yet neuertheleſſe becauſe he tilleth them not as hee ought: hee telleth him that he ſhal bee ouerpreſſed with ſodaine inexpected pouertie, the which is ſignified by this word *walking* or as a traueller, or wayfaring man: for hee ariueth, when no man thinketh on him. But it ſhal not bee only ſodaine, but alſo rude and rough, harde and very difficile to ouercome or eſcape, as Solomon ſignifieth by *an armed man*, or one wel appointed.

The xxv. Chapter.

1 T*Heſe alſo are parables of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Iuda copied out.*

God gaue commandements to the children of Iſrael to ſhewe them howe the king ought to gouerne himſelfe amongeſt them. *Deut.17.16* To the which commandements king Ezechias was obedient. Now amongſt theſe commandements he ſaieth: When hee ſhal ſit vppon the throne of his kingdome, then hee ſhall write for himſelfe this lawe *2.Kin.18.3* in a booke by the ſacrifiſers Leuites, &c. *Deu.17.18.19* Wherefore we may vnderſtande that the men of Ezechias whereof mention is made heere, were of the Leuitical ſacrificers which were careful to inſtruct and teache the king Ezechias. And to doe this, they gathered him togither therin a booke the ſentences which were heere and there diſperſed, and put them in order, according to the authors out of whome they were drawen: and amongeſt others they haue put the prouerbs of Solomon which folowe, to the former, to make thereof a booke. Wherein we may ſee two things: the firſt, what kings ought to learne and followe of their predeceſſours, to wit, good doctrine after the which they may reforme their manners as they ought, in all holineſſe and iuſtice, and not to regarde their worldly pompes, and carnall magnificencies, neither their pryde and haughtineſſe, nor their vanities and follie. The ſecond, that about them they haue ſkilful men, which may bee careful to ſearche the ſcripture, and that they expounde it in ſuch good order and faſhion that it may bee eaſie to the hearers which are ready to bee taught and profite therein. And theſe two things heere appertaine principally to Princes and Magiſtrates which beare the name of Chriſtians, and ſay they are reformed to the Goſpel. As wee may ſee, when there is expreſſe mention made heere that Ezechias which had ſuch men, was King of Iuda, that is to ſay, of the people of God.

2 *The glorie of God is to conceale a word: but the Kings honour is to ſearch out a word.*

The worldly wiſe men deſire greatly to be knowne, to the end to be in honour and worſhip. And to come to this, they make their workes to ſhyne, and as much as they can poſſibly, giue a faire ſhew to their ſpeeche and wordes: and al to darken the glorie of GOD, which they haue in contempt and deriſion, & are enemies & aduerſaries theretoo. Yet God ſheweth not himſelfe to the eye what hee is, as Eſaie pronounceth it. Truely thou art a God which hydeſt thy ſelfe. *Eſa.45.15.* For he exempteth not the wicked from his vengeance, and yet neuertheles he executeth it not preſently, alſo he fruſtrateth not his choſen of their promiſes, although he accompliſh thē not ſo ſoone as they would. But he diſſembleth, letting the wicked floriſhe and proſper, and ſending afflictions to the iuſt, reſeruing to himſelfe that which hee hath determined euerlaſtingly, to put it in effect at his time appointed without change of purpoſe. And this is for his glorie that he doth ſo: keeping himſelf as it were couert and in ſilence. Solomon pronounceth it ſo when he ſaith, *The glorie of God,&c.* And this is as though he ſaide. Becauſe that God is ſtil and diſſembleth, and it ſeemeth to the wicked that hee is deafe and blinde, or that there is no God as they ſay in their hearts. For this cauſe they deſpyſe him, and as much as they can, bring him to reproche, yea to nothing if it were poſſible for them. But we ſeeing and knowing his bountie and patience, by the which hee inuiteth vs to repentance, to the end that wee periſhe not, wee haue to cal vpon and glorifie him with Dauid. For the riches are great, which thou haſt reſerued for them which feare thee, &c. And albeeit God by his eternal purpoſe (which cannot bee but iuſt) is ſilent and diſſembleth for a time, yet neuertheleſſe kings and gouernours of the earth which are his lieftenants, cannot, nor ought not to ſearche their glorie in deferring iudgement, but rather their honour is and ſhalbe to make diligent inquiſition of things, to the end that they may readily doe iuſtice and iudgement, according as God hath commanded them by his woorde. Solomon wel ſheweth it them, when he ſaith, *But the kings honour, &c.* Wherein hee ſheweth that the kings of the earth are worthy of contempt & rebuke, for in ſteede of *ſearching out a worde*, that is to ſay, of being careful and vigilant to doe their duetie and office, they are aſleepe. And if they wake it is not to looke to that which they haue to do: ſo that men may rightly complaine of them. Al their watchings are blinde: they knowe nothing: they are al dumbe dogs, &c. He ſheweth alſo that falſe witneſſe, as much as in them lyeth, depriue kings and men that do iuſtice, & of honor: for they let them to ſearch out *the worde*, when in ſteede of veritie they witneſſe vntrueth. Moreouer ſeeing we ought to honour our Kings, Princes, and ſuperiours, Solomon ſheweth vs that we ought to bee careful to let them vnderſtand the trueth, and not to hyde it from them in no caſe, eſpecially when there is queſtion of mainteining the honour of God, the peace and quietneſſe of the iuſt and innocent. If Kings and their ſubiects wil wel ſearche out the worde, it behooueth them to bee careful to reade, heare, and meditate the doctrine of Moſes, of the Prophetes and Apoſtles, the which is hidden to the ſage and prudent of this world. Thus doing they procure the honour and glorie of God, and he wil honour them as he hath promiſed.

Pſal.31.20.
Iſa.56.10.
Mat.11.25.
1.Cor.1.18.
1.Sam.2.30.

3 The

Michal Cope vppon
The Prouerbs
Of Solomon

3 *The heauens in height,& the earth in deepeneſſe,& the kings heart can no man ſearche out.*

Although the heauens and the earth be thinges viſible and palpable: yet neuertheles the heauens are ſo high, and the earth ſo profound, that if all the men which euer were, were aſſembled together to ayde one another to reach vp to the heauens, and digge or make a hole to goe through the earth, to knowe how high the heauens are, and howe deepe the earth is: yet they coulde haue no ſure knowledge thereof. For they could not mount to the heauens, nor diſcend from the one ſide of the earth to the other. Eſay willing to *Eſa.40.12.* exalt and magnifie the puiſſance of God, attributeth to him, that there is none, but he alone, that can meaſure theſe thinges, ſaying, Who is he that hath meaſured the waters with his hand, and hath compaſſed the heauens with his palme? Solomon pronounceth the ſame now, when he ſaith,

The heauens in height, and the earth in deepenes, and the kinges heart.&c. Not that it is his principall intent to ſhew, that there is none but God, which can meaſure the highnes of the heauens and the depth of the earth: but he compareth the hearte of kinges, princes, and ſuperiours of the earth to this highnes and deepenes, to ſhewe vs that it is not for vs to tempt and aſſay what the hearte of the king is, to make it condiſcend to our will and bee gouerned by vs. And alſo the hearte of a true king is ſo vpright, that one ſhal hardly bow it to wickednes and iniquitie, as Solomon hath ſayde elſewhere. *Prou.16.10. & 21.1.* And although there is none but God which ſoundeth the heartes of men, how great or little ſoeuer they be: yet neuertheles Solomon ſpeaketh heere principally of the heartes of kinges, and this for diuers reaſons. Firſt becauſe God maketh kings otherwiſe then they were when they were priuate perſons, as wee haue ſeene in Moſes, which was inſtructed in all wiſedome by the *Act.7.22.* Egyptians, and in Ioſua. *Deut.34.9.* One may ſee it alſo in the Iudges which were after Ioſua. It is alſo written, that Saul ſhould be changed into another man. *1.Sam.10.16*

Secondly becauſe they are the Lieſetenants of God, which boweth for no bodie. Alſo they ought not to ſuffer that one ſhoulde

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ſearche their hearts to make them incline to another mans wil, for their inclination woulde bee farre more dangerous then a priuate perſons. Thirdly, becauſe that ſubiectes ought to beare ſuch reuerence to their ſuperiours, that they ſhoulde not once thinke, to turne the hearte of their ſuperious to their appetite, but that they leaue it to God, praying him to diſpoſe it as hee ſhal ſee good. Fourthly, becauſe that when magiſtrates ſuffer not their heartes to bee ſearched, for to bee turned from right and equitie, but that they feare to offende the Lorde, and are afraide that God wil vſe them as the inſtrumentes of his yre: as hee hath done with Pharao and the Kings of the Aſſirians and Babylonians. And as he doeth nowe with the Pope, and Kings and Princes which obay him, to perſecute and murther the poore faythful. Then the ſubiects alſo ſhal learne to feare the Lorde, and for his ſake to obay their ſuperiors, whome they ſee to bee conducted by the prouidence of God, and knowe that if they haue no feare and reuerence towardes God and their magiſtrates, that they ſhal not eſcape the iudgemēt of him who gouerneth the heartes of the magiſtrates.

4 *Take the droſſe from the ſiluer, and there ſhal proceede a veſſel for the finour.*

This preſent ſentence woulde bee litle account made of, if wee ſhould ſay that Solomō taught the finour, how he ought to diſpoſe and purifie the ſiluer to make ſome peece of worke thereof. And therefore note wee that the holy ſcripture tranſferreth the names of things vnſenſible, to creatures which haue ſenſe and reaſon. And ſometimes it vſeth ſimilitudes and compariſons the better to imprint in our heartes (which are rude) the doctrine which is very profitable and neceſſarie for vs. As when he ſaieth, thy ſiluer is turned into droſſe, and thy wine is mingled with water. The Prophete calleth corrupt ſiluer the hypocrites. Likewiſe Ieremie tranſferreth the names of ſiluer and other mettalles to the people of Iſraell. And chiefly to the greateſt which woulde bee moſt eſteemed. And when Solomon ſaith,

Eſa.1.22.

Ier.6.28.29 30.

Take away the droſſe, &c. hee ſpeaketh by ſimilitude: for this ſentence with that which ſoloweth.

5 *Take away the wicked from before the king, & his throne ſhalbe eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſſe.*

It is aſmuch as if Solomon ſhould ſay: As when the goldſmiths are careful to ſcumme and purifie their ſiluer, then they make ſubſtantial and pure worke, which cannot be founde fault withal: euen ſo when Kings, Princes, and Magiſtrates, are careful and vigilant to roote out the wicked, then they raigne peaceably ouer their ſubiectes which feare to offende them, or doe wrong or griefe one to another, and are carefull to yeelde euery one that which appertaineth to him in al trueth and righteouſneſſe. The Lorde ſhewed this wel when hee purged the worlde by the flood and ſubuerted Sodome and Gomorrha, and ſunke Dathan Core and Abyron. Hee gaue Moyſes well to vnderſtande that hee ought to roote out the wicked, when hee gaue many lawes and commandements, wherein hee expreſſed the puniſhement, which hee woulde that the wicked ſhoulde endure: And hath often appointed that the wicked ſhould be rooted out to the end that others hearing & ſeeing their puniſhmentes might learne to feare and reſtraine themſelues from the lyke wickedneſſe. Dauid wel vnderſtoode ſuch ordinances, and had good affection to ſolow them: as appeareth by the proteſtation which he maketh in the 101. Pſalme. Heere kings are taught cleerely how they ought not to ſpare the fire of puniſhment to purifie their ſubiectes thereby, to the ende they may bee as cleere as ſiluer from the droſſe. Alſo ſubiectes ought to let themſelues bee ordered by their ſuperiours, as the ſiluer is by the finour: & in no wiſe to murmur againſt the magiſtrates, for the puniſhmentes which they make, although they trouble their neereſt kinne. And as ſiluer, after one hath taken away his droſſe, is of no leſſe pryce, but more ſaleable: euen ſo a nation ought not to thinke themſelues diſhonored if one roote out of the wicked which are in the midſt of them. Note wee alſo that although it be ſaid,

Frō before the king, & that it is meete he haue good aſſiſtāce about him: yet notwithſtanding in that the care and wakeſulneſſe of the king ought to ſtretch throughout al his realme, he ought not to reſtraine it before him, in his preſence and ſight, but ſtretch it out ouer al his dominions and charges.

6 *Boaſt not thy ſelfe before the King, and ſtande not in the place of great men.*

Wee wil not abaſe our ſelues, but by our wils, wil naturally bee aduaunced, and appeare great, to the ende that by this meanes wee may maintaine our ſelues, and enioy our enterpriſes and attemptes. *Gen.3.& 6. & 11.* Adam woulde haue beene lyke to God. The giants got themſelues great renowme. The ſonnes of men, began a great building to purchaſe fame, and make themſelues mighty. *1.Sam.18.8* Saul ſeeing himſelfe deſpiſed, was angry, and to maintaine his greatneſſe, conſpired againſt Dauid. *2.Sam.15. 16.& 17.* Abſolon coueting after the Kingdome, wrought treaſon againſt Dauid his father. And al theſe heere haue thriued very ill with their ambition and pryde. And becauſe Solomon knewe wel that we feared the harmes, to the which yet neuertheleſſe we went not, but rather ran headlong as furious and enraged, by our raſhneſſe and boldneſſe, by our pryde and haughtineſſe of ſtomacke: for this cauſe hee ſeeketh to deſpoile vs, and withdrawe vs from al ambition, and induce vs to humilitie, and make vs loue it when he ſaith, *Boaſt not thy ſelfe, &c.* There is none of vs but naturally hee hath a Kings heart, worldly and carnal, which ſeeketh to bee praiſed, exalted, and redoupted: and wee ſtriue to preferre our ſelues before our neighbours, and couet to bee afore them in honour and glorie. Solomon thinketh not ſuch a nature to bee good, which is ſo ful of pryde and loftineſſe, and wil that wee preuent one another in honour, eſteeming euery one more excellent then our ſelues. He ſheweth vs this wel, when teaching vs in general to humble our ſelues towards our neighbours, he nameth *but kings & great men.* Becauſe thoſe are they which ought to be preferred aboue al men, & if we hũble not our ſelues vnto ſuch perſonages, we wil eaſily deſpyſe the others. For this cauſe we are admoniſhed to bee ſubiect to al humane order for God: beit to the King as a ſuperiour; or to gouernours, as ſent by him, &c. *1.Pet.2.13. 14.* There are very fewe that thinke wel of this that Solomon ſaith here, & thinke nothing better then to exalt thẽſelues, & ſtriue to make to make them ſelues fellowes with Kinges and great men of the earth. And it ſeemeth that if they ſhould recoyle, and playe the cowards and baſhful fellows, then men would make no more account of them then of ſots, and idiots. But to the ende wee reſemble not ſuch men, but like wel of this ſentence, to withdrawe vs eaſily from al ambition, pride, and arrogancie: Solomon ſheweth vs what it is that we ought to preferre & eſteeme as moſt profitable for vs, when he ſaith:

7 *For it is better that it be ſaide vnto thee, come vp hither: thē thou to be put lower in the preſence of the prince whom thine eyes haue ſeene.*

Here at firſt viewe it ſeemeth that Solomon teacheth vs onely a modeſt and humble ciuilitie, but in taking this ſentence ſo, we giue it not that excellencie that belongeth to it: wherefore we ought to vnderſtand, that vnder the word of humble ciuilitie, hee ſtriueth to print in our heartes the true ſpiritual humilitie, by the which wee are guided to humble behauiour, & modeſt countenance. Our lord Ieſus Chriſt doth the like. *Luk.14.7.* Neuertheles our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, nor Solomon condemne not the firſt places howe high ſoeuer they bee, but the ambitious affection: as the Euangeliſt ſheweth it wel, when hee ſaieth that Ieſus told the bidden gueſtes a ſimilitude: to beware howe they choſe the firſt place at the table, &c. Now to allegoriſate this ſentence otherwiſe by the Minor, it would be to no edificatiō. Let it ſuffice vs, that the holie Ghoſt inuiteth vs here to true humilitie, to the ende, that being lowly of heart in this world, we may be at laſt exalted, which thing we ſhal obtaine if we be of the ſame affection that the Publican was. *Luk.18.13*

8 *Goe not foorth haſtily to ſtrife, leſt thou know not what to doe in the ende therof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to ſhame.*

They that are haughtie of courage, doe quickly begin ſtrife with their neighbours. And therefore it may ſeeme, that to bring vs to concord, Solomon hath ſought to roote out of our hearts, pride and ambition, & to plant in them true humilitie, which cōſiſteth chiefly

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hauing God in great admiration and reuerence, we may feare him and obey his wil according to his woorde, and that wee lift not our ſelues vp againſt our neighbours, deeming our ſelues more excellent and worthie then they, that we be not folowers of the Phariſee. Solomon (I ſay) hauing tolde vs of ſuche humilitie, commeth by good order to ſpeake of concord, when he wil not that we ſtriue ſaying, *Goe not foorth haſtily to ſtriſe, &c.* Wherein hee deſcribeth vnto vs the manners of a ſtout and vnaduiſed man, and which hath too hotte a blood. They that are ſuche, hearing the leaſt word that is to their diſpleaſure, goe out into the ſtreete ſtraightway to ſcold and chide with their neighbour, or to areſt him to the law and trouble him. Of ſuch people the worlde is ful, as one may ſee daily, So that one may wel complaine of al nations, as Saint Paule did of the Corinthians. Brother hath proceſſe againſt brother, &c. Solomon deſcribeth alſo the perplexitie wherein they fal which are haſtie to ſtriſe vnaduiſedly: which is, that they whome they wiſhe yl too, are often Superiours, and obtaine the conqueſt: and ſo make theſe raſhe fellowes abaſhed, aſhamed, and confounded: ſo that they knowe not what they ſhal doe. In making ſuche diſcriptions, Solomon ſeeketh meanes to withdrawe vs from al mutinies, ſeditions, ſtriſes, and debates: for to bee put to ſhame is a thing which we feare: Not that it is the principal cauſe that ſhould withdrawe vs from being haſtie to ſtriſe. For the principal cauſe is, and ought to be the feare of the Lorde, and nexte, the charitie which we owe to our neighbours. But Solomon in this caſe ſpeaketh to vs as to men, which feare more their domage then God, and loue their worldly honour better then their neighbour. If wee wil wel ſhunne ſuche perplexitie and confuſion, let vs folow the counſel that Ieſus Chriſt giueth vs, Agree with thine aduerſarie quickly, whileſt thou art in the way with him.

1.Cor.6.6.7.

Mat.5.25.26.

9 *Debate thy cauſe with thy neighbour, & reueale not the ſecret of an other man.*

Men are naturally ſo hot of blood, and ſo cholerick and furious, that if it ſeeme them that their neighbour hath done thē any offēce, although it bee light and ſecrete, incontinently they rage in publike, and ſounde, as it were a Trumpet, to giue to vnderſtand to others that thoſe haue offended them greatly, and ſeeke not but to defame their neighbour, ſowing wordes of reproch here & there againſt him. And becauſe this dealing is contrarie to humanitie, which wee ought to haue in great eſtimation: For this cauſe Solomon willing to moderate our choler, admoniſheth vs, that if wee haue to do with our neighbor about controuerſie, we ſhal talk therof with him, & ſeeke to make an end of it, the ſecretlieſt that we cã, without calling witneſſe to vs, and that we diſcouer not the imperfection, & falt of our neighbor, til we haue firſt talked of it betwene vs and him, & ſought to remedie it ſecretly. Solomon (I ſay) admoniſheth vs this ſame, ſaying, *Debate thy cauſe, &c.* Wherto agreeth the ſaying of our Lorde: But if thy brother haue offended thee, goe and rebuke him ſecretly betweene thee and him. Take yee heede. If thy brother haue offended thee, rebuke him, and if he repent, pardõ him, &c: & this agreeth with the law, Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, Correct thy neighbour, & ſuffer not ſinne vpon him. We could not ſo guide our ſelues, if wee were not gentle, gratious, and merciful. And therfore to obey Solomon, or rather Ieſus Chriſt wel, it behooueth vs to mortifie, diſpoile, and cloath: as ſaint Paul admoniſheth vs in diuers places. Mortifie therefore your members which are earthly, &c.

Mat. 18. 15.
Luk. 17. 3. 4.
Leuit. 19. 17.
Col. 3. 5.

10 *Leſt happily, he that heareth it, put thee to ſhame: and that thine infamie doe not ceaſe.*

Some thinke they get great honour in reuealing an other mans ſecret, that is to ſay, they creepe into reputation by defaming their neighbour, and complaine of him to an other man of ſome ſecret offence, or which is none at al, as it commeth oftentimes to paſſe, that the accuſers, and they which complaine, doe the moſt wrong. But it happeneth (as good reaſon it ſhould) that in ſteed of getting honor therby, he that heareth the accuſation or complaint, knoweth quickly that it is without cauſe that the accuſer complayneth. And therfore he that ſits in audience, blameth him, as hee wel deſerueth: and the accuſer getteth a marke or blotte to him ſelfe, which endureth and can not bee defaced: and they that know him wel, take him for a lyer, talebearer, and backbiter, & wil cal him ſo, as Solomõ

ſignifieth

ſignifieth it by the *ſhame and infamie which wil not ceaſe*, when he ſaieth, *Leſt happily,&c.* Hee ſaieth namely, peraduenture, or *happily*, regarding firſt the opinion of the accuſer: who thinketh that men wil hold his words for true, and deemeth it a great hap if his malice be diſcouered, and hee haue blame and infamie thereby. Regarding ſecondly, that it is verie harde to change cuſtome, chiefly when it is wicked. Nowe the cuſtome is ſuch throughout al the world, that they take pleaſure to heare yl ſpeeches of their neighbours, and that flatterers, lyers, & backbiters, are the beſt welcome. And ſo it is great happe if they bee rebuked and defamed. They which ſlandered Dauid vnto Saule, were welcome, and more eſteemed then hee. But the holie Ghoſt which heareth them, knoweth wel howe to rebuke them, by the ſcripture, and to put them to ſhame, and infamie, which ſhal neuer be aboliſhed. And ſo if backbiters bee not diſcouered by men, God can wel diſcouer them at time conuenient.

11 *A worde ſpoken in his due place, is like apples of gold, with pictures of ſiluer.*

If any man ſeeke to garniſhe his ſpeeche, to pleaſe and bring profite and delight to an other man, he for whō, and at whoſe pleaſure this man ſpeaketh, wil ſay, that his neighbour hath a golden tongue, and that his ſpeech pleaſeth him as wel as a iewel of golde, bedecked with white ſiluer. If amongſt worldlings, words be of ſuch price, by farre more reaſon we ought greatly to eſteeme of the word of God, which is purely and faithfully adminiſtred to vs, and ſhould take great delight therin. Solomon ſheweth vs it, when he ſaieth, *A word ſpoken in his due place*, or order, or vpon his wheeles (as Solomons language is) *is like apples of gold,&c.* I knowe that one might applye this ſentence to al purpoſes which are ſpoken of, as it appertaineth of what matter ſoeuer they be. But when hee ſaieth, Bleſſed is hee that hath his affection ſet on the lawe of the Lord, and meditateth it day and night. Wee ſhoulde not fynde a worde ſo well ſpoken in his due place, or vpon his wheeles, as the woorde of the Lorde. And therefore with Solomon wee will compare it to *Apples of Golde, with pictures of ſiluer:*

not that the woorde diuine exceedeth not farre al the fayreſt, and moſt precious thinges of the worlde: but the ſcripture applyeth it ſelfe to our rudeneſſe, to leade vs as it were by the hande, to take a taſte and delight in the worde of God: the which in other thinges is compared to golde, ſiluer, and precious ſtones. If one wil take here *the worde*, for that which is proper to pacifie quarels betweene one neighbour and an other, without publiſhing them, the ſenſe ſhalbe verie conuenient, and not contrarie to that which hath bene ſaide. For there is no worde more fit to pacifie ſtrifes, then the worde of the Lorde, or that which is conformable thereto.

12 *Hee that reprooueth the wiſe and the obedient eare: is as a golden earing, and an ornament of fine golde.*

Earinges or pendentes of golde, were in olde time in vſe with maidens and women, and alſo other iewels of golde, and pleaſed them, & (as they thought) became them wel: as may be ſeene, when Rebecca was readie to receiue the earinges of golde that Abrahams man put before her face. And at this day, alſo maydens and women which are curious to be ſeene, take delight to weare precious ornamentes, and thinke them ſelues gaie, when they ſhine in golde and ſilkes, and when they be preciouſly and pompeouſly apparelled. And they loue ſuche ornamentes ſo wel, that they are verie careful in keeping them: and if they haue power & libertie, they wil gather abundance of them. We ſay not this, to the praiſe of women and maydens, nor to allowe that which they doe in this caſe. For Saint Paule and Saint Peter rebuke them. But if women bee ſo deſirous to decke them ſelues outwardly, it behoooueth vs to bee verie readie to receiue inwarde ornamentes to decke and beautifie our ſelues: which is, that in al obedience, wee lende our eares to them which inſtruct vs in the worde of the Lorde, by the which they admoniſhe and inſtruct, argue, and reprehende vs, to make vs more faire and pleaſant before our God. Let vs take pleaſure in ſuch perſons, and eſteeme our ſelues wel iewelled, when the Lorde putteth before our face ſuch earinges. To do this wel, we ought to renounce al follie, for they which are giuen thertoo, deſpiſe al counſel,

Gen. 24. 22

1. Tim. 2. 9.

1. Pet. 3. 3.

and reiect al correction and inſtruction, as is ſaide here aboue in diuers places. And it behoooueth vs to embrace wiſedome, the which maketh vs attentiue to correction, & procureth vs to loue it. Thus doing, wee ſhalbe decked and adorned verie gorgiouſly: as Solomon ſignifieth it, when he ſaieth, *He that reproooueth, &c.* The wiſe man which giueth eare to obey corrections and reprehenſions, maketh great account of him which reproooueth him, and thinketh him wel garniſhed and adorned therby. And (as hath bin ſeene) hee loueth him which reproooueth him, & becommeth ſage thereby, and groweth vp in doctrine. Wherefore let vs neuer think our ſelues ſo wiſe, but men may finde wherin to reproooue vs: chiefly if we bee wiſe, we wil acknowledge that we are wel worthie of rebuke. Not that I wil ſay, that wiſe men commit crimes wittingly, but they offend by infirmitie. Wherof perceiuing them ſelues guiltie, they ſuffer willingly to be reproooued, and take pleaſure therein, thinking it a great honour to do ſo. They reſiſt not by murmuring and deſpight, they brag not themſelues to be honeſt men, as do the foliſh & wicked, who riſe vp againſt them, which ſeeke to decke them with earings and ſpiritual iewels of ſapience: whoſe marchandiſe is better then the marchandiſe of ſiluer: and her reuenue, then fine gold. Pro.9.8.9. Pro.3.14.15

13 *As the cold of ſnow in the time of harueſt, ſo is a faithful meſſenger to them that ſend him: for hee refreſheth the ſoule of his maiſtreſſe.*

Pro.13.17. A faithful meſſenger hath bin ſpoken of elſwhere: notwithſtanding, Solomon letteth not to treate of it now againe, & to ſhew vs, what we ought to be in our charges and commiſſions, and what we ought to do therin, and whereto to attende. For there is none of vs but he is a meſſenger: not that the charges or commiſſions are all alike, for ſome haue more power then ſome. And to ſhewe vs this ſame, he ſetteth before vs thoſe meſſengers or Embaſſadours which ſerue their maiſters faithfully, & by this meanes giue them matter of ioy, and content them ſo, that they repoſe themſelues wholy vpon thē. And hee compareth thē to the *cold of ſnow*, which wintereth the corne that is in the ground, and commeth in ſuch a ſeaſon that it maketh it to proſper: ſo that the harueſt folowing is fertile and abundant. Or alſo (which ſeemeth more conuenient) he compareth them to colde which commeth in harueſt time, much like to the cold of ſnowe to refreſh them which reape and labour in a whote region: ſuch colde is a greate recreation, for it maketh that they which trauel, are not altered, ſurfeited, nor choked vp with the great heate. And it is not without cauſe that he maketh ſuch a compariſon, for they which doe their meſſage faythfully, doe keepe their maiſters which ſende them from great griefe and from al vexation, and aſmuch as they can, yeelde them matter of recreation. As wee knowe that it is a great pleaſure to a Gentleman, when hee hath ſeruantes that execute wel the charge that is committed to them. Nowe wee are al meſſengers and Embaſſadours of our God, who hath called vs into his familie, & ſendeth vs as he thinketh good, & giueth vs a charge which he wil that we execute. Not that we haue al publike charge, as kings & ſuperiors of the earth, nor as Paſtors & miniſters of the Church, which are the principal meſſengers, as hath bene ſaid aboue: But the Lord ſendeth vs to our neighbors, giuing vs charge that we haue care one ouer another, according to the talent which he hath put into our hands. If we execute our charge faythfully, we ſhalbe to him as the cold of ſnowe in the Harueſt. Not that we can doe any thing to recreate or reioice him, but he alone of his bountie reioyceth, and delighteth himſelf, when in vprightneſſe of heart we ſeeke to execute our charge faythfully.

14 *He that boaſteth of falſe liberalitie, is lyke cloudes, and winde without raine.*

When men ſee cloudes driuen by the winds, they looke that they ſhal haue raine, but it chaunceth ſometimes that none at all falleth, and ſo they looſe their expectation: Euen ſo when men ſee any one which is franke of his promiſes, they hope to obtaine the ſame of him. But they are very often deceiued, and prooue that the greateſt promiſers are *cloudes & wind without raine*. They are rich and liberal in promiſes, but there is no effect folowing, and ſo they boaſt themſelues falſly and are of no profite. They are content to beare a fayre face, and make men gape after them, and holde them in hope of thinges. Thoſe which are ſuch, not onely are vaine, as cloudes which are without water, but alſo hurtefull, as the winde which dryeth the earth, ſucking his humor without ſending

him any againe, but making it yawne for thirſt and dryneſſe. The
captaine of ſuch men is the Diuel, and of him they haue learned to
Gen.3. boaſt themſelues falſly. Adam wel prooued the boaſting of the Di-
1.Kings.22. uel to be falſe. Likewiſe Achab and Ioſaphat haue prooued it, after
that they had beleeued falſe Prophetes, by whoſe mouth the Diuel
Mat.4.9. ſpake. The Diuel ſent cloudes, and winde without raine, when hee
Luke.4.6. promiſed our Lorde and Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt to giue him al the
kingdomes of the world, and boaſted that al the glorie thereof was
his. We ſee then that they which brag of things which thy neither
wil nor can do, are ſuppoſts of the Diuel, who is a lyer & the father
Iohn.8.44. of lyes. Alſo as the cloudes & wind without raine vaniſh away, &
come to nothing: euen ſo theſe greate boaſters ſhal periſh with the
Diuel their father. For, Thou ſhalt deſtroy al them that ſpeake lyes:
Pſal.5.7. and chiefly when the lye is in ſlaunder. As is the falſe doctrine of the
Papiſtes, which teache of free wil, and merites, and other abhomi-
nable lyes, & promiſe that by this meanes men ſhal win paradice &
obtaine life eternal. Their deſtruction is plainly ſhewed thẽ. Wher-
2.Pet.2.3. fore we ought to take great heed of al falſe boaſting. And principally
of things which are to come which are to vs vncertaine, & of them
wee ſhoulde make no promiſe, but at Gods good wil and pleaſure.
Alſo of things which are preſent with vs, if wee wil ſhewe libera-
litie, let vs doe it in ſecret, without oſtentation or vaine ſhew, euen
as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath taught vs. Laſt of al let vs vnderſtand,
that the holy Ghoſt teacheth vs heere to loue one another in deede
and trueth, as alſo we are admoniſhed thereof in Iohn.
1 Iohn.3.18.

15 *A Prince is pacified by the ſtaying of anger: and a ſofte tongue breaketh the bones.*

Albeeit the anger of kings and greate men of the earth, bee
Pro.16.14. meruelloufly to bee feared becauſe of their highneſſe and power,
& 19.14. and that men hardly eſcape it, and with greate difficultie and
& 20.2. danger: yet neuertheleſſe if one ſhewe himſelfe ſage before
Pro.16.19. them, hee may pacifie them, and in ſteede of beeing har-
med, finde pleaſure and vtilitie. Nowe to ſhewe ones ſelfe wiſe,
it behoou eth him to put of an angry and furious hearte, which is

ſeditious and arrogant, hautie and rebellious, and not to bee eaſie, nor haſtie to ſhew his anger nor wrath, to riſe vp againſt his prince, or doe damage, hurt, or violence to his neighbours. If wee haue ſuch wiſdome and diſcretion to deferre and ſlack our anger, we ſhall finde grace at our princes handes, ſo that they ſhal refraine their great anger, and bee induced to vſe beneuolence. Solomon hath ſhewed this aboue, and yet nowe againe hee ſheweth it when he ſaith,

Pro.14.29 & 16.32. & 19.11.

A Prince is pacified, &c. Yea though hee bee very obſtinate, and hardened in his anger, yet one ſhall winne him by faire words, as Solomon ſignifieth it ſaying, *And a ſoft tongue breaketh the bones.* This is agreeable to that which is ſaide: A ſoft anſwere appeaſeth anger, &c. This hath beene proued by Dauid and Saul, and Dauid and Abigael. Meanewhile this is not to ſay that one ought to ſeeke by faire wordes to turne away wrath of kinges and greate men of the earth, which is and ought to bee kindeled againſt the wicked to doe vengeance on them: for this ſhoulde bee to reſiſt the ordinance of God, but we ought to be of ſo peaceable, humble, and obedient a life, that we may winne the harts of our ſuperiours: and alſo it is needeful for vs to turne them awaye from al tyranny & crueltie, & that we keepe them frõ animating themſelues againſt other Princes their neighbours, by good admonitiõs and forewarninges, ſo to mainteine peace, and to liue vnder them in reſt and quietneſſe. And if wee ought to bee ſo heedy, to yeelde our ſelues obedient, and humble to men, by a farre more ſtrong reaſon wee ought to take heede to deſpite, or murmure againſt our God which is our ſoueraigne Prince: for it is an horrible thing to fal into his handes. Neuertheleſſe his anger is not ſo harde, but it may bee broken by a ſoft tongue, if with an affectionate hearte we yeeld him praiſe, prayers, and thankes giuing, with confeſſion of our faultes & offences, acknowledging that we are wicked, and that hee alone is iuſt: as the auncient fathers afore vs haue doone, to turne away the wrath of the Lorde both from them, and from their neighbours. And amongſt others, Daniel. Chap. 9.

Pro.15.1

1.Sam.26. & 25.

Rom.13.

16 *Haſt thou founde hony? Eate that is ſufficient for thee: leaſt thou be ouer ful, and vomit it.*

God hath giuen vs, al meate to vſe indifferently with thankes giuing, which thing gluttons and drunkardes cannot doe, who are not content to take ſufficient, but deuoure and ſwalowe ſuche abundance thereof, and with ſuche exceſſe, that they almoſt burſt therewith, and are conſtrained often to caſt their gorge: and which worſe is, looſe both ſenſe and vnderſtanding, as is dayly proued: and ſo they cannot acknowledge the goods which come from God, too giue him thankes for the ſame, as belongeth to him, wherfore to the ende that wee be not vnthankeful for the benefites which God beſtoweth vpon vs, let vs vſe it with temperance and ſobrietie, and be very circumſpect that we take not too much delight in the goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe of the meate, to cauſe vs to abuſe the good creature of God, in vſing the ſame exceſſiuely. Solomon vnder the name of hony as it ſeemeth, admoniſheth vs of this ſame, when he ſaith,

Haſt thou found hony, &c. This ſenſe is not impertinent, & conteineth good and neceſſary doctrine: for there is no meate ſo good but it hurteth vs, and waſteth & deſtroyeth vs, if we take too much thereof. If one fill himſelfe ouer ful, he is hurt thereby: for the ſtomacke is greeued therewith, and the vnderſtanding (which is worſt of al) is ouer laden and dulled. And ſo he is in worſe eſtate then bruite beaſtes, who eating and drinking their fill, yet looſe not their natural ſenſe which God hath giuen them: If men vomit, the meate and drinke is loſt. And ſo gluttons and drunkards deſtroy thẽ ſelues, and worke deſtruction, and in this maner they waye not God as they ought to doe. For not onely they deſtroy the goods which hee hath created for the vſe of man, but alſo in as much as in them lyeth they deface and aboliſh the image of god. But it ſeemeth to be more conuenient to ſay that Solomon ſpeaketh by ſimilitude, and that the ſecond part of the ſame followeth, when he ſaith:

17 *Withdrawe thy foote from thy neighbours houſe, leaſt he bee weary of thee, and hate thee.*

Now the ſenſe of the ſimiltude is ſuch, as if one ſaide, as hony hath a ſweete taſt, and therefore men delight to eate it, and giue it entrie into their bodies: yet neuertheleſſe if one eate more thereof then is needeful, he ouerchargeth his ſtomacke, and is forced to vomit,Euen ſo,although it ſeemeth that thy neighbour liketh of thee, and that he taketh pleaſure to haue thee familiarly conuerſant with him,yet neuertheleſſe take heede to bee importunate vpon him, & to trouble him at vnconuenient houres, and too often, for feare leaſt he be weary of thee,and in ſteed of louing thee,fal to hate thee: and for a freend,become an enimie. As then,it behooueth that in al ſobrietie and temperance we vſe meate and drinke,howe good & ſweete ſoeuer it bee: euen ſo what amitie and familiaritie we haue with our neighbours,and though they declare both in wordes & deedes to bee at our commandement,yet let vs take heede to be curious inquirers of their eſtate,and not to binde on them as farre as our appetite biddeth vs, as if that which they haue were ours to diſpoſe at our pleaſure.Such ouer boldnes engendreth hate and enmitie, wherof proceed ſtrife and debate,diſſention,and ſedition,by the which one is often forced to caſt his gorge, & leaue that which he hath taken vnaduiſedly. Wherfore one may wel cal the Anabaptiſts authours of ſedition,troublers of peace, and deſtroyers of charitie, when they would haue al goods to be common. One may alſo cal them blaſphemers, when they ſpeake againſt the holie Ghoſt, who hath ſaide by Solomon, *Withdrawe thy foote, &c.* For if al things be cōmō, it is lawful to enter euerie where, & to vſe al things at ones pleaſure,and there would be no theeues: and ſo that would be in vaine which God hath ſaid, Thou ſhalt not be a thiefe. Let vs not thinke that it is laweful to enter into our neighbours houſe at our pleaſure,no although they haue ſomewhat of ours,and that we would fetch it away,or haue a pledge for the ſame. Know we therefore that we are here taught that we ought to ſpare our neighbour, & not thruſt our ſelues forth to inquire of his dooings, nor to vſe his goods at our pleaſure,be he neuer ſo much our friend. Our dutie is to let him be maiſter within himſelf, & vſe his goods as he liſt priuately,as we would do ours. By this meanes amitie ſhalbe maintained,and we ſhal liue in peace one with another. Hereby one may conclude that they which ſmel and ſeeke out good cheere,and tarie not til they bee bidden, but haue the face to preſent themſelues and ſit downe at anothers mans table, are not afraide to bee hated: it is ynough for them to ſatiſfie their bellies. Of the number of which are the begging fryers, to whome the worlde

Deut.24.10. 11.

is bounden as they thinke. And therfore they are importunate too aske, and goe not away for two or three biddinges, but thinke that men doe them wrong to deny them that which they aske.

18 *A man that anſwereth againſt his neighbour as a falſe witneſſe, is like a hammer, a ſworde, and a ſharp arrowe.*

Pro.6.19.& 12.17.& .14. 5.25.

Solomon hath already often treated of the falſe witneſſe, hee hath ſhewed partly the frowardneſſe of the falſe witneſſe, and threatned him deſtruction, the which he wel deſerueth, as hath bin largely declared, And becauſe it hath bene but partly, that hee hath declared his frowardneſſe, and that it is verie needeful to knowe it better, to the ende to vnderſtande that they periſhe not without cauſe, and that wee may haue them in more diſdaine, now he ſetteth out their crueltie more plainly. And to do this ſame, he nameth the witneſſe by circumlocution, calling him, *A man that anſwereth, &c.* Wherein we haue firſt to note, that although in the ſcripture, *to anſwer*, is taken oftẽ for to ſpeake, not being asked nor prouoked by other wordes: notwithſtanding one may ſay, that in this place Solomon hath regarded that falſe witneſſes to make their wordes be taken, come not to ſpeake before the Iudge, vntil they be called by oath. Secondly let vs note, that it is ſaide expreſſiuely, *Againſt his neighbor*, becauſe the intent of the falſe witneſſe, is to hurte his equals, either in goods or in good name, or in his body or in al the three, and hath not God in his minde: and yet neuertheleſſe he that anſwereth againſt his neighbour, tyeth himſelf to God, & riſeth vp againſt him, to bring him to nothing if it were poſſible. Solomõ ſignifieth it when he calleth him *a falſe witneſſe*. For ſeeing he forſweareth himſelfe, he maketh God the author of lyes, and depriueth him of his trueth (as much as in him is) without the which God cannot conſiſt, & ſo there is great boldnes & temeritie in the falſe witneſſe, whẽ he wrongeth not man only, but God himſelf alſo who hath al power, whome it is vnpoſſible to reſiſt. Hee expreſſeth afterwards his crueltie, making him lyke to three inſtruments with the which men do many murthers: for *the hammer* breaketh the bones ſhiuering thẽ into peeces heere & there: *The ſworde* cutteth and giueth great woundes in the fleſhe: *The ſharpe arrowe*, pearceth deepe, and cannot bee eaſily drawne out, but the iron wil remaine in the body. And ſo the falſe witneſſe hath a tongue very ſoft it ſeemeth, and which is not other in apparance, but that, which ſpeaketh trueth, but it is very harde, very ſharpe, and very pearcing, when it murdereth and killeth the innocentes. It is not therefore without cauſe that the Apoſtle Saint Iames complaineth of the tongue.

Nowe when Solomon accuſeth the falſe witneſſe of ſuch cruelty hee ſheweth that he is worthie of death: for he that ſheedeth another mans blood, his blood ſhalbe ſhed. Then ſeeing wee wil bee neither thought murderers, nor be murdered, let vs learne to ſpeake trueth and flie from lying. *Iam.3,6.7.8* *Gen.9.6.*

19 *Confidence in an vnfaithfull man in the time of trouble, is like a broken tooth, and a ſliding foote.*

They that haue broken teeth eate not as they woulde, and as neceſſitie requireth: but if they be an hungred, languiſhe, and cannot remedie themſelues according to their deſire. Likewiſe a lame man which is weake of his feete, cannot goe lightly nor ſoone diſpatch a long iourney, nor helpe another to paſſe it: for his feete are not ſtedfaſt, but ſlide, and lets them fal whome he thinketh to helpe. This is wel knowne by experience: neuertheleſſe, there is none ſo toothleſſe, but hee thinketh to feede wel if hee haue wherewithal, and there is none which hath ſo great deſire to goe, as the lame, and weake of foote, but often the toothles and lame, are both fruſtrate of their intent, and chiefly in their moſt neede, euen ſo when one truſteth *the vnfaithfull*: That is to ſay, thoſe which haue no feare of God, nor reuerence of his word, nor haue any affection of humanitie towardes their neighbours, nor make it no difficultie to lye & deceiue them, to hurt and betray them: when (I ſay) one hath confidence in ſuch wicked perſons, they eate not when they haue need, nor goe not when they ſhoulde goe, that is, they are fruſtrate of that which they looked for of them when they fal into tribulation: for they are like *a broken tooth*, and *a lame foote* in the time of neede. If they bee ſuch towardes their neighbours, it is no maruel ſeeing they are no more profitable to themſelues: for giuing themſelues to al deſpiſing of God, and al treaſon towardes their neighbours: for they promiſe them that they ſhal proſper, and bee without harme, and ſhal behaue themſelues valiantly againſt al aſſaultes. but they come to their purpoſe: for God breaketh their teeth, and maketh their feete ſlide, and ſtumble. If therefore the vnfaithful haue any confidence it is vaine, and if wee haue any in him, wee are abuſed. And ſo, it is the ſureſt way to truſt only in the Lorde.

Iob.4.8.9.10
Pſal.38.& 58.7.
Pſal.37.18.

20 *Hee that taketh away the garment in the colde ſeaſon, is like vineger powred vpon * Nitre, or like him that ſingeth ſongues to an heauie hearte.*

* of Alumme, or Sope.

When it is very colde, and wee wil keepe our bodies from harme, we put on clothes enough to keepe vs warme, and lay them not away willingly, for feare of catching colde, the which we cal the enimie of nature: for without taking away the garment, the colde being great, pearceth ſo that one feeleth it euen in his bones, as may bee ſeene when eche man trembleth thereat. And when men powre vineger vpon Alum or Nitre (which is vnknowne to vs) they melt it away, for it looſeth it hardneſſe. Alſo if any one haue an heauie hearte, hee hath no pleaſure to take paines to comfort him, but rather is vexed and greeued thereat the more, and chiefly if his hearte bee frowarde and malitious, and hee doe bite on the bridle, as one woulde ſay, and is diſpleaſed, and taketh it in yll that he is not come to the ende of his wicked enterpriſes, but is deſperat therewith. Or alſo when a poore conſcience is as it were ouerwhelmed with the iudgementes of GOD, and ſeeth nought but death and hel about him becauſe of his ſinnes. The more one ſeeketh to comfort ſuche men, the more they are greeued and vexed, and their ſorowe is augmented: for they neither wil nor can giue place in their mindes to any good woorde of conſolation as is ſeene by proofe. Notwithſtanding the intent of Solomon is not to forbid vs to comforte them which are afflicted in their heartes, by ſweete and pleaſant woordes : for God hath giuen vs his worde to the ende that we ſhoulde vſe it : for the conſolation of the ſad and ſorwful. The Lorde comforteth the afflicted by the preaching of his worde, when hee giueth efficacie to the admonitions, exhortations, and warninges, which are doone in his name. And when the wiſe inſtruct the ignorant, and that the ſtrong vpholde the weake, the riche helpe the neceſſitie of the poore, and thoſe that are in proſperitie haue compaſſion on them that ſuffer aduerſitie. Solomon therefore wil not keepe vs from taking care to comfort the miſerable and afflicted, neither giueth hee vs to vnderſtande, that conſolation is hurful vnto them : but hee meaneth that if ſeeing our neighbours in diſtreſſe, wee laugh at their miſery and reioyce and take pleaſure at it, whereas wee ought to weepe & haue compaſsion on them, and put our ſelues in paine to comforte them, wee reſemble thoſe which vncloth their neighbours, when it is colde wether, and which ſpill vineger vpon Sope and Nitre.

Eſay.40.1.
& 51.11,12.
& 61.1.
Iere.31.10.

Hee wil not therefore haue vs ſing ſongues *to an heauie hearte*. That is to ſay, hee will not haue vs to laugh and reioyce, when wee ſee our neighbours in affliction, for ſo doing (in as much as in vs lyeth) wee augment their miſerie, which is a thing very wicked before GOD : as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth vs. Wherfore let vs obey the Apoſtle Saint Paule, who ſaith, Reioyce with them that are mery, and weepe with them that are ſad. So that it may be accompliſhed in vs which is ſaide, And if one member indure any thing, all the other members ſhall ſuffer with it. &c.

Luke.6.24.
Rom.12.15
1.Cor.12.26.

21 *If hee that hateth thee, bee hungrie, giue him bread to eate, and if hee bee thirſtie, giue him water to drinke.*

So muche is it vnlawful to take away the garment in a colde day, or ſing ſongues to the heauie heart, when thy neighbour loueth thee (or at leaſtwiſe hateth thee not) is in miſerie and diſtreſſe, that rather it behoueth vs to haue pitie and compaſsion on them which wiſhe vs euil not only in words & ſound ſhewes, but alſo in deedes, helping them and ſuccouring them at their neceſſitie. Ioſeph did ſo

Gen.7.&.42

to his brethren, who had ſhewed him great ſigne of hate, and executed great crueltie againſt him.

1.Sam.24.& 26.

Dauid kept that none ſhoulde doe Saul his enimie harme, where vnto Solomon agreeth very wel ſaying,

If hee that hateth thee bee hungrie, &c. Ieſus Chriſt commandeth vs the like. Nowe as concerning the wordes of Solomon wee haue to note, that it ſeemeth at the firſt ſhewe, that hee is content, that one make as much account of him which is his enimie, as of a Dogge, to whome likewiſe wee giue bread and water: for hee ſpeaketh but of giuing *him bread and water*. But one may eaſily exempt Solomon from ſuch ſuſpition, firſt in ſaying (as the trueth is) that the Scripture vnder bread and water comprehendeth al that which ſerueth to nouriſhe the body of man, yea vnder the onely worde *bread*. Secondly in ſaying that Solomon hath named that

Gen.3.19.& 18.5.& 28.20.& 39.6.7
1.Kin.13.8.
2.Kin.6.22.
Luk.16.10

which is leaſt eſteemed, to ſhewe that if one refuſe to giue to his enimie bread and water, he wil not giue him other meates which are exquiſite, nor wine which is ſweete and delicate, and to ſhew that if one obey not in a little thing, he wil hardly obey in a greater: according alſo as our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte ſaith, Hee that is vniuſt in a little matter, is alſo vniuſt in a great matter, &c. And though in no other place of the Scripture are founde not bread and water, for al the nouriſhnent of the body of man, yet Saint Paul ſheweth vs, that we ought to vnderſtande this place, for al foode: for hee nameth nei-

Rom.12.20.

ther bread nor water, but ſaith ſimply that one ſhoulde giue to eate and drink. Vnderſtande wee therfore that Solomon teacheth vs to be merciful towards our enimies, miniſtring to thẽ according to our power, that which they haue neede of. And heerein he ſheweth that wee ought not to hate any body, although wee bee hated, neither doe il though wee bee doone yl vnto, but rather render good for e-

Ro.12.14.17.
1.Pet.3.9
Mat.5.45

uil in al thinges which are poſſible for vs. Thus doing wee ſhal bee the children of our heauenly father which maketh the Sunne ſhine on the good and on the bad, &c.

22 *For thou kindleſt coales vpon his head, and the Lord ſhal deliuer thee.*

The firſt good that commeth of our doing wel towards our enimies, is that we kindle coales, or as Saint Paul ſaith, Heape coales of fire vpon their heades: that is to ſay, we breake their hearts. Inſomuch that they are forced to encline on the one ſide or on the other, that is to wit, that either by our benefites their courage is ſoftened, and they induced to loue vs: or if they bee ſo cruel that they relent not by our benefites, yet neuertheleſſe they ſhal burne and bee troubled with the witneſſe of their conſcience, which ſhal feele it ſelfe confuſed and ouercome with our benefites. One may ſee this token in Saul, and as Saul finally ceaſſed to perſecute Dauid, euē ſo our enimies wil leaue of to trouble vs, & ſo we ſhal not looſe the good that wee haue doone them. *1.Sam.21. & 26.* The ſeconde, and which is moſt profitable for vs, is that the Lorde wil recompence our benefites: And to perfourme the ſame, not onely wil giue vs a temporal good thing for a temporal: but alſo wil receiue vs for his children. Our Sauiour admoniſheth vs to doe wel to our enimies, to the ende we may bee the children of our father which is in heauen, and if we bee children, wee are heires. *Mat.5.44.45.* And ſeeing it is an heritage, it followeth that God giueth vs not that which hee oweth vs: for he cannot bee our debtour: and ſo the retribution is gratis, and procedeth of his free liberalitie, without any merite of ours, as wee ought wel to acknowledge it: *Rom.8.17.* for wee ought not to bee otherwiſe towardes our God, then wee woulde that our children ſhoulde bee towardes vs, and wee woulde haue them ſtil to acknowledge that they haue not deſerued the goods which wee leaue them in poſſeſſion after vs.

23 *As the North winde driueth away the raine: ſo doeth an angrie countenance, the ſlaundering tongue.*

Whiles the Northwinde bloweth not, the Southwinde ſendeth him cloudes which diſtil raine, euen ſo when a man which is in credite and authoritie, in power and ſuperioritie, ſheweth himſelfe fauourable and curteous, then flatterers, tale bearers, lyars, and backbiters, feare him not, but dare eaſily come before him, and thinke themſelues welcome, when in ſecrete they bring him falſe reportes of their neighbours. Contrariwiſe, when the Northwinde which is drie and impetuous, bloweth, the cloudes are ſcattered, and yeelde no raine : euen ſo when a perſonage which is in preheminence ſheweth himſelfe rude and ſeuere, rough and rigorous, as though hee were alwayes angrie, the flatterers which deſire to diſtil raine of lyes and backbitinges, dare not approch to him, but abſent themſelues away: for although they ſeek ſtil to cloke their ſaying, for to hide their falſehood, yet neuertheleſſe a vertuous iudge can wel diſcouer it, and confound them, ſo that they dare not appeare before him: and when he hath caught them, hee wil ſcatter them, as the dry Northerne wind bringeth the cloudes to nothing. Heere Solomon ſheweth wel to kinges and rulers of the earth that they ought not to laugh, reioyce, and take paſtimes at flatterers & backbiters, but rather to be bitterly angry againſt thē, & in anger to take reuenge vpon them, executing that which Dauid purpoſed to doe, ſaying, Hee that priuily ſlaundeth his neighbour, him wil I deſtroy. *Pſal.101,5.* He that hath a proude looke and high heart, I cannot ſuffer: and hee teacheth vs that to ſhunne the fury of our Princes, and to bee in their grace and fauour, wee ought to abſtaine from lying detraction and falſhood, for heere aboue it is ſaide that the iuſt mans lippes doe pleaſe kinges, &c. And ſo one may ſee that al is out of order, when kings giue entertainement rather to flatterers and backbiters *Pro 16.12.* then to men of trueth, and alſo men ſeeke to pleaſe them rather by lyes then by trueth. Let vs learne alſo euery one of vs not to fauour in any caſe, lyars and backbiters, but rather ſhewe them an angry countenance to giue them to vnderſtand that wee haue them in horrour and deteſtation, to the end that they withdrawe themſelues from vs, and bee mute and dumbe before vs, if ſo be it, they wil not ſpeake trueth. Otherwiſe wee are giltie of lying and detraction, ſeeing we take pleaſure in hearing them.

24 *It is better to dwell in a corner of the houſe top, then with a contentious woman in a wide houſe.*

Pro.21.9. Wee haue ſeene this ſentence worde by worde. Neuertheleſſe this repetition vſed of the holy ſcripture, is not vnprofitable, but rather neceſſary, becauſe of our rudeneſſe and negligence, or rather (as concerning this preſent ſentence) becauſe that commonly women are the more proude and arrogant, they are the more ſtout and obſtinate in their wickedneſſe, and as it were enraged, inſomuch that they wil not reſt vpon reaſon, what warning ſoeuer one giueth them: & alſo becauſe men are more attentiue to match themſelues with riche women, which are come of a good houſe and kinred, then to inquyre of their womanhood and good manners, of their modeſtie and humilitie. This auarice or diſordinate deſire is marked by the *wide houſe*. For theſe cauſes I ſay Solomon ſetteth againe before vs this preſent ſentence to reprooue men and women according as they deſerue. And as the repetition is not ſuperfluous, ſo it ſhal not bee vnprofitable to apply to this place preſent that which was ſaide in the 21. chap. 9. verſ.

25 *As are the colde waters to a perſon fainting for drinke: ſo is good newes from a farre country.*

When any body hath long ſuffered hunger, and through the long ſuffering of the ſame is waxed faint and out of hearte, if he finde any colde well of water, or freſh running riuer, hee taketh pleaſure to drinke thereof, hee ſlencheth his thirſt, hee recouereth ſtrength, and is renewed againe. Euen ſo if any one haue his friend in a farre countrie, and thinketh that this friend is very conuenient for him, yea neceſſarie, hee wilbee vexed and greeued greatly, and wil as it were pyne away when his friende hath not of long time ſent him any newes. But if his friend haue a care of him, and if hee bee diligent to let him vnderſtande of his newes, which bee pleaſant and profitable to him: his griefe wil paſſe, his languor wil ceaſe, hee is well recreated and refreſhed, and hartely thanketh his friende that hath him ſo in remembrance. Nowe whyles wee are preſent in body, we are abſent in the Lorde, which is the beſt friend that wee can haue. And ſo in reſpect of vs that walke in this earthly country by fayth and not by ſight, our God is in a far country. And if ſo beit he ſende vs not and diſtille downe vpon vs his freſh waters, if hee ſende vs not of his good newes, wee languiſhe and are faynt through ſpirituall thirſt: with the which hee hath threatened the

*Amos.*8.11. children of Iſrael. We languiſh I ſay, and waxe faint if wee haue the
12. true knowledge of the bountie, and clemencie of our God, and
knowe howe great a gift it is to enioy his worde and ſerue him according to the ſame, and not to haue libertie to doe it in the company of the faythful. Dauid was ſeaſed with ſuch languor and faint-
*Pſal.*42.2. neſſe. As hee expreſſeth it. If wee wilbee free from the foreſayde
& .63.2. manace, and not lye long in languor, let vs harken to our GOD
which inuyteh vs ſo courteouſly by his Prophete: All you that are
*Eſa.*55.1. thirſty, come vnto the waters, &c. And to obay him, let vs come to
*Mat.*11.28. Ieſus Chriſt, who alſo inuyteth vs, and hee wil giue vs of the water
*Iohn.*7.37. of life, which wil keepe vs from thirſt for euer. And alſo it is hee
*Iohn.*4.10. which is ſent from a farre. For hee diſcended from heauen, and
13.14. brought good newes to the worlde. And as hee hath begunne to
bring vs this good newes, ſo hee continueth it by his miniſters, whereof wee ought to bee rauiſhed in admiration, and make great account and bee ioyfull ſaying, Howe fayre are the feete of him vpon the mountaines which hath pronounced and publiſhed peace and goodneſſe, which preacheth ſaluation, who ſaith to Zyon, thy God raineth, wee were very farre from our Lorde GOD by our ſinnes and abhominations, and lykewiſe wee were his enemies: and yet he hath not letted to loue vs, and ſende vs his good newes.
*Eſa.*57.10. And therefore wee ought to remember that wee which were of
& 66.19. late Gentils in the fleſhe, were at that time without Chriſt, ſtran-
*Eph.*2.17.11 gers in the common weale of Iſrael, and ſtrangers of the alliances
which contained promiſe, &c. But now by Ieſus Chriſt, wee which were then a farre of, are made neere by the blood of Chriſt.

26 *A righteous man falling downe before the wicked, is like a troubled wel, and a corrupt ſpring.*

Men iudge by the world that they behaue themſelues wel if they maintaine themſelues peaceably with euery one, and that chiefly to liue in peace, one ſhould bow downe himſelf before the wicked, flattering them, and fauouring them, & ſhould ſearche al the waies hee can to haue their grace. They thinke they doe not ill in thus dooing, for they haue the Diueliſh prouerbe in their heart and in their

mouthes which ſaith, that wee muſt liue by the quicke & not by the dead. And ſo they thinke a iuſt thing to make themſelues companions or rather inferious to the wicked. But ſuch iuſtice is no better then wickedneſſe it ſelfe. Solomon ſheweth it wel ſaying, *A righteous man falling down before the wicked, is like a troubled wel, &c.* Wherein hee ſheweth vs that wee ought to perſeuer in righteouſneſſe and integritie, to approue our iuſtice before God, and before his elect and faithful, Otherwiſe as the cleaneſt and pureſt fountaine of the world is vnprofitable, yea noiſome and hurtful, if in treading in it with our feete, or otherwiſe we trouble it: or els if one caſt into the ſpring thereof any filth or poiſon to infect and corrupt it: Euē ſo if the iuſt man conſent to the wicked, to bee at his commandement and ſeruice, his righteouſnes ſhalbe vnprofitable to him: and he wil make no conſcience to giue himſelfe to euil, to be a reproche and hurt to his neighbours, and to corrupt them: and ſo he ſhal be no more righteous, but wicked and vniuſt, and as a corrupt ſpring is deſpiſed, and men let it goe to ruine: euen ſo the iuſt man which ioyneth himſelf to the wicked, and becommeth his peere in turning away from his righteouſneſſe, ſhal periſh in his iniquitie. Nowe one
ought not to finde it ſtrange, that I ſay, the iuſt man turning away *Eze.18.24.*
from his righteouſneſſe: for although that God be faithful, and perfourmeth
the work which hee hath begunne in his faithful, to make
them continue vnto the end, yet neuertheleſſe as there is in ſome a
temporal faith: ſo in ſome there is a temporal righteouſneſſe, as one
may ſee it heere when Solomon ſaith, *A righteous man falling* *Luk.8.13*
downe before the wicked, &c. And alſo as one may ſee it in the
place afore alledged out of Ezechiel. But one may ſay that many of
the ancient holy fathers haue fallen downe before the wicked as Abraham,
the brethren of Ioſeph, Iacob. And Ieremie admoniſheth *Gen.23.7.12*
king Zedechias and his people to ſerue the king of Babylon. The *&.47.3.&*
anſwere is, that it is not euil to bowe downe before the wicked for *33.3.*
ceremonie, or to obey God, who putteth the wicked in preheminence *Iere.27.12.*
and maketh vs ſubiect to them: but it is great wickedneſſe to *Rom.15.*
encline to them, to fauour them, and conſent to their iniquities. In *1.Pet.2.*
the time of the primitiue church, the kinges and princes were infidels,
and yet neuertheleſſe the Apoſtles woulde that men ſhoulde be
ſubiect to them,

27 *It is not good to eate much hony: ſo to ſearch their owne glory, is not glory.*

Man from the beginning of his creation hath been conſtituted Gen.1,27.28 in glory & honor, being created of God to his image and likenes, & hauing obteined of him the rule ouer the earth, & al things therin conteined, but man was not content with ſuch glory, but was curi- Gen.3. ous to exalt himſelfe further, ſtriuing to bee like God in diſobeiyng him, whereby hee fell: as hee hath wel perceiued when hee hid him ſelfe amongeſt the trees in the garden of Eden. Eccleſiaſtes hath ex- Eccle.3.18. preſſed this glory, and alſo the fall, ſaying: I haue thought in my hearte of the eſtate of children of men, that God hath made them excellent, yet to ſee to, they are in themſelues as beaſts. Now as our firſt fathers haue not kept themſelues in the glory which God hath giuen them, and therfore haue ſlided: euen ſo their poſteritie hath doone after them. One may ſee it in Cain, who was not content Gen.4. with the honor of firſt begotten, but he would rule cruelly, & killed his brother Abel, and therefore he fel into an euerlaſting curſe. Pharao was not content to rule ouer the people of Egypt, but he would oppreſſe the people of Iſrael, and keepe them in bondage, and therefore he periſhed wickedly. One may heere put Abſolom coueting, Exo.14 and gaping for the kingdome of his father: Dauid numbring his people: Sennacherib beſieging Ieruſalem: and others, by whom one may ſee that it is not good to *ſearch ones owne glory*. Nowe that which theſe heere, and others haue proued, Solomon pronounceth it when he ſaith, *It is not good to eate much, &c.* he ſaith ſo, becauſe experience hath not touched our heartes as it ought, and that it is very needeful for vs to be reproued, and told of that expreſly which we haue to follow or forſake. As in this preſent ſentence we are admoniſhed not to be couetous of glory, otherwiſe we ſhalbe expoſed to ignominie, as it is wel marked, ſaying, *That it is no glory when men ſearch their owne glory*. Wherein we haue to note that wee make great account of them which are exalted in glory & honour, and eſteeme them as holy: and if it be in our owne ſelues, we ſwalowe it (as one would ſay) like ſweete hony. And indeede alſo, it is not a thing to be reiected, that this glory when through the ſame we forget not our ſelues, nor put not God, nor the dutie which we beare to our neighbors in obliuion, ſeeing alſo that God which exalteth them in glory which pleaſe him: and if we obteine any degree of honour, it is from him that we haue it : and as one may ſee it when he promiſeth Abraham to make him grow into a great natiō. And Ioſeph acknowledgeth his glory to come from God. And Solomon obtained of God the glory of the kingdome, ſuche a one that no king before him had the like in Iſrael. But as God hath giuen vs the hony which is very ſweete, & al other good meates for to mainteine and keepe vs in this life : and yet if wee take too much of it, and vſe it exceſſiuely wee receiue harme thereby : Euen ſo if we be couetous of honour, and ſearch curiouſly our owne glory, wee fal into ignominie, as one may ſee it by the exāples alledged in the beginning. Whoſoeuer therfore exalteth himſelf, ſhalbe brought low, yea, by the hand of God, for he reſiſteth the proude.

Gen.12.2.& 45.8.
1.Chr.29.25.

28 *A man that refraineth not his appetite, is like a Citie that is broken downe, and without walles.*

Thoſe people that wil keepe themſelues ſafe from the danger of their enimies, & be in ſuretie, are careful to munite their townes & cities with ſtrong and good walles al about, & if peraduenture there be any breach made, they are diligent to repaire it, to the ende that the enimie haue no entrance that way. Otherwiſe, if they make no account to enuiron the citie with good walles, it is open to the enimie, & eaſily deſtroyed : for the enimies which craue but the ruine of the ſame, enter in as they wil, and pul it, and ſack it at their pleaſure: and ſo the citie is diſpatched for lacke of walles, which is a miſerable thing. Solomō compareth to ſuch a citie, *the man that refraineth not his appetite*, and ſo approoueth him very miſerable. And therefore that we may knowe how to eſchewe ſuch miſerable deſtruction, wee ought to vnderſtande what it is that wee haue to doe, to refraine our owne appetite, and to be able to attaine to the ſame, wee haue to note that the appetite is taken diuerſly in the Scripture. Firſt for the inwarde part of man, in the which are reſident vnderſtanding, thoughtes, affections, willes, determinations and counſels. And becauſe this part is corrupted by ſinne, it is mooued ſooner to euil then to good : wherefore it hath neede to bee

reſtrained, otherwiſe it bringeth foorth the deſtruction of the man,
Pro.16.18. Solomon hath ſhewed vs this. Contrariwiſe if the appetite be refrai-
19.32. ned, the man is preſerued: as Solomon ſheweth alſo. Secondly, it
Mat.12.35. is takē for the ſpirit, that is, the blowing, or breathing of the mouth
36.37. the which followeth the inwarde diſpoſition: for of the abundance
of the hearte, the mouth ſpeaketh: if the breath bee good, good
commeth to the man: but if it be euil, there followeth deſtruction.
Let vs vnderſtande therefore that it is very neceſſary for vs to re-
fraine both our inwarde and outwarde ſpirite or appetite: As alſo
Iam.1,19.20. Saint Iames admoniſheth vs to do.

The xxvi. Chapter.

1 A*S the ſnowe in the Sommer, and as the raine in the Harueſt are not meete: So is honour vnſeemely for a foole.*

AS there are ſeaſons wherein ſnowe and raine are profitatble, as proofe ſheweth it: ſo there are perſons who are fit to bee exalted in honour, becauſe they can wel vſe the ſame, as doe the vertuous, fearing God, prudent, ſage, diſcrete, careful, and diligent to doe their duetie in all vprightneſſe and integritie, without any lifting vp of their heartes, or riſing vp aboue others, to deſpiſe them, moleſt them, or oppreſſe thē. Honour was very ſeemely, for Abraham, Moſes, Dauid, Ezechias, Ioſias, Daniel, and other holy perſonages. Contrariwiſe, there are ſeaſons wherein ſnowe doeth great hurt, as when it commeth in Sommer, when al the thinges of the earth haue neede of heate for to growe and to waxe ripe, the ſnowe that falleth, letteth them to proſper, for it cloieth the earth, & the thinges that ſhe beareth.

Likewiſe the rayne which commeth in harueſt, rotteth the corne & graſſe which are cut downe, lying yet on the fielde. Nowe if wee feare the ſnowe in ſommer, and the rayne in harueſt, it behooueth vs greatly to feare, leſt fooles be placed in honour and glorie. For as Solomon ſaieth, *Honour is no more ſeemely for a foole, then ſnow in the ſommer, and rayne in the harueſt.* If fooles be placed in honour, they cloye the earth: for, as much as in them lieth, they take the courage from them, which otherwiſe would giue them ſelues to wel doing. They freeſe the goods, for they hate them which ſeeke to proſper and increaſe, they rotte the graſſe and corne: for as much as they can, they corrupt and deſtroy al good order, and good pollicie, and ſet and ſhew foorth ſlaunders, diſſolutions, wantonneſſe, wickedneſſe, infamie, filthineſſe, villanie, and abhomination: as the wicked Kings and gouernours, and the falſe Prophetes haue done. And alſo nowe a dayes the Emperours and Kinges, the Pope & his Adherentes doe, which tende onely to deſtruction. Here we haue to note firſt of al, that Kinges, and al they which are in any preheminence, or which haue any honourable gouernment, ought to be careful to refraine from al follie and wickedneſſe, and to giue them ſelues to prudence and ſapience, and to doe their diligence, to abaſe and bring downe, yea, to roote out the fooliſh which are ſo vnprofitable and hurtful, that if they be exalted, and once crept into credite and authoritie, they ſerue but as ſnow doeth *in ſommer*, and rayne in harueſt. Secondly, as ſnow and rayne which commeth not in ſeaſon, are the ſcourges of God, and his curſes: euen ſo let vs vnderſtand that God is angrie againſt vs, & that he chaſtizeth vs, when we haue fooles for rulers and gouernours: as alſo hee giueth it vs to vnderſtande by his Prophetes. Thirdly, that the worlde asketh but her owne ruine and deſtruction. For as we ſee commonly, men ſeeke not to haue wiſe men to rule and gouerne them, but rather giue the authoritie thereof to fooles.

Leuit.26.
Deut.28.
Eſa 3.2.& 29.14.
Oſee.13.11.

2 *As the Sparowe by flying, and the Swallowe by flying eſcape, ſo the curſe that is cauſeleſſe, ſhal not come.*

Men ſet nettes, and prepare ſnares for birdes, who haue not deſerued it: and it comes to paſſe oftentimes that they looſe both their time and their labour: and the birdes haue no harme, but ſaue themſelues and ſcape away by flying, and flye away, and ſo the birdcatchers obtaine not alwayes that which they deſire, but are often fruſtrate of their intentes. Likewiſe mouthes that are ful of curſes, ſtriue to hurt the innocent without cauſe, who neuer offended thē, but the goodneſſe of God which is verie ſuccourable, ſerueth for feete and winges to them whom we curſe wrongfully, and without cauſe. Inſomuch that the curſes which one caſteth out againſt them, neuer touch them: for God turneth it away. Solomon teacheth vs this ſaying,

As the Sparowe by flying, and the Swalowe by flying, eſcape,
&c. Dauid had no euil through Goliah his curſe, nor for the
1.Sam.17. malediction of Semei. Alſo the children of God feele no euil for
43. the curſe of the wicked: as Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth vs wel, but their
2.Sam.16.5. curſes returne rather vnto them ſelues, and they beare the paine
Mat.5.11. thereof by the iuſt iudgement of God, as Goliah wel prooued it:
44. for Dauid cut off his head with his owne weapon, Semei alſo prooued it. And in many places God hath threatned malediction and
1.King.2.42 puniſhment to them which curſe without cauſe. Thoſe therefore
Gen.12.3.& which at randon and without iuſt occaſion curſe their neighbours,
27.29. curſe them ſelues, and hurt not them awhit whome they curſe, ne-
Exo.21.17. uertheleſſe they force not of it, wherefore they well deſerued pu-
Leuit.20.9 niſhment. And thus while we are taught not to feare their curſes:
Pro.20.20. as the Prophete Eſai admoniſheth King Ezechias, and his folkes.
Pſal.109.17 And note wee, that it is not ſaide in general, that the curſe ſhall not
2.King.19.6 happen, *But the vnreaſonable curſe*, or the curſe without cauſe:
for if one curſe vs iuſtly, it is to be feared, that wee ſhal feele the
hurt of it, yea, by the iuſt vengeance of God, which wil hearken
Eccle.4.5.6. to the crye of them that curſe vs. For this cauſe Eccleſiaſtes admoniſheth vs not to giue occaſion to any bodie to curſe vs: for the
prayer (ſayeth hee) of him that curſeth thee, in the bitterneſſe of
his ſoule, ſhalbe heard of him that created it. And this is in folow-
Deu.15.9. ing that which Moyſes pronounceth, and as by witneſſe wee ſee,
that the curſe vttered for good cauſe, commeth to paſſe, euen ſo,
wee haue examples thereof. Moyſes prayed againſt Core: Ely
Num.16.15. curſed the meſſengers of King Ochoſias: Eliſee, curſed the young

children, and twoo Beares toare twentie and twoo of them in peeces. Saint Peter curſed Ananias and Sapphira, and they fell downe dead: Saint Paule curſed Elymas, and hee became blinde.

2.Kin.1.10. & 2.24.
Act.5.3.4. 9.& 13.10.

3 *As the whip is for the Horſe, & the bridle for the Aſſe: ſo is the rodde for the fooles backe.*

It is written, I wil giue thee vnderſtanding, and wil teache thee the way wherein thou ſhalt walke, &c. And this is to the end that wee be not fooles, and without reaſon: as alſo we are warned thereof, Be not as the Horſe, or Mule which are without vnderſtanding. Otherwiſe, as men tame Horſes, Aſſes, and Mules by bridles, ſpurres and whippes, or by other meanes, euen ſo the Lord hath ordeined chaſtiſementes and puniſhments for to tame fooles, and roote them out if they be vncorrigible. As one may ſee by the threatninges which are in the ſcriptures, and nowe heere when it is ſaide, *As the whip is for the Horſe, &c.* Now euen as great Lordes, for to tame their Horſes and other beaſtes, haue men to whome they giue the charge thereof: euen ſo our God hath his men to whome hee committeth the charge of guiding them, which haue neede to bee tamed: hee hath giuen to his Prophetes and Apoſtles, to his Miniſters and Paſtours his worde, which is a cutting ſworde, more ſharpe then any two edged ſworde. This word hath bene committed, I ſay, to the Prophetes and Apoſtles, and to al Miniſters for the chaſtiſement, yea, for the deſtruction of the rebellious. Hee hath giuen Kinges and Princes, Superiours and Gouernours, the rodde of yron, to wit, the ſworde, to chaſtiſe fooles. Hee hath alſo ordeined that fathers and mothers ſhoulde correct their children. Briefly, all thoſe, which haue any preheminence or ſuperioritie, haue charge from God to chaſtiſe the fooliſhe which are committed to their charge. That if the fooliſhe remayne vncorrigible and obſtinate, they ſhall not onelye feele the temporal rodde, but as one is conſtrayned to murther and kill the Horſe which will in no wyſe bee tamed,

Pſal.32.8.9.
Pſal.2.9.& 89.31.
Hebr.5.12.
Eſai.49.2.
Ier.1.9.10.
2.Cor.10.4.
Rom.13.
1.Pet.2.
Pro.13.24. & 22.15. & 23.13.14.
Pro.1.26.

euen ſo the fooles that are obſtinate, ſhal periſhe euerlaſtingly. And as an horſe which wil not be tamed, ouerthroweth his maiſter, euẽ ſo, when one correcteth not the fooliſh, hee goeth to perdition as hee wel deſerueth, and as it is wel giuen vs to vnderſtande. And although the fooliſhe be not corrected, yet they ceaſe not to periſhe, Saint Paule ſheweth it. It is meete then that the great men which are in authoritie and power, and thoſe which haue ſuperintendance and gouernment, bee wakeful, and heedie, to vſe the rodde which God hath giuen them, in chaſtizing, & puniſhing, in admoniſhing, and reproouing, correcting and threatning: and that inferiors and al they which knowe not howe to guide them ſelues, ſhould ſubmit them ſelues to that diſcipline which is conuenient for them. For if bruite beaſtes which haue neither ſenſe nor reaſon, endure to be tamed, it is good reaſon that men who ought to haue vnderſtanding, be not more wilde and ſauagde, to the ende that, that be not laide againſt them, which Moſes rebuked the children of Iſrael with. He which ought to be righteous, is waxen fat, and hath kicked with his heele. And though that God hath his ſeruants to tame and chaſtiſe fooles, yet neuertheleſſe they profite nothing, if hee him ſelfe put not to his hande, as Moyſes wel ſheweth. For although that he admoniſheth the children of Iſrael, Circumciſe the forepart of your heartes, &c. Hee ſheweth them notwithſtanding afterwardes that his admonition is nothing, if God him ſelfe worke not, when hee ſaieth, The Lorde thy God ſhal circumciſe thy heart, &c. Euen ſo doeth the Prophet Ieremie.

Eze.3.18.
Rom.2.12.
Deu.32.15.
Eſai.1.2.
Deut.10.16
Deut.30.6.
Ier.31.18. 19.

4 *Anſwere not a foole according to his fooliſhneſſe, leſt thou alſo be like to him.*

Men ſee by experience in this worlde that fooles haue power, credite, and authoritie, that they are at their eaſe and proſperitie, according to outwarde apparance. And for this cauſe men doubt them and feare them: or els haue them in admiration, and deſire their alliance vnder hope that they ſhalbe wel aduanced, and profite by their meanes. But bee it for feare, or for hope, men fauour and flatter them, and ſeeke to couenant and agree with them, without diſpleaſing them any way. And whereas they commit great wickedneſſe,

neſſe, men wil ſay to them it is wel done, yea, they wil incourage them to folowe their wicked enterpriſes: as the flatterers did Saul, againſt Dauid, and them which fauoured him, and gaue him ayde and ſuccour. They did this, to be welcome to Saul who was a wicked foole. And therefore thoſe which doe ſo, are wicked and fooliſhe, as them to whom they conſent and accord. Solomon wil not haue vs to reſemble them: as he ſheweth, when he ſaith, *Anſwere not a foole, &c.* To anſwere, in this caſe, is not to ſatisfie in wordes any queſtion or demaund: but it is to fulfil, couenant, and accorde to the wil and appetite of an other. For why the ſcripture applieth it ſelfe often to our maner of ſpeaking: for if any one wil ſay, that two thinges accorde and agree wel together, hee ſaieth, that they anſwere wel one to an other, Contrariwiſe, if any one condiſcend not to our opinion, wee ſay, that hee anſwereth not our purpoſe: and this is becauſe if one aske vs of any thing which wee know, and which pleaſeth vs, we anſwere willingly: but if it diſpleaſe vs, wee nodde the head, and vouchſafe not to open the mouth to anſwere. And wee vnderſtande that Solomon would that we ſhould diſdaine fooles, and that wee ſhould ſhewe no ſigne of conſenting to their follie, otherwiſe we are in danger to be put in a reprobate ſenſe, and to be abandoned to al follie. For if euil talke corrupt good maners: the conuerſation and accorde which we haue with the fooliſhe, wil make vs fooles and wicked, according to the fooliſhneſſe and wickedneſſe which wee ſhal ſee, and to the which wee conſent: as with theeues, one becommeth a theefe: and with Idolaters, an Idolater. Wherefore we ought to take careful heed that we *anſwere* not Papiſtes and other heretikes. *1.Cor.15.33*

5 *Anſwere a foole according to his fooliſhneſſe: leſt hee be wiſe in his owne conceit.*

It ſeemeth at firſt viewe, that this ſentence is quite contrarie to the former. Neuertheleſſe it is not lawfull to thinke nor ſay that there is any contrarietie: for they are ſpoken both by one and the ſame ſpirite of trueth, which can not be contrarie. Wherefore we ought here to take *anſwere* otherwiſe then in the former ſentence. For if one condiſcended to the foole, and accorded to his follie, he giueth him occaſion to eſteeme him ſelfe wiſe: which Solomon wil not haue done, no more then he wil that we be like vnto them. And therefore note wee, that the foole ſeeketh wholly to perſuade himſelfe that hee is wiſe, and can not abide one to reprooue him, nor reprehende him for his follie. For this cauſe, to the end that as much as in vs lyeth, we ſuffer not the foole to bee ſo abuſed. Solomon admoniſheth vs to anſwere him *according to his follie*: that is to ſay, to rebuke him, and tel him ſharply and ſeuerely, that there is nothing but follie in him, and that he is voide of al wiſedome. Thus doing, he wil knowe that he is a foole, and wil ſeeke to amend him ſelfe, if ſo be it, hee be not altogether vncorrigible, and of the number of them which are ſharpely rebuked and threatned. We haue therefore to anſwere and reſiſt the Papiſts, and principally the moſt eſteemed: for, becauſe they are not reſiſted, but that the ignorant people fauoureth them, and hath them in admiration, they waxe ſo proud, and it ſeemeth them, that they are wiſe men of the world, And note wee, that Solomon ſpeaketh principally to them which haue preheminence, or ſuperintendance.

Pro.1.24.

6 *Hee that ſendeth a meſſage by the hande of a foole, is as hee that cutteth off the feete, and drinketh iniquitie.*

It is verie meete and neceſſarie, that one be wel aduiſed & careful to take heede, whome hee putteth in truſt to doe his buſineſſe, and chiefly thoſe which are of great importance. See Pharao King of Egypt, who hauing conſidered the wiſedome and vnderſtanding of Ioſeph, made him ruler and gouernour ouer his countrey. Alſo Nabuchodonozer hauing ſeene the great vnderſtanding of Daniel, honoured him, and made him gouernour. It behoooueth one therfore to be careful to regarde who thoſe be which are fit and capable to deale in affayres, and to commit them to their charge: as Iethro telleth Moyſes. Saint Paule declareth it plainly. 1. Tim. 3. & Tit. 1. and in other places. If one doe contrarie, not onely hee laboureth in vaine, but alſo hath hurt thereby, as Solomon ſheweth it, when he ſaieth,

Gen.41.28
Dan.2.48.
Exo.18.21

Hee

He that ſendeth a meſſage, or he which committeth his affaires, &c. If hee haue domage thereby, he wel deſerueth it. For (as wee ſee heere) in committing any affaires to fooles, one doeth them iniurie: ſeeing it is as though hee cut off their feete, and conſtrayned them to goe. Nowe hee that doeth ſuch iniurie or violence to his neighbour, meriteth wel to drinke the iniquitie, and ſuſteine the loſſe: they therefore which fauour the wicked, and to aduaunce them, place them in office, doe them iniurie, and violence: for they laye vpon them a charge which they cannot wel weild, but as a man which hath his feete cut off, ſo that hee cannot goe, to beare any meſſage from farre: and as ſuche a one doeth rather fal and hurt him ſelfe, than goe: euen ſo the wicked cannot, nor wil not doe their duetie, when they haue any commiſsion: and therefore they goe to ruine and deſtruction, and they which ſo haue cut their legs off, remaine not vnpuniſhed, but drinke the iniquitie. If therefore wee loue the profite and health of our neighbours, and our owne, let vs not put to charge or office thoſe whom we know to be fooles, and wicked perſons.

7 *Lift vp the legs of a lame man: ſo ſhalbe a ſentence in a fooles mouth.*

Lame men haue commonly one leg long, and another ſhorte: whereof it commeth that they cannot goe at their eaſe, nor as they woulde: and ſo their going is not pleaſant. And though one ſeeke to helpe them in lifting vp the one of their legges or both, yet they goe neuer a whit the better. Lykewiſe if fooles ſtudy to pronoũce any thing of excellencie, they cannot compaſſe it, nor their woordes are not acceptable, but to them only which are like vnto them, and although they haue ſome which by flatterie ſeeke to giue them hart to ſay wel: Yet neuertheleſſe their wordes are not amended. Solomon maketh ſuch a compariſon, ſaying,

Lift vp the legs, &c. The which compariſon is very conueniẽt for although the foole haue but one mouth, yet when hee forceth himſelſe to ſpeake wel, hee halteth. For as one legge of a lame man, or one ſide when hee walketh, anſwereth not the other and is not agreeable too it: euen ſo when the foole will meddle to ſpeake wel, his mouth is not agreeable to his heart. Hee hath a ſhort heart as concerning excellent thinges in deede: for hee diſpiſeth & reiecteth them, and filleth himſelf with affections, thoughts, willes, and determinations out of order, and by hypocriſie and ambition, ſeeketh to ſtretch his mouth to thinges, by the which hee may bee in admiration, to the ende that men may ſay of him as of Herod, The voyce of a God, and not of a man. But meanewhile, as they which haue a cleare ſight, know wel that the lame mans going is not good: Euen ſo, they which haue the vnderſtanding of the trueth, diſcerne eaſilie betweene that which is wel, and that which is yl ſaide, although one ſeeke neuer ſo to diſguiſe him ſelfe. Behold the children of Iſrael boaſted them ſelues to be the people of God, and made profeſſion to ſerue him: but Ely filled with the ſpirite of god, knew wel that they were lame, what faire ſacrifices ſoeuer they made: and therefore hee ſaide to them: Howe long wil you halt on both ſides? Wherefore if wee wil ſpeake vprightly of thinges which are worthie to be heard, it behoueth vs to put of al folly, and receiue the inſtruction of wiſedome to frame our hearts wel, to the end that a ſentence may be fit for our mouthes.

Act. 12.22.

1. Kin. 18.21

8 *As a precious ſtone cloſed vp in a heape of ſtones: ſo is hee which giueth glory to a foole.*

If wee finde it ſtrange and without al reaſon that one ſhoulde hyde amongeſt a great heape of common ſtones, a precious ſtone, becauſe it is a rare thing, and men make much account of it: for it hath other vertues then the reſt, and is more delectable to the ſight, and while it is thus incloſed, it is almoſt vnpoſsible to finde it, and lieth to no vſe, for one hath neither profite, nor pleaſure therby: Euen ſo wee ought to thinke it an vnreaſonable thing to ſee fooles eſteemed, and exalted to glory, for glorie is an excellent gift of God which exalteth them that ſeeme worthie. And thoſe which deſire it, haue not ſtil the inioying of it, but are often caſt off, and depriued of it vtterly. And in ſteede of glory, reape contẽpt, rebuke, and ignomie. For fooles knowe not howe to vſe glorie according as it is appointed by God, but rather abuſe it, when in ſteede of giuing them ſelues to grauitie, vertue, magnanimitie, prudence and wiſedome, they folowe lightneſſe, vice, puſillanimitie, blockiſhnes, vanitie, and follie: and ſo their glorie can be neither profitable nor delectable, no more then a precious ſtone which is incloſed ſo farre in a heape of ſtones, that one cannot come by it. Wherefore they which haue power to diſtribute ſtates and degrees, are here taught, that if they wil not looſe the precious ſtone, they ſhould take heede not to aduance fooles, malicious perſons, diſſolute and looſe liuers, nor any ſuche: becauſe it is a thing loſt. For as one cannot ſee a precious ſtone ſhine, which is incloſed in a heape of cōmon ſtones, as wel for the multitude, as for the groſeneſſe and waight of the ſtones which are vpon it: euen ſo, the fooliſhe abound ſo much in vanities and follies, in filth and infamie, in ſcandales, and diſſolutions, in malices and wickedneſſe, and are ſo wayghed downe with the ſame: that they darken, and adnihilate the glorie in which they are placed: for they them ſelues thinke, ſay, and doe, things which tende to the extinguiſhing of it. And ſo they are wholy vnworthie: yea, what greatneſſe or nobleneſſe ſoeuer they haue, yet they are not capable thereof: no more then it is to hide a precious ſtone in a heape of ſtones bee it neuer ſo great. Saul was mightie and puiſſāt, & yet neuertheles he ſhewed him ſelf vnworthie of the glory of the kingdom. Dauids brethren were greater then he, and yet they were deiected, in that they were not annointed, and Dauid the leaſt of them al was annointed for King. Euen ſo, although the Pope haue power and authoritie, yet neuertheleſſe, hee is not capable of the glorie which the world giueth him.

Pro.25.27

1.Sam.9.1.2.& 15.11 23.& 16.1.

1.Sam.16.7 12.13.

9 *As a thorne ſtanding vp in the hand of a drunkarde, ſo is a parable in the mouth of fooles.*

The man that is giuen to drinke much, and ſo is drunke, is ſo blockiſh, dull, and fooliſh, ſo voide of ſenſe, reaſon, vnderſtanding and feeling, that hee ſeeth not commonly, nor knoweth not what it is that he hath or holdeth in his hande, nor howe he ought to vſe that which he hath betweene his fingers. He makes no more difficultie to gripe in his hande a ſharpe thorne, then he doth a ſoft feather, & wil giue it to kiſſe to them whō he meeteth, as if it were a noſegaye of flowers, or ſweete ſmelling hearbes. And in this wiſe hee ſheweth that he careth not what harme he doe to him ſelfe, nor to his neighbours : but as he pricketh him ſelfe, ſo he pricketh and ſpoyleth them which doe him no hurt, and which likewiſe deſire that he were in ſounde eſtate and good diſpoſition. And ſo we ſee that the drunkarde leadeth a miſerable and wicked life : whereby it appeareth that one ought to haue drunkenneſſe in great horror and deteſtation, and flye the company of drunkardes, as a madde Lion, or any ſauage beaſt. Nowe if wee ought to take heede, of a thorne *ſtanding vp in the hande of a drunkarde*, becauſe he cannot handle it as hee ought : euen ſo wee ought to vnderſtande, that fooles wordes are verie dangerous. As Solomon pronounceth it, ſaying,

As a thorne ſtanding vp, &c. Wherein wee haue to note, that as the drunkarde maketh no difficultie to pricke his neighbors, and hurt them with ſome thorne, or other ſharp inſtrument which he hath in his hande : euen ſo the fooliſhe are hardie and raſhe to pronounce wordes, or ſpeeches which are yrkſome, grieuous, or hurtful to their neighbours. And that in diuers ſortes : for ſome ſpeake to their neighbours, making no ſhewe to hurt them, and yet ſecretly practiſe their death. As Cain dealt with his brother, when they were together on the fielde. Cain roſe vp againſt his brother Abel, and killed him. Ioab killed Abner in treaſon : the ſame Ioab killed alſo Amaſa by treaſon. Dauid vſed ſuch faynedneſſe towardes Vrias. Iudas and the Phariſies towardes Chriſt. Other backbite and defame in ſecrete, as thoſe which in the abſence of Dauid ſpake yl of him to Saule. Others beare falſe witneſſe, as Ioſephes maiſters wife : and the Iewes againſt Ieſus Chriſt. Others ſpeake openly foule woordes and outrages againſt the innocent, as if they were greatly woorthie of blame, as they did to the Prophetes, to Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and as they doe preſently to the true ſeruantes

Gen.4.8.
2.Sam.3.27.
& 20.9.10
& 11.6.
Mat.26.49.
& 22.15.
Gen.39.17
Mat.26.
Luk.23.

ſeruants of God. And (which is the moſt ſharpe and pricking thorn of al) ſome beare about falſe doctrine, the which pricketh the ſoules to death. And ſo the mouth of Papiſtes is the moſt dangerous, and they are the wickeddeſt and woorſt fooles of the world. One may adde thoſe Magiſtrates who in ſteede of pronouncing equitie, make vnlawful ordinances, and giue wrong iudgement. Wee haue alſo to note, that as the drunkarde pricketh him ſelfe, euen ſo fooles wordes are their owne deſtruction: as it hath bene alreadie ſhewed, both by witneſſe and examples. Foraſmuch therefore, as wee wil not be reputed drunkardes, nor fooles, let vs looke that wee caſt away thornes, and carie ſentences which are not pricking, & that no woorde paſſe out of our mouth which is not ſounde, pleaſaunt, and amiable, to the glorie and honour of God, and to the edification and health of vs and our hearers. And this is that which appertaineth principally to Miniſters of the word, and to them which are committed to doe iuſtice and iudgement, and this, towardes them which yelde them ſelues tractable and readie to be taught. For we ought to vſe thornes againſt them which are obſtinate and vncorrigible: not fearing to incurre the note of drunkenneſſe or of follie. Some ſaide, that Ieſus Chriſt had Belzebub, that he was a glutton, a drunkard, and a friend to them that liued wickedly. And that the Apoſtles were drunke, but being aſſured that they walked vprightly, they letted not to pricke where it was needeful. So ought al they to doe, which haue any adminiſtration, to guid thẽſelues vprightly in prudence and wiſedome.

Mat.12.24.& 11.19
Act.2.13.

10 *The mightie man doeth al thinges by him ſelfe: but the foole giueth wages, yea, he giueth wages to the tranſgreſſours.*

When Solomon praiſeth the man that is great & excellent in vertue, inſomuch that he is ſufficient of him ſelfe to doe his office and duetie, euen ſo he doth it, and applieth himſelfe therto carefully: and to expreſſe this ſame, he ſaieth, *That he doth al things:* and blameth the foole which hireth folkes to doe his buſineſſe. It may ſeeme at firſt view, that Solomõ reputeth thẽ fooles that haue hired ſeruantes vnder them, to doe their woorke in the houſe, or in the towne, or in the fielde: and herein hee ſhould blame the good antient Fathers, and good Kinges which haue had a multitude of perſons in their wages, and him ſelfe alſo, for hee had no ſmal company to ſerue him, as the holie hiſtorie reciteth. But Solomons intent was not ſuche. For alſo it is lawful, yea neceſſarie that they which haue much to do, ſet many about it, to helpe and aide them. For what force, vertue, or ſufficiencie ſoeuer they haue, they cannot perfourme al. And chiefly when a man hath ſtore of goods, he vſeth deedes of charitie when hee hyreth poore folkes to let them gaine their bread, & paieth them their wages faithfully. It behooueth alſo, as there where are many goods, are many eaters: ſo there where are many things to doe, muſt be many workers, as Iethro ſheweth it to Moſes. Solomons intent therefore is to praiſe them, which are ſo growne and augmented in vertue, that feeling their ablenes they wil not be idle, but rather of free courage employ them ſelues to do al things which are for their calling and duetie: and ſo they put the talents of the Lorde to profite. And contrariwiſe, his meaning is to blame the fooliſh naughtipackes, which deſpiſe al vertue, & alſo are void therof: and therfore they neither can nor wil apply them ſelues to their worke, but rather hire folks for wages, not regarding if they be ſufficient, or if they haue courage to do wel. As Solomō marketh it, when he ſaith, *That the foole giueth wages to the tranſgreſſors.* That is, to them which paſſe ouer or aboue that which is their duetie, deſpiſing it, and rather giuing them ſelues to doe the contrarie. And heerein is accompliſhed the common prouerbe, Like maiſter, like man. Vnderſtande wee therefore, that it behooueth vs to increaſe daily in vertue, to the end we may need no Vicar, Suffragan, nor Lieſetenant, but that hauing negligence & ſloath in diſdaine, & deſpiſing al eaſe, delight, and pleaſure of carnal reſt, wee may giue our ſelues carefully to doe our duetie, yea, when for the ſame, wee muſt endure afflictions and calamities, iniuries and wronges, reproche and ignomie. Let vs folowe Moyſes who carefully and faythfully did his duetie, what difficulties ſoeuer came, as one may ſee it in the ſcriptures.

Eccle.5.10
Exod.18.

Now although ſuch care appertain chiefly to great mē of the earth

(as likewiſe the firſt worde of this ſentence ſignifieth it, the which Num.12.7
we haue expounded *mightie*, and one may terme it, Maiſter, Lorde, Hebr.3.2.5.
excellent and vertuous) and that it apperteineth alſo to al thẽ which & 11.24.
haue any gouernment or ſuperintendance: for they ought aboue
al men to acknowledge the honour wherein God hath placed them,
and not to be vnthankful for the ſame, as Kinges and Princes of
the earth, which are falne a ſleepe in their owne delightes, & drunk
with worldly pleaſures, pleaſing them ſelues in their owne loftines:
and meanewhile make no account to doe their duetie, but hyre
men for wages, yea, negligent men who moſt commonly ouerturne
right. And although the Pope and his great Minions, Cardinalls,
and Biſhoppes, bee not ſo exalted by God, but rather by the Deuil,
whome they ſerue and doe homage too: yet neuertheleſſe, becauſe
they vaunt them ſelues to be Vicars of Ieſus Chriſt, and ſucceſſors
of the Apoſtles, which were men ſufficient enough to doe their office,
and applied it: for this cauſe we wil put them in the ranke and
number of fooles, which do nothing but haue their Vicars, & ſuffragans,
the which they hyre for benefices, & take no care if they be
honeſt mẽ or no, for why they wil haue thẽ no better thã thẽſelues:
and if they were honeſt men, they would not be ſerued with ſuche,
but rather would burn them. Although (I ſay) that great men aboue
al others, ought to be careful to do their duetie them ſelues: yet neuertheleſſe,
it is meete that al they that are called to the knowledge
of the trueth, & make profeſſion to be Chriſtians, be careful to imploy
themſelues faithfully to do al things which are for their eſtate,
duetie, and office: as wee are wel taught the ſame in the ſimilitude
of talents. Meanewhile let vs take heede of ſuch pride and preſumption, Mat.24.& 25.
not to eſteeme our ſelues ſo mightie, that of our ſelues we may
fulfil that which is our duetie: ſeeing wee are not able enough to 2.Cor.3.5
think any thing of our ſelues, as of our ſelues, but our ableneſſe and Phil.2.13.
might is from God. It is alſo he which woorketh in vs both the wil
and the effect, according to his good pleaſure. Alſo when Solomon
ſaieth, *That the mightie man doeth, &c.* Hee wil not eſtabliſhe free
wil, but that wee ſhould giue our ſelues to worke, without truſting
to our neighbours. For God appointeth vs not, making vs vertuous
and able, to liue without doing any thing, & paſſing away the time
pleaſantly, but that we labour al our time.

11 *The foole which beginneth his follie afreſhe, is lyke a Dogge returning to his owne vomit.*

By the corruption and wickedneſſe of our nature wee are deſpoiled of the true knowledge of God, without the which we haue neither religion nor reuerence, nor feare of him, ſo that wee are depriued of al wiſedome, and are fooles, without ſenſe, reaſon, and vnderſtanding. And there is none but of him ſelfe is ſuche a one, *Gen.6.5.* what worldly wiſedome ſoeuer he haue, for al the imagination of *& 8.21.* the thoughtes of the heart of man, are onely euil at al times, and *Pſal.14.1.* the conceiuing of the heart of man, is wicked from his youth vp. *2.3.* And therefore Dauid maketh great complaintes thereof: and ſo of our ſelues we are ignorant, blinde, wicked and naughtie, and can not bee otherwiſe, vntil ſuche time as God lighten and regenerate vs, giuing vs true intelligence of his worde, and reforming our heartes, to the ende wee may liue after the ſame: for this word is our vnderſtanding and wiſedome: and therefore we ought to receiue it, and imprint it in our heartes, to the ende it may make vs vomit al the follie of our natural corruption, and that we may bee wel purged from our filthineſſe and infections, and that we vomit it in ſuche ſorte, that wee neuer returne theretoo againe, but that we haue it in horrour and diſdaine, and that wee flye it as poyſon, and feare it as a mortal peſtilence: otherwiſe our later condition woulde be farre woorſe then the former, and we ſhould giue Satan *Mat.12.43.* a more eaſie acceſſe then he had afore. Solomon marketh vs out *2.Pet.2.20* the corruption, and returne to the ſame, when he ſaieth, *The foole which beginneth his follie afreſhe.* And after hee noteth the miſerable condition, ſaying, *Is lyke a Dogge returning to his owne vomit.* Wherin we haue to note firſt of al, that it is not without cauſe that hee calleth men fooliſhe: for from the beginning he hath forſaken his Creator from whom commeth al wiſdom. Now if for this cauſe he merite to be called foole, by a more reaſon hee is wel worthie of this name, when hauing bin inſtructed in the word of truth, which is the true wiſdom: he returneth to his follie: for in ſo doing he apoſtateth, & reuolteth from wiſdom, to whom afterwardes he cannot haue recourſe. For thoſe which once haue bin lightened and haue taſted the ſweete word of God, if they fal again, it is vnpoſſible that they ſhould be renued by repentance, &c. Secondly we haue to note, that although God haue eternally reprooued the foliſh which apoſtate and reuolt from wiſedome, and that the firſt cauſe of their apoſtacie is eternal reprobation: yet neuertheles, God ought not to be ſo blamed in no wiſe for their apoſtacie. For it is the foole *which beginneth his follie afreſh*: as Solomon ſheweth it, &c. Thirdly note we, that although the elect of God after being called to the knowledge of the trueth, commit follies, either through wickednes, or by ignorance or fragilitie, yet neuertheleſſe *they begin not their follie afreſh*: as we may ſee it here, when Solomon compareth the foole which beginneth his follie anewe, to the Dogge which eateth that which he hath vomitted: for there are none but the reprobate which are like to ſuch dogges. For although ſuch dogges, after receiuing again that which they haue vomited, do not return to it again: euen ſo the reprobate being gone backe from the holie commandement, which they haue receiued, doe neuer returne by repentance. But the elect of God are not denied repentaunce: as the ſcripture doth witneſſe in diuers places: and as there are therof diuers examples: and their laſt ſtate is better then the firſt: for they obteine forgiueneſſe of their ſinnes by the precious blood of Ieſus Chriſt: but the reprobate lye ſtil wallowing in their filthineſſe: and are like not onely vnto dogges, but alſo vnto ſwine, which after their waſhinges, do returne to wallow in the myre. Therfore, when we are deliuered from the filthineſſe of the world, through the knowledge of the word of God, let vs ſee that we accompliſhe our ſaluation in feare and trembling: for if we returne vnto our fooliſhneſſe, ſinning againſt the holie Ghoſt, we can not obtaine forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes.

Hebr.6.

2.Pet.2.22.

Mat.12.34.
32.
Hebr.6.4.&
10.26.

12 *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his owne conceit? more hope is of a foole then of him.*

We naturally do deſire to be wel eſteemed and accounted of amongſt our neighbours, & would haue men to hope wel of vs. This deſire is good & cõmẽdable, ſo that in attaining the effect therof, we behaue & gouern our ſelues, in the feare of God, & reuerence of his worde, with humilitie and modeſtie towardes our neighbours, and

that we may truely proteſt with Dauid, Lorde, I am not high min-
Pſal.131.1 ded: I haue no proud lookes, &c. For if we thinke to ſet foorth our
ſelues, and to bee eſteemed as being wiſe and able enough to win
reputation, not needing to bee admoniſhed nor rebuked: and
that wee bee ſo puffed vp with our worldly and carnal wiſedome,
that wee can abide no admonition, nor correction, wee depriue
our ſelues of al good reputation, and are in the way to bee coun-
ted woorſe then fooles, which are ſo corrupted, that they haue
no minde nor deſire after wiſedome, nor to get reputation. And
in deede, they which thinke them ſelues wiſe enough, are worſe to
be corrected and reformed then fooles, which are vtterly voyde of
wit and reaſon. Solomon doeth ſo pronounce it, ſaying, *Seeſt thou,*
&c. This thing hath beene prooued, as the ſcripture ſheweth. The
Scribes and Phariſies thought them ſelues iuſt and wiſe, and there-
1.Cor.1.30 by remained obſtinate and hardened, and woulde not receiue Ieſus
Mat.3.7.& Chriſt, who of God is made vnto vs wiſedome. But the Publicans
9.9.& 12.3. and whoremongers did confeſſe their follies and wickedneſſes, and
&15.13.& repented their ſinnes, & beleeued in Ieſus Chriſt, receiuing him for
21.31.& 23 their redeemer and Sauiour: but thoſe Scribes & Phariſies, which
13. were wiſe in their owne conceite, ſcorned him, refuſed him, and
Luk.7.29.& perſecuted him vnto death. For this cauſe are they ſharply rebuked,
15.1.2.& 16 threatned, and condemned, & the tolegatherers & whoremongers,
14.15.& 19 are comforted, and receiue hope to be ſaued Therfore if we would
2. that men ſhould conceiue a good hope of vs, let vs folow that which
Pro.3.5.6.7. Solomon doeth teache vs, ſaying: Truſt thou in the Lorde with al
Rom.12.16. thine heart, and leane not vnto thine own wiſdom, &c: and S. Paule
Eſai.5.21. ſaieth, Be not high minded, &c. Otherwiſe, though the world were
Luk.16.15. dazeled with our pompe and faire ſhew, yet ſhould wee be litle the
1.Pet.5.5. better for it: for we can not deceiue God which reſiſteth the proud,
1.Cor.3.18 abhorreth the high minded, and curſeth the arrogant. Wee ſee ther-
19. fore, that it is verie neceſſarie for vs to folow the aduertiſements of
Col.3.12. Saint Paule: If any amongeſt you ſeeme wiſe, let him become a
Phil.2.3. foole in this world, that hee may be made wiſe. Moreouer, let vs
note, that when Solomon ſaieth, *More hope is of a foole then of*
him, &c. This is no more to ſay, that he alloweth foliſhnes to cauſe
Rom.5.20. vs to continue therin: then when S. Paul ſaith, that where ſin aboũ-
ded, there did grace more aboũd: he alloweth not ſin, neither would
he

he haue vs to cõtinue therein, that grace might abound: otherwiſe Solomon ſhoulde builde that which hee had deſtroied, and deſtroy that which hee had builded. Let vs vnderſtande then that Solomon compareth him, which praiſeth himſelfe, and wil not ſuffer too be admoniſhed, with him that ſuffereth himſelſe to bee caried away of his vnbrideled concupiſcences, and yet doeth preſume nothing of himſelfe, whome hee calleth foole: and pronounceth that wee ought rather to hope for the amendment of ſuch a foole, then of him which thinketh himſelfe to bee wiſe. And thus he doth cloſely admoniſh vs, to forſake our fooliſhnes, that mẽ may not hope in vaine of vs, and that we ſhould obteine good fame and renowme: the which is more to be deſired thẽ great riches. And thus we may deſire it, ſo it be done without ambitiõ, & onely ſeeking the glory of God, and the profite of our neighbour: and not to be praiſed therefore, and to be made a wonderment, for to bee worſhipped; as doe the hypocrites, whom Ieſus Chriſt taxeth. *Pro.22.1.* *Mat.6.23.*

13 *The ſlouthfull man ſaith, A Lion is in the way: a Lion is in the ſtreetes.*

When God doeth commande or forbiddeth vs any thing, or that hee doeth place vs in any eſtate, and calleth vs vnto any vocation, we muſt imploy our ſelues therin with al care and diligence, without ſtopping or lingering to conſider the hurtes, or feare the dangers which may happen: following the good olde fathers: as Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob. Likewiſe God ſhewed vnto Moſes that wee muſt not ſtriue againſt that which God commandeth, and wil haue no man to leaue of his charge which hee hath giuen him, for feare of dangers. But they which wil neither obey God nor their ſuperiours, but wil liue after their fantazie, and to doe little, or nothing, are readie to alledge excuſes, and to lay for them ſelues the dangers which are to bee feared and auoided, as they thinke. Wee muſt not follow the example of ſuch, except wee woulde bee counted amongſt the number of the ſlouthful, and to bee blamed with them: as we ſee that Solomon doth rebuke them, ſaying, *The ſlouthfull man ſaith, a Lion, &c.* Wherein hee ſheweth that they which wil not doe their duetie, doe forge fantaſtical excuſes, *Ge.12.& 32.* *Exo.4.11* *Ier.1.7.17* *Mat.10.28.*

without knowledge that it is ſo indeede. For hee ſaith not, that the ſlouthful knoweth that the Lyon is in the way, but onely that the ſlouthful man ſaith it. And for to ſhewe howe the ſlouthfull man is very deſirous to make excuſes, hee repeateth againe his ſaying. Amongſt the number of ſuch ſlouthful men, wee may place the Nichodemites, which doe carefully excuſe themſelues for that that they knowe not what ſhal happen and betide them, and thinke thereby to bee excuſed from making confeſſion of their faith.

Now that wee may not bee of the ſame number, let vs aſſure *Luke.10.19* our ſelues of the promiſe of our Lorde, Beholde I giue you power, to treade vpon Serpentes, and Scorpions, and ouer al the power of the enimie, and nothing ſhal hurt you. Nowe that they which diſdaine and refuſe to doe their dueties, do not know whether the dangers for the which they excuſe themſelues from labour, are preſent, or to come. Solomon doth ſhewe it when hee ſaith,

14 *As the dore turneth vpon his henges, ſo doth the ſlouthfull man vpon his bed.*

When the ſlouthful man remooueth not out of the houſe, no more then the doore which hangeth vpon his henges, yea doth not ſtirre out of his bed, turning and toſsing nowe on the one ſide, and nowe on the other: as doeth the doore which is put to and fro, doeth not remooue from his place, but doeth turne hyther and thither vpon his henges, hee cannot certenly knowe what is doone in the ſtreetes) but doth feare paine ſo much, and liketh ſo wel of the reſt, that he forgeth in himſelfe excuſes, by the which he laboureth to ſhewe, or alſo to make himſelfe beleeue, hee hath good cauſe to abſtaine from labour. Notwithſtanding hee is not without paine, neither hath ſuch reſt as hee woulde: otherwiſe hee woulde not ſeeke it as hee doeth, turning himſelfe in his bed: for if he reſted after his deſire, and at his eaſe, hee woulde not turne ſo often from one ſide to another: but hee toſſeth and turneth ſeeking the reſt that he hath not. And ſo they which paſſe not of doing their duety and office, ceaſſe not to bee without paine, though they labour to auoide it: albeit they haue none without, yet doe they feele it within: and though they are not troubled with thoſe that apperteine nothing to their charge, yet are they vexed and moleſted with their houſholde. Neuertheleſſe let vs not thinke that Solomon woulde rebuke al them which turne them in their beds for to take the better reſt: for it is lawful for them which haue laboured ſore in the day, to take their reſt at night, that they may bee the better diſpoſed on the morrowe after for to doe their duetie: but hee blameth thoſe which doe eſchue and flie paine and labour, and doth declare them to bee vnprofitable: as alſo hee doeth againe immediatly, folowing, when hee addeth.

15 *The ſlouthfull hideth his hand in his boſome, & it greeueth him to put it againe to his mouth:*

And heerewith hee ſheweth that through his ſlouthfulneſſe hee muſt needs come vnto great miſerie, as hath been declared. But it ſeemeth that Solomon ſpeaketh heere, ſomewhat by an Ironie, and after our kinde of ſpeache. For if wee ſee any man which willingly abſtaineth from labour, though hee bee a ſtrong and bolde eater, and that hee ſpareth not his hande for to thruſt it often to his mouth, yet in mocking him, and rebuking him for that hee is not quicke and nimble, but to eate and drinke, wee ſay vnto him, Thou laboureſt ſore, and takeſt great paines to lift thy hand to thy mouth. He ſweateth (wil ſome ſay) for paines hee taketh in eating. And we muſt not wonder though Solomon doeth ſcorne and floute the ſlouthful: for they doe wel deſerue it, ſeeing they wil eate their bread in idleneſſe, which is not lawful.

16 *The ſluggarde is wiſer in his owne conceit, then ſeuen men that can render a reaſon.*

Hee ſheweth wel that ſlouthfulneſſe is a very dangerous vice, and that if a man delight therein, hee waxeth obſtinate and indurate: in ſuche wiſe as it ſeemeth there is no good, nor better, nor more goodly eſtate then to liue without doing of any thing, and in being idle, They are flouted which *let them ſelues out to* *hyre*, ſetting themſelues diligently on worke: neither can ſuche as wil not worke, indure their exhortations, admonitions, and corrections which doe reaſonably, and as behoueth exhorte them to labour, and to ſet themſelues on work, for to doe their duetie, and to giue good example vnto their neighbours. Of the number of ſuch ſlouthful perſons, which are ſo wiſe in their owne conceite, are the Pope, Cardinals, Biſhops, Prieſtes, and Monkes, which labour too make themſelues beleeue that they lead an angelical and perfite life, in doing nothing, but onely occupied about an heape of trifles, yea vngodlineſſes. For though the Lorde ſhoulde raiſe them vp *ſeuen*, that is to ſay, diuers perſons that can giue a reaſon, aſwel in labouring as in exhorting them, yet woulde they nothing eſteeme it, but woulde rather deſpiſe them, yea perſecute them: as wee may ſee by the fires thar are dayly kindeled. In the ſame number wee may ſet whooremongers, gluttous, drunkardes, and gameſters.

17 *Hee that paſſeth by and medleth with the ſtrife that belongeth not vnto him, is as one that taketh a dogge by the eares.*

Pro.6.19
Mat.5.9.

As God hateth and abhorreth him that ſoweth ſtrife between brethren: euen ſo alſo hee loueth and accepteth him that is carefull for to make peace betweene brethren: yea hee accounteth him for his childe: for bleſſed are the peacemakers, for they ſhalbe called the children of God. Wherevpon it may ſeeme (as alſo it is the trueth) that there is no ſtrife but that wee ſhoulde labour to appeaſe and quiet it, when wee once knowe of it, and are come where it is, and that we haue the power to reconcile the parties together which are at diſcord, though the perſons doe nothing at al belong vnto vs, but onely that they are men, and alſo that the matter wherevppon the diſcorde riſeth, doeth nothing touch vs, and that wee in medling to pacifie it, doe put our ſelues in danger: for wee come not hither to ſeeke our own particular profite, but to ſerue God and our neighbours. Wherſore it may ſeeme at the firſt ſight that Solomon ought not to haue compared him that *paſſeth by, and medleth with the ſtrife that belongeth not to him*, *vnto one that taketh a dogge by* *the eares*. For if it is a good thing to be wiſhed that brethren ſhoulde dwel together, yea altogether: euen ſo alſo ought wee too think him a good man which paſsing by, ſeeth a ſtriſe, and laboureth to ſet peace: and ſo hee ought to bee eſteemed wiſe and diſcrete: in ſteede where hee which taketh a dogge by the eares, is arrogant and raſhe, putting himſelfe in danger of the dogges teeth, if one of his eares doe ſlip or eſcape out of his handes or both of them. Euen ſo muſt wee vnderſtande that Solomon doeth not rebuke him that in paſsing by, laboureth to accord them which are at debate, but he that without witting and learning where about they ſtriue, without knowing who hath right or wrong, doeth take part and mainteine the quarrel of one of the parties againſt the other: ſuch a paſſenger is wel worthie of rebuke, when raſhly hee putteth him ſelfe into danger, for one of the parties: or which in paſsing by raiſeth a quarrel of a matter whereof hee hath nothing to doe nor to meddle. And thus, not to be like vnto him which taketh a dogge by the eares, let vs content our ſelues to meddle with that which belongeth vnto our ſtate and vocation. *Pſal. 133.*

18 *As hee that faineth himſelfe mad, caſteth fire brandes, arrowes and mortall things:*
19 *So dealeth the deceitfull man with his freend, & ſaith, am not I in ſport?*

God doeth highly commend vnto vs faithfulneſſe and loyaltie towardes our neighbours, when hee doeth expreſſely forbid vs to deceiue and beguile them. But ſo much it wanteth that we eſteeme any ſuch forbidding, that we thinke not a man to be cunning, except hee, can make his particular profite by the hurte of another, and moſt what they that are the greateſt deceiuers, and which doe moſt hurte, and bring greateſt loſſe and dammage, do perſwade men to beleeue that they doe nothing but ſporte and play, and that they meane no euil. In which doing they are very dangerous: as Solomō doeth declare, when he compareth ſuch deceiuers vnto thoſe which ſeeme to bee out of their wittes and without ſtrength and yet wil vſe great violence, the which can not bee eaſily holpen. This violence is ſignified, *By the caſting of fyrebrandes, arrowes, &c.* Now as *Leui. 19. 11. 12. 13.*

wee cannot eaſily remedie ſuche violence: euen ſo alſo can no man lightly and eaſily riſe vp from them which would haue men to think that what ſoeuer they doe againſt their neighbours is nothing but ſport. And thus ſuche deceiuers are murderers: for no thanke to them, though thoſe whom they deceiue, doe not periſhe. And foraſmuch as wee woulde not be counted murderers, let vs be careful to keepe trueth with our neigbours, following that which Saint Paule teacheth vs: Let no man oppreſſe or defraude his brother, in any matter, otherwiſe the vengeance of the Lorde is prepared redy againſt vs, as againſt murtherers. *1.The.4.6.* And if wee feare the deceiuers which in ſporting bring hurt vnto our good name, to our bodies, and to our temporal goods: by a more ſtrong reaſon wee muſt greatly feare the ſport of Papiſtes, whereby they deſtroy ſoules. I cal al their doctrine and al their ceremonies, play and ſport, becauſe that without faith they teache and doe all their diuine ſeruice, as they cal it: for if it were not to liue at their eaſe, they woulde not meddle with it. And truely there are many which in their hearts, doe mocke at their dooing: as wee may knowe it by their wordes vttered at vnawares.

20 *Without wood the fire is quenched, and without a talebearer ſtriſe ceaſſeth.*

When the fire hath taken any part, it is of no continuance, except it meete with matter fit for to burne, or that there is ſomthing miniſtred vnto it, euen ſo, when any ſtriſe beginneth, it may bee quickly appeaſed, except ſome talebearer doe labour to mainteine it. Solomon making ſuch compariſon, doeth firſt of al admoniſh vs, that wee ſhoulde not caſt debates, ſtriſes, the faggots of falſe reports and ſlaundering, flatterie, & falſe witneſſe bearing into the fire: for ſuch wood doeth not coole and quench ſtriſe, but mainteineth and kindleth it more: as wee haue ſeene heeretofore vnder other wordes. *Pro.18.8.*

Secondly, hee doeth admoniſhe vs that if wee feare leaſt the fire wil catch our earthly houſes, wee muſt feare muche more to giue entrance of talebearers vnto vs. Thirdly, as we draw the wood back out of the fire, that it ſhoulde no longer burne: euen ſo the office of the Magiſtrate is to roote out talebeareres. And euery one of vs ſhoulde labour to quenche the fire of ſtrife and debate, chiefly when wee beare our neighbours no good will, or that our neighbours do ſtirre and prouoke vs vnto anger and ſtrife. And for to doe this, we muſt renounce our owne concupiſcencs: for from them come debates.

Iam.4.1.

21 *As the coale maketh burning coales, and wood a fire, ſo the contentious man is apt to kindle ſtrife.*

Solomon compareth a riotous and contentious man vnto a cole & wood, the which are good creatures of God, the vſe whereof is good and neceſſary, as experience teacheth. It is not to ſay, that ſuch a man is any thing profitable for all that: but hee woulde giue vs to vnderſtand, that as whẽ a man careth not for warming of him ſelfe nor for fire, hee wil drawe backe the coles and wood: euen ſo if wee wil bee exempted from ſtrife and diſſentions: we muſt forſake the company of the riotous & cõtentious. Such men do kindle diſſentions which are of no ſmal continuance: as Solomon doeth marke it wel, when hee compareth them vnto coles and woode, which make the fire to burne the longer, and not vnto ſtrawe the which is incontinently conſumed, & mainteineth not the fire: and ſo they are very dangerous, and is very expedient to flie and auoide their conuerſation. For as when we ſtand neere vnto the chimney or fire, we waxe warme: euen ſo when we vſe the company of the contentious, wee are ſtirred vp to bee angry, and to make ſtrifes and debates, the which cannot bee ſo ſoone quenched, no more then it is eaſie to quench a great flame or great fire. Let vs vnderſtande then that Solomon doeth admoniſh vs to be ſoft, gentle, and gratious, that wee ſhoulde not ſtirre vp any man vnto ſtrife and diſſention againſt vs: and alſo he doth admoniſh vs to ſeeke the company of quiet people, & to flie theirs that are cõtentious. For albeit that Solomon doeth not preſently compare the contentious vnto chaffe, yet are they chaffe, which ſhall burne eternally in vnquenchable fire, as al other wicked ſhal do.

22 *The wordes of a talebearer, are as flatterings, and they goe downe into the bowels of the belly.*

The worde which wee here expounde, as *flatteringes* hath bene expounded as wounds, becauſe the word hath diuers ſignifications and not contrary: for there is no repugnancie that the talebearer ſhoulde flatter him whome hee wil deadly hurt: hee will ſpeake gentle, that no man may beware of him, and till hee haue leaſure to hurt at his pleaſure: and that not onely hee may doe hurt vntoo his goods, of whome hee ſpeaketh euil, but alſo that by his falſe tongue, hee may bring him vtterly vnto deſtruction, Solomon doth ſignifie it, ſaying,

That the flattering wordes goe downe into the bowels of the belly. As touching the reſt, when hee ſo often rebuketh the tale carrier, let vs knowe that it is becauſe hee is enclined vnto ſlaundering of his neighbour: and the which alſo is a very abhominable thing: for hee proceedeth therein of malice againſt his conſcience. The talebearer knoweth wel that hee would haue no man to ſpeake ſo of him. They that are ſuch, are dangerous: but ſome of them are much more to bee feared then other, when they labour by their tale bearing to turne away the poore weakelings from the true religion.

23 *As ſiluer droſſe ouer laide vpon a potſharde, ſo are burning lippes, and an euill hearte.*

When wee delight to ſee goodly thinges, if wee haue any veſſel of great price, for to make the ſame faire, wee wil couer it ouer with golde or ſiluer, according as wee eſteeme the peece to be worthie: neither wil we beſtowe ſuch coſt and glittering ſhew vppon a thing of nothing, as is a potſhearde, euen ſo when a man doth delight in the vprightneſſe and goodneſſe of his heart, hee wil ouerlay it, after a manner of ſpeache, with pure, cleane, ſweete, and louing woordes, hee wil make his hearte to ſhine by fit and conuenient talke, which ſhal bring no hurt nor trouble, no moleſtation nor hinderance vnto his neighbours, but rather with his talke he wil labour to make them glad, and to bring them profit and honour. A good Mat.12.35. man out of the good treaſure of his hearte bringeth good thinges. Contrarily, when a man delighteth in the frowardnes of his hearte, he wil not ouerlay the ſame with holy words for to pleaſure therewith his neighbors, to profit them, & to honor them: but with his fiery lippes of euil ſpeaking he wil endeuour to vexe his neighbour and to hurte him ſo much as he can. Beholde the ouerlaying which is fit for an euill hearte: ſuch had the Scribes and Phariſees, which Mat.12. coulde not ſpeake wel of Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde. And for this cauſe alſo our Lorde rebuketh them ſharply, declaring to them, that they had ouerlayed the ſame, with wickedneſſe agreeable to their harts, when hee ſaith to them, Generation of vipers, how can ye ſpeake wel, ſeeing you your ſelues are euil? Mat.12.34. Let vs therfore vnderſtand that Solomon ſaying,

As ſiluer droſſe, &c. doeth admoniſhe vs that we ſhoulde be careful to keepe that our heartes bee not infected with wickedneſſe and made vnfruiteful as is a potſharde. And for to doe this, let vs arme them with the pure worde of the Lorde, which are pure as ſiluer that is purified and perfectly fined: let vs learne thereby to abhorre al iniquitie and frowardneſſe, that wee may not haue furious and burning lips that wil vtter hurtful thinges vnto our neighbours, but rather that by our wordes we may procure their benefit and honour, without any thing hindring them.

24 *Hee that hateth, wil counterfaite with his lippes: but in his heart he layeth vp deceit.*

When they which conceiue any hatred againſt their neighbors, doe thinke to haue a iuſt cauſe to hate them: if they feele thẽſelues ſtrong ynough for to hurt and to bring damage, they wil not gladly diſſemble it, but doe openly aſſault their enemie: as Saule making him ſelfe beleeue that Dauid was his enemie, did purſue him without diſſimulation. The enemies of the trueth, which thinke to doe ſeruice vnto God for killing of the diſciples of Ieſus Chriſt, doe boldly pronounce without diſſimulation, ſentence of death againſt them. Euen ſo they which are not aſhamed to ſhewe their euil minde, doe nothing at al feare to declare themſelues enemies to them which pleaſe them not. Theſe are not they whereof Solomon ſpeaketh, when he ſaith,

He that hateth, &c. But of them which ſhal knowe in their conſciences that they doe wrongfully hate their neighbours, and yet wil not ceaſe their hatred, the which they wil diſſemble with ſweete woordes, and wil ſecretly deuiſe in their heartes ſodainely to take them whome they hate, and to hurte them by deceit, that they may not take heede and auoide them. The captaine of ſuch people is Caine: The brethren of Ioſeph are ſo inlikewiſe. The traytour Iudas doeth wel deſerue to bee ſet in the ſame order. Likewiſe the Scribes and Phariſees, and al thoſe which hate the trueth, which knowe and make a faire ſhewe vnto them, whome they purſue, that they may finde meanes to deſtroy them. Nowe wee muſt carefully take heede that wee doe not become like vnto the firſt haters, who are proude: for then wee ſhal not onely haue men for our aduerſaries, but God alſo who reſiſteth the proude. And wee muſt alſo take heede from being like vnto them, of whome Solomon nowe ſpeaketh: for then ſhoulde wee bee cruel and hypocrites ſinning againſt our owne conſciences and of ſet malice. Hypocriſie is noted and knowne by the fayning of the lippes: and crueltie is diſcerned by the diſſimulation which lyeth hidde within: and the malice prepenſed in them both: to wit, in the diſſembling of their lippes, and in the couering of the diſceit. But wee may take heede of them both, ſo that wee ſuffer not our ſelues to bee ouercome by the ſweete wordes of ſuch as hate vs, and that wee giue credite vnto the admonition folowing.

Gene. 4. 8. & 37.

25 *Though he ſpeake fauorably, beleeue him not: for there are ſeuen abhominations in his heart.*

The wordes of the hateful may ſeeme ſweete and amiable: but let vs not beleue them: for whiles he ſpeaketh ſo gently, hee inuenteth abhominable things in his heart, not only one or two, but many; as Solomon noteth by the number of *ſeuen*. Neuertheleſſe wee may ſay that Solomon meaneth heere, that the hateful are giuẽ vnto ſixe things that God hateth, yea to the ſeuẽth, which he abhorreth. For they which hate their neighbours inuent and ſeeke out all wicked

Prou. 6. 16.

ked and abhominable wayes, yea cruel meanes by the which they may deſtroy them, whome they hate. Nowe if we ought to beware of ſuch haters, as bring harme to our goods, bodyes or good name: by a ſtronger reaſon, wee muſt carefully flye from them which hate our ſaluation, which are enemies of the croſſe of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt (without the which we haue neither ſaluation nor life) and ſo conſequently are our enemies: as alſo Saint Paule doeth wel ſignifie it calling them greeuous wolues which will not ſpare the flock, and yet notwithſtāding wil ſpeake fauourably for to draw diſciples after them, but we muſt not beleeue them. We muſt beleeue them which folowe S. Paule, as hee exhorteth vs to be followers of him. *Acts.20.29.* *Rom.16.17.18* *Phi.3.17.18*

26 *Hatred may be couered by deceite: but the malice thereof ſhall bee diſcouered in the congregation.*

Solomon following that which he hath ſaide in the twoo former ſentences, doeth ſhewe nowe againe what the hatefull ſeeke, when hee laboureth to diſſemble and to hide his hatred, by the diſſembling of his lippes, and by the fauourablenes and ſweetnes of his voice, that is to ſay, that he ſeeketh to deceiue him whom he hateth, to take him, to hinder and to hurt him, before he can know it, til after he is caught and had by the backe, and cannot eſcape. Loe, what the hateful ſeeketh when he hideth his hatred. But he deceiueth himſelfe: for nothing is ſo hid, but at one time or other it commeth to light. And therefore let the hateful diſſemble and hide his hatred ſo long as he wil, ſaying he intendeth no euill againſt his neighbour or ſuch like wordes for to diſguiſe himſelfe and to counterfeit, and to deceiue his neighbour, his hatred ſhall not remaine couered, but his malice (as ſaith Solomon) *ſhalbe diſcouered in the congregation*. He thinketh to hide his hypocriſie, malice and crueltie, from twoo or three: but God will diſcouer and defame him before many. Though it is not heere in this preſent life, yet ſhal it be in the congregation of his Angels, and of his elect. *Mat.10.26.*

Let vs vnderſtande that Solomon by this ſentence doeth admoniſhe vs, that wee ſhoulde bee gentle, ſofte, and louing, and that wee ſhoulde walke vprightly and in the integritie of our heart one towardes another, without diſſembling. Thus doing, wee ſhal not bee diffamed in this worlde before the congregation of the Lorde, nor at the laſt day before his Angels and elect. Likewiſe hee doeth admoniſhe vs that wee ſhoulde not bee ouermuch penſiue, though through the hatred and malice of the wicked, our righteouſnes or innocencie be not made manifeſt and reuealed: for it ſhal come to light the time that God hath appointed, and as ſayth Saint *1.Tim.5.24. 25.* Paul, Some mens ſinnes are opened before hand, & come to iudgement, other ſome do follow after.

27 *Hee that diggeth a pitt, ſhall fall therin: and hee that rolleth a ſtone, it ſhal returne vnto him.*

The holy Scripture ſo vſeth by ſimilitudes, for to ſhewe the wicked, that the wicked enterpriſes they take in hand, againſt their neighbours for to deſtroy them, are not only vnprofitable, but alſo hurtefull, and noyſome. And amongeſt others, it ſetteth foorth the *Pſal. 7. 16. & 9.16. & 57.7. Iere.18. 20.* ſimilitude of them which hunt the great and wilde beaſtes, or ſuch beaſtes as are hurtfull: as Lyons, Beares, Wolues, and Foxes. Theſe hunters make pitfalles, and couer them ouer with greene turues, that the beaſtes may not perceiue them, and that in running ouer them, they may fall and tumble vnto the bottome: and ſometimes forgetting the place where they lye, and running after the beaſtes to make them fall in, they themſelues oftentimes tumble in headlong. Solomon doeth now vſe the like ſimilitude ſaying,

He that diggeth a pit ſhall fall therein. Whereby he ſheweth that ſo farre it is off, that the wicked profite by their wicked enterpriſes, that rather thereby they ſeeke their deſtruction, and finde it ere they know it. And for to expreſſe this ſame yet further, and to ſhewe that albeit the wicked are ſtrong and luſtie, yet they ſhall not auoyde the euill they thinke to doe vnto other, but it ſhall come to them and ouerthrowe them. He addeth another ſimilitude, the which is takẽ of a man that ſtãdeth at the foot of an hil, & with his arm caſteth vp a ſtone, & not taking heed of the ſame which falleth faſter & more ſwiftly thẽ it moũted, & went vpward, ſtãdeth ſtil not caring for it,and is ſodainely ouerthrowne of the ſtone. Wherein the faythful are admoniſhed not to feare the deuiſes and enterpriſes of the wicked: but ſeing them vexed with them,let them patiently looke for the iſſue which it ſhal pleaſe God to ſende: and the euil ſhal not deſtroy them,but themſelues that woorke it. Pharao did inuent much euil againſt the children of Iſrael: Saule againſt Dauid: Iudas againſt Ieſus Chriſt: but the ende hath ſhewed the trueth of this preſent ſentence. And though wee ſhoulde not ſee the experience thereof in this worlde, yet ſhal the laſt day ſhewe it,that the wicked haue ſought their owne deſtruction, in going about to deſtroy others. And if they which inuent but our temporal deſtruction ſhal receiue their rewarde,worthy of their paine and labour, by a ſtronger reaſon muſt they, (which ſeeke to intrappe mens conſciences,to deſtroy their ſoules, to looke for a grieuous and feareful puniſhement,as the Pope and his bande.

28 *A falſe tongue hateth the afflicted, and a flattering mouth cauſeth contention.*

The worlde is not ſatiſfied to ſee the affliction of the miſerable, after the outwarde apparance, but laboureth to adde affliction vpon affliction: as the wife of Putipher Ioſephs maiſter in Egypt
was not contented that Ioſeph ſhoulde bee a poore ſlaue, but for *Gene.39.*
to afflict him further,ſhe vſed a falſe and lying tongue againſt him. *Exo.1.33.*
Pharao alſo was not contented that the people of God were ſubiect vnto him, but made wicked lawes for to oppreſſe them and make them more miſerable.The neighbours of the children of Iſrael,as the Moabites,Ammonites,Edomites,and Iſmaelites, laboured more and more to kindle rage and fury againſt them. The Babylonians procured lawes and proclamations to be made to afflict the poore Iewes the more, that they helde in captiuitie: and as it is ſaide,when we wil kil a dogge,wee wil ſay and lay to his charge,hee is madde.In al times this hath bene ſeene prooued, after the which Solomon ſpeaketh, when he ſaith,

A falſe tongue hateth the afflicted. Wherein wee haue to note that that which Solomon calleth a *falſe tongue*,he afterwards calleth a *flattering mouth*, becauſe that the cuſtome of lyers for more better to deceiue and to hurte, is to flatter, that they may more eaſily execute that which they haue conceiued through hatred. And to the flattering mouth hee attributeth *contention*, which is the frute proceeding from hatred: for hee that hateth, deſireth nothing but to raiſe vp contentions againſt them whome hee hateth, that hee may ouerthrowe and deſtroy them. Nowe foraſmuch as wee woulde not bee counted neither lyers, nor flatterers, let vs take heede to folowe what ſoeuer tendeth and belongeth to peace, concorde and loue towardes our neighbours, and chiefly towardes ſuch as are moſt miſerable and full of calamitie, moſt deſpyſed and weake, which haue no power to bee reuenged. Otherwiſe, wee ſhoulde deſpyſe this preſent ſentence, the which is not written, to the ende that wee ſhoulde onely knowe what the lyers and flatterers thinke and doe, but alſo that wee ſhoulde abhorre their affections and woorkes, and alſo ſhoulde take heede and beware of them.

The xxvii. Chapter.

1 *BOaſt not thy ſelfe of to morrowe: for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring foorth.*

WOrldlinges which neither haue nor wil haue any knowledge of the prouidence of GOD, and can not beleeue that al things come to paſſe according as the Lorde hath ordeined in his eternal counſel, which cannot change, but doe attribute one parte vnto fortune and chaunce: and another parte vnto their wiſedome and worldly and ſenſual counſel, are full of arrogancie and boaſting of concupiſcences and diſordinate affections, after the which they promiſe themſelues great things in time to come: but moſt often they are deceiued of their minde & hope.

Gene.11.3.
& 27.41.
& 37.27.
Exo.1.8.
& 14.3.
1.*Sam.26.2.*
2.*Sam.15.*
1.*Kings. 12.*
2.*Kings.18.*

Solomon woulde not not haue vs to bee like vnto ſuch worldlings, when he ſaith,

Dan.4.
Luke.12.16.
Iames.4.13.

Boaſt not thy ſelfe of to morowe. For beſides the ir arrogancy, as we may ſee by the ſcriptures, they guide themſelues by chaunce, not referring & committing themſelues vnto the wil of God. Chaunce is marked, when Solomon ſaith, *For thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth.* When he thus ſpeaketh, he doeth not rebuke vs of ignorance, though we know not what ſhal be done to morowe: for God onely hath things to come in his preſence: and would that we ſhould tarie patiently and looke for that which it ſhal pleaſe him to ſende, and that we ſhoulde be certified that al thinges come to paſſe according to his good wil: for the which the foreſaide worldlings looke not after: and therfore they are wel worthy to be rebuked of ignorance, the which is not imputed vnto the faythful, which waite vpon the prouidence of God. For albeit that particularly, they know not the things that are to come: yet neuertheleſſe they knowe and are certified that nothing can come to paſſe, but what God wil haue, and that hee hath ordeined from eternitie. This ignorance is humbleneſſe before God, who doth not count it for ignorance: but whē we doe ſo caſt our ſelues downe, wee are receiued and accepted for wel learned and knowing much. Notwithſtanding, though wee doe not knowe, what thing the day *ſhal bring foorth*, yet hee doth not meane that we ſhould do nothing, whereof wee might make our profite on the morowe: otherwiſe wee ſhoulde tempt God, who would haue vs to labour, that afterwardes we might eate the fruite of our labour. Hauing regard to this wil of God, if we labour faithfully to gather riches, without ouer greedie deſire, not minding to enriche our ſelues, and without deſire to hurt our neighbours, wee care nothing for to morow, but do folow the meanes, by the which God wil giue vs our dayly bread. Furthetmore let vs note, that our free wil is very ſmal, yea of no force, when we neither ought to wil, nor can ordeine of things done to morowe. And if the worldly & temporal matters which are of no great importance & waight, are not in our power, much leſſe ſhal we haue power ouer the heauēly and eternal. Let vs alſo note that Solomon doeth heere compare the day vnto a woman with childe, of whome no man can certainly ſay whether ſhe ſhal bring foorth a ſonne or a daughter: and as wee cannot tel the ſame, euen ſo is it too much curioſitie to enquyre thereof. Let vs therefore vnderſtande that by this ſimilitude Solomon doeth admoniſh vs that we ſhoulde not be curious.

2 *Let another man prayſe thee, & not thyne owne mouth: a ſtranger, and not thine owne lippes.*

The worldlings and carnal men which care nothing of glorifying God in al things, and who for al thinges doe not acknowledge him to bee the onely author of al thinges, doe greatly praiſe themſelues, and are ſo puft vp in their hearts, that the mouth muſt ſpeake, and ſounde out the praiſes of ſuch boaſters: in ſuch wiſe that ſome wil bragge of the nobilitie of their parentage: other ſome, of their wiſedome and cunning: otherſome, of their power, credite, and authoritie: and other ſome againe of their beautie and riches: and the moſt fooliſhe boaſters of al, wil brag of their merites. In the number of ſuch boaſters, wee may reckon Abſolon, Roboam, Nabuchadnezar, the *riche* glutton, the proude Phariſee. The ende of ſuch people is ſhameful and ful of confuſion: and therefore Solomon, which deſireth our honour, woulde not haue vs to bragge of our ſelues: but if there bee any thing in vs worthy of praiſe, that wee ſhoulde holde our peace, and let others ſpeake, ſaying, *Let another man praiſe thee, and not thyne owne mouth*. And foraſmuch as it is very harde for vs to forſake boaſting, and that our tongue doeth ake with the great deſire that wee haue to praiſe our ſelues, Solomon therefore addeth the ſame forbidding againe, ſaying, *Let it bee a ſtranger, and not thy lippes*. And let vs note, that hee ſaieth not, let thy brother, or thy couſine praiſe thee, but a ſtranger. For if the brother praiſe the brother, or the couſin his couſin, this is as if a man ſhoulde praiſe himſelfe: but if a ſtranger doeth praiſe vs, it is an argument and probation that we walke ſo vertuouſly, that they which are not acquainted with vs, are conſtrained to praiſe vs. Notwithſtanding, this is not to ſay, that it is laweful for vs to doe any thing for to bee praiſed: but in al our conuerſation, wee muſt ſeeke the honour and glory of God, & the edification of our neighbours. Thus dooing, God without our deſire, wil raiſe vp men which ſhal praiſe vs, according as ſhalbe expedient: as wee may ſee

2.Sam.15.2
1.King.12.10
Dan.4.27.
Luke.12.16.
& 18.11.

by the holy hiſtories, wherein hee hath gathered by wryting the deedes and actes worthy of prayſe of our olde Fathers, that wee ſhoulde praiſe them and folow their vertues: and alſo hath brought to light the actes of the wicked, that wee abhorring them, might feare to doe the like.

3 *A ſtone is heauie, and the ſand weightie: but a fooles wrath is heauier then them both.*

Wee naturally doe deſire to bee exempted from offices, paine, labour, and trauaile, and to liue doing nothing, except a very little thing, for to ſeeme that wee woulde not bee ydle. And yet for to be at eaſe, and to liue delicately, wee ſeeke the acquaintance, and familiaritie of the Lords of the earth, who for the greateſt parte, are ſo voide of wiſedome, and of modeſt affection, and of humble mind, that for a thing of nothing and without cauſe they wil become angry, and wil ſtorme againſt them that are about them, and wil greatly reuile them, and furiouſly oppreſſe them: ſo that it were better for them to helpe a maſon or bricklayer, for to carry ſtones & morter, then to dwel with ſuch fooles, with whom a man knoweth not howe to bee, except hee can abyde iniuries & wrongs, oppreſſions, & violences, euen to be weary of his life, when a man ſeeth that he cannot tel howe to auoide their furie, and that they rather looke for death, then for life. Albeit that the childrẽ of Iſrael being in Egypt, ſought not to liue ydlely without doing any thing, yet it had beene more expediẽt for thẽ to haue ſuffred more paine thẽ they did, then ſo to haue felt the wrath of the king which cauſed their ſõnes to be ſlaine. Dauid alſo did not ſeeke to liue ydlely: but it had bene more neceſſarie for him in mans iudgement, to haue liued a priuate and a baſe life, then to bee the ſonne in lawe of Saule, who was a wicked and cruel foole, and perſecuted Dauid, in ſuch wiſe, that hee knewe not where to hyde himſelfe, but amongſt the infidels. According to this experience Solomon ſaith nowe, *A ſtone is heauy, &c.* Wherein hee doeth admoniſh vs, not to bee delicate, but to folowe our vocation, though it be very harde. Let vs alſo learne, that it is farre better to beare the yoake of Ieſus Chriſt, which ſeemeth troubleſome and harde to the fleſh, then to ſubmitte a mans ſelfe and enclyne vnto the traditions and doctrines of men. For albeeit that at the firſt approche it ſeemeth that they are Angelles which teache them: yet doe they proceede with greate furie: firſt of all againſt them that wil not yeelde and obay: ſecondly they deſtroy for euer their ſoules which ſuffer themſelues to be deceiued by thē. And further let vs note, that hee ſaieth not ſimply and abſolutely, *wrath*, but the *wrath of a foole:* for it is profitable for vs that the wiſe become angry with vs, when we faile & erre, ſeeing they ſeeke not our deſtruction, but our profit, the which wee ſhal feele, if wee doe not rebel againſt them. And contrarily, the foole by his wrath ſeeketh nothing but deſtruction, for the which to auoide wee muſt take diligent heede from conſenting vnto his folly: for thinking to eſchue a temporal deſtruction, wee ſhal fal into an eternal damnation: from the which the fooles ſhal not be exempted, for they waxe angry without cauſe, the which is equal to murther.

4 *Anger is cruell, and wrath is raging: but who can ſtand before enuie?*

Gene.4.
& 27. & 37.
Exo.14.
1.Sam.18.
2.Sam.15.
1.Kings.12.

An angry man is cruel: as we may ſee by Caine, Eſaw, and the brethren of Ioſeph. And a man that is furious, is like vnto a flood of water that deſcendeth with raging: as wee may ſee in Pharao, Abſolon, and Roboam. Nowe that which is ſeene by experience, Solomon doth pronounce, when he ſaith, *Anger is cruel. &c.* Wherein he doth aduertiſe that the companie of the wrathful & furious mā is very hurtful and dangerous, and for this cauſe that we ſhould not deſire the ſame, but ſhould rather ſhunne and auoide it. And foraſmuch as we deſire not that any man ſhould fly our company, as frō cruel and wrathful, furious and vnmerciful men, and alſo that wee would not haue our neighbours to be ſuch towards vs, let vs vnderſtand that Solomon doeth admoniſh vs to put from vs al bitternes, anger, wrath, and roaring, as doeth S. Paule. The angry and wrathful are very dangerous, but the enuious are far more cruel: as Solomon doeth pronounce, when he ſaith,

Eph.4.31.32.
Col.3.8.

But who ſhal ſtande before enuie? For beſides crueltie and raging, the which wee may correct in the angry and wrathful, the enuious is ambitious and arrogant, a diſſembler, purpoſing malice, obſtinate and harde of heart againſt his conſcience, ſo that they are altogither without reconciliation: as wee may ſee in the Scribes and Phariſees againſt Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde. Thus we are aduertiſed to take diligent heed of the enuious, and alſo that we our ſelues fal not too it: folowing the admonition of S. Peter.

2. Pet. 2. 1.

5 *Open rebuke is better then ſecrete loue.*

Loue is little woorth and ſerueth them to no purpoſe whome we thinke wee loue, or that wee woulde perſwade our ſelues wee loue, except that wee declare the ſame by good deedes towardes them, in helping their neceſſitie. And therefore S. Iohn doeth admoniſh vs to helpe the neceſſitie of our brethren. It were better for vs to be openly rebuked, then ſo to bee loued: as Solomon doeth pronounce it, ſaying,

Iames. 2. 14.
1 Ioh. 3. 17. 18.

Open rebuke or correction, &c. For if wee doe openly rebuke our neighbours, if they are eaſie to bee taught and tractable, they wilbe aſhamed, and wil beware of returning to the like faute, and wil returne vnto God by true repentance: as did Dauid, after that the Prophet Nathan had rebuked him. That rebuke was much more profitable for him, then the ſecrete loue of Nabal: who ſought to do Dauid no hurt, but yet he woulde not helpe his neceſſitie. As there are many ſuch which wil perſwade themſelues that they loue their neighbours ynough, when they doe them no wrong nor violence, though they haue no minde at al to doe them any good. Such kinde of loue is ſo ſecrete, that it is nothing, but rather hatred: for where there is no loue, there is hatred: ſeeing there is no meane way betweene both. Moreouer, wee are admoniſhed rather to reprooue and correct, then to diſſemble the fautes of our neighbours: and alſo we are admoniſhed that we ſhoulde not deſire to be flattered, but to be ſharply corrected and rebuked.

2. Sam. 12.
1. Sam. 25.

6 *The woundes of a louer are faythful: but the kiſſes of an enemie are harde.*

Wee cal a tree a true and faithful ſiſter, when it faileth not to bring foorth her frute in due ſeaſon: euen ſo wee cal riuers true or faythful ſiſters, when they faint not, but doe alwayes runne abundantly. After this ſenſe Solomon doeth cal the *woundes of a louer* which chaſteneth, when he ſaith, *the woundes of a louer, &c.* For albeit that after mens carnal reaſon, we take not the chaſtizementes and corrections in good parte, yet are they fruiteful. And thus, Solomon doeth admoniſh vs that wee ſhoulde count the chaſtizements of the wiſe and iuſt, profitable and fruiteful: ſeeing they loue vs, and that they labour to make vs that wee ſhoulde take our profite, not onely temporal, but alſo ſpirituall and eternall. For they ſeeke to make vs exerciſed and profite in the feare of the Lorde God, whereby wee are turned from euill, to followe righteouſneſſe and holineſſe, and conſequently come to the accompliſhement and perfection of this profite, which is the poſſeſſion of the euerlaſting bleſſedneſſe. The woundes therefore of ſuch people are very faythful, and ſo muſt we receiue them in good parte, with patience and with ioy, and ſay with Dauid, let the righteous ſmyte mee, for that is a benefite: and let him reprooue me, and it ſhal be a precious oyle, that ſhal not breake myne head, &c. *Pſal.141.5.* And if wee muſt thus behaue our ſelues towardes men which of loue that they beare vs, doe chaſten vs: it is therefore good reaſon that wee ſhoulde take in woorth, when the Lorde which loueth vs with an incomprehenſible loue, doeth correct and chaſten vs: euen as the Apoſtle doth admoniſh vs: my ſonne deſpiſe not the chaſtizement of the Lorde, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him: for the Lorde correcteth euery ſonne that he loueth, &c. *Heb.12.5.* Nowe as wee muſt patiently ſuffer their chaſtening that loueth vs: euen ſo contrariliе, wee muſt fly and abhorre the flatteries of them which hate vs: as Solomon doth admoniſh vs, ſaying, *and the kiſſes, &c.* Albeit that ſuch kiſſes after the outwarde apparance are pleaſant, as the worde which we haue expounded *harde* may import: yet when they are ful of treaſons and murthers, the which are things much abhominable, then are they truly very harde: as amongſt other the kiſſe of Iudas the traytour.

7 *The perſon that is full, treadeth vnder feete an hony combe: but vnto the hungry ſoule euery bitter thing is ſweete.*

It is lawful for vs to eate and to drinke, of ſuch things as GOD hath created for our vſe, and alſo it is as lawful for vs to abſtaine frõ them: as we may in ſome ſort gather of S. Paule. I ſay in ſome ſort: for the intent of S. Paule, was not to handle, whither it were lawe-ful for vs either to eate, or to abſtaine: but knowing that their vſe is free and lawful for vs both to take and to leaue, we ſhould be careful to keepe our ſelues that we fal not into one of theſe two extremities: the one whereof is properly vitious & damnable, the other is dangerous and hurtful. The vicious extremitie is marked by Solomon, when he ſaith, *The perſon that is ful, treadeth vnder feete, &c.* Wherein he doeth ſhewe vs that wee ought not to deſire ſuperfluitie and exceſſe in eating and drinking, but that wee ſhoulde fly and auoide al gluttony and drunkenneſſe, and al intemperancie. For beſides that al the perſon is made heauie and ill diſpoſed, men come to deſpyſe and marre the good creatures of God, which is a great vnthankefulneſſe. Solomon doeth note the contempt & ſpoiling, *by treading vnder feete the honny combes.* We may alſo ſay that Solomon meaneth that the perſon which hath abundance of riches, and doeth not confeſſe that God doeth giue them to him, for to vſe ſoberly and temperately, careth not though the better parte be loſt: as are they which neuer haue their tables furniſhed ynough to their minde and deſire, at the which they entertaine a ſort of ydle bellies. There are the combes of hony troden vnder feete, there is much good meate loſt, that would ſerue wel to fil the hungry ſoule. And thus let vs vnderſtande that Solomon doeth exhorte vs vnto ſobrietie and temperancie, howe riche ſoeuer wee bee, and woulde haue vs to confeſſe that they come from the goodneſſe and liberalitie of the Lorde, that wee ſhoulde feare to make any ſpoyle, or to haue them in contempt. But as touching the dangerous extremitie, it ſtandeth in the abſtinence of meates and drinkes, when

Rom.14.3.6
Phi.4.11.12

any man careth not to nouriſhe and to ſuſtaine himſelfe, but doeth famiſh and hungerſtarue himſelfe, ſo that with the greate greedineſſe that hee hath to eate, he careth not what he taketh and eateth, but deuoureth the firſt meate that he meeteth and commeth to, be it good or bad, ſweete or bitter. Solomon noteth this extremitie, ſaying, *But vnto the hungry ſoule euery bitter thing is ſweete.* The which I cal dangerous, becauſe that the perſon which ſo ruleth himſelfe, runneth in danger to poyſon himſelfe. Neuertheleſſe wee may ſay that Solomon meaneth that they which are poore, and ſtay to eate til they haue a ſtomake, haue no neede of ſauſe, for to dyne withal, and that the meate which the gluttons doe abhorre, as if they were bitter, are to them ſweete and pleaſant. Nowe as they that are ful, deſpiſe good meate, euen ſo the worldly wiſe which are puft vp with their knowledge, doe nothing regarde and eſteeme the good meate of our ſoules, which is the worde of God, the which to *Pſal. 19. 11.* the faithful is ſweeter then hony. Contrarily, as the hungry take them to al kinde of meates that they meete with, and are in danger to be poyſoned: euen ſo the ignorant doe conſent as ſoone vnto a falſe doctrine as vnto a good and true: and ſo their minds and vnderſtandings are eaſily poyſoned. They alſo which are delighted in the pleaſures and voluptuouſneſſe of this world, and do enioy thẽ, do nothing eſteeme heauenly things. They which challenge righteouſneſſe by their workes, and thinke themſelues riche by the righteouſneſſe of them, are not earneſt, neither do hunger that GOD ſhould graunt them grace, or ſhoulde ſhewe his goodnes to them: but they which hunger and thirſt for righteouſneſſe, doe finde the yoake of Ieſus Chriſt ſweete, and his burthen light, and doe manly and couragiouſly beare the croſſe, yea death.

8 *As a byrd that wandereth from her neſt, ſo is a man that wandereth from his owne place.*

The nature of the byrd is to be careful of his neſt, that hee may nouriſh, mainteine, bring vp, and keepe his little ones. Notwithſtanding yet wil he ſodainely fly from his neſt, & forſake his little byrds, And this ſhal be ſometimes for to goe ſeeke foode for her ſelfe, and for his young ones: and ſo this commeth of the care that hee hath to ſeede them wel: ſometimes foraſmuch as he hath perceiued ſomthing wherewithal hee hath beene feared: and ſo he wandereth and flyeth farre off, for to ſaue his life, and forgetteth ſome of his little ones. Such is the nature and kinde of doing of little byrds, as wee may ſee it by experience. And the holy ſcripture maketh mention of it, not to the ende that wee ſhoulde knowe it: but the ſcripture ſpeaketh of byrdes, comparing vnconſtant men vnto them, which eaſily are afearde, forſake their office, and forget their duetie. And thus by this compariſon the ſcripture doeth rebuke the fearefulneſſe, the weakeneſſe and inconſtancie of men: as heere, when Solomon ſaith,

As a byrde that wandereth, &c. True it is that as the byrd doeth flye farre from his neſt for to ſeeke foode and meate, euen ſo, when the Sunne is vp, man muſt goe forth vnto his worke and to his labour, til it is night: but hee ſhoulde not goe farre from his place. For hee that doeth his office and duetie, whereſoeuer hee goeth, hee doeth not wander farre from his place, but keepeth reſidence there as hee ought. And alſo when the ſcripture compareth man vnto the byrde that flyeth her way, moſt commonly it ſerueth for to rebuke him, as in this preſent ſentence, or for to threaten to take his reſt from him. Nowe that wee may not bee taxed of inconſtancie, of fearefulneſſe, or of weakeneſſe, let vs take heede to bee careful to holde faſt our place, in walking diligently and faithfully in the ſtate wherein God hath placed vs: and
let vs for any feare that can bee made vs, ſaye with Dauid: In *Pſalm. 11. 1*
the Lorde haue I put my truſt, howe then ſay yee vnto my ſoule,
fly away to your mountaine as a byrde? For if in holding our place
wee walke in the feare of the Lorde, and doe aſke in a ſure truſt
with Dauid, Keepe mee as the apple of thyne eye, &c. againe, *Pſalm. 17. 8*
Haue mercie vppon mee, O GOD, haue mercie vppon mee: for *& 57. 2.*
my ſoule truſteth in thee, &c. hee wil not fayle to aſſiſt vs, and to *Pſal. 91.*
keepe and ſaue vs, as hee promiſeth. For hee is not like vnto
the byrde which wandereth farre from his neſt, and forgetteth his *Dan. 33. 11.*
young: but hee is lyke vntoo the Egle which ſtirreth vp her *Exo. 14. 4.*
neſt, flootereth ouer her birds, ſtretcheth out her wings taketh thẽ, *Mat. 23. 27.*
and beareth them on her winges. Hee is alſo like vnto the henne

which gathereth her chickens vnder her winges. Wherefore confeſſing that of our ſelues and of our owne nature wee are weake, vnconſtant, and fearefull as little byrdes, let vs runne vnder the winges of this henne, truſting in the fatherly care of our father, and wondering at his goodneſſe which hee ſheweth to them which truſt in him, ſaying, How excellent is thy mercy, O God! therefore the children of men truſt vnder the ſhadowe of thy winges. I wil dwel in thy Tabernacle for euer, and my truſt ſhalbe vnder the couerings of thy winges. *Pſal. 36. 7. & 61. 4.*

9 *As the oyntment and perfume reioyce the heart: ſo doeth the ſweetneſſe of a mans friend by heartie counſel.*

When the body is at his eaſe and in health, the hearte is merry and glad: as we feele it by experience. And therefore after this experience, Solomon ſaith, *that the oyntment and perfume reioyce the heart.* Not that hee wil teache vs that for to poſſeſſe our delightes and ſenſual pleaſures wee ſhoulde apply oyntmentes and perfumes vnto our bodies: for ſuch delightes, becauſe they are too curiouſly deſired, and vſed exceſſiuely, are not acceptable vnto God, albeit he hath created al things for the vſe of man, to whome it is laweful to vſe al good creatures, ſoberly and tẽperately, with giuing of thanks. But Solomon ſpeaketh of oyntment and perfume, by compariſon, and woulde, that if we reioyced in ſuch things, and that we founde them ſweete, wee ſhould alſo reioyce at the vnfained ſweete counſel that the neighbour giueth: for by ſuch ſweeteneſſe the ſoule of man is brought in good health: as Solomon doeth pronounce, ſaying,

So doeth the ſweeteneſſe of a mans friende by harty counſell. When wee ſee that our neighbour loueth vs, and that he deſireth nothing but to procure our wealth and our ſaluation, and to cauſe vs to attaine theretoo, he doeth teache, admoniſhe, exhort, reprooue, correct, rebuke and threaten, according as hee ſeeth to bee expedient and neceſſary for vs: ſo farre is it of that wee ſhoulde ſtomacke or deſpyte him, that rather conſidering the gentleneſſe and good affection that hee beareth to vs, wee ſhould receiue his counſel pleaſantly and acceptably, though in outwarde apparance it bee ſharpe and ſowre: as Dauid did the reprehenſions of Nathan the Prophet: and the Apoſtle Saint Peter of the rebuke that Saint Paule gaue him. Otherwiſe the good and ſweete ſauour of Chriſte, which is brought vnto vs by his miniſters, ſhoulde bee ſauour death vnto death, and ſhoulde goe vnto perdition. 2.Cor.2.14.15.16.

10 Thine owne freende, and thy fathers freende forſake thou not: neither enter into thy brothers houſe in the day of thy calamitie: for better is a neighbour that is neere, than a brother farre off.

We are ſo vnconſtant of nature, that wee cannot holde that which is profitable, and that which is familiar vnto vs, & as it were common by cuſtome, but wee deſire newe thinges, and therefore we labour to make alterations, the which are not alwaies profitable, but oftentimes bring great hurt, wherby we haue troubles & moſt heauie ſorowes: in ſuch ſort that we know not on which ſide to turne vs, inſomuch that wee dare not reſort vnto our owne carnall brethren: for wee haue experience that the riche brethren doe not care for their poore brethren, nor woulde gladly to ſee them, and alſo doe hate them. Wherefore, when we haue proued and tried our freendes, wee ought not to change, but to holde them ſtil: as Solomon hath alreadie admoniſhed vs. And nowe hee doeth the like, when he ſaith, Pro.19.7. Pro.18.24.

Forſake not thou thine owne freende, &c. And heerein, hee teacheth vs, that if wee haue good neighbours, who haue alwayes ſhewed ſignes and tokens of loue, and haue beene fauourable and helpeful vnto our houſe, that wee ſhoulde in no wiſe ſeparate our ſelues and looſe ſuch neighbours: for in time of neceſſitie ſuche neighbours wil bee more ready to helpe vs, then our owne carnall brother: and oftentimes we looſe both time, labour and our hope to reſort vnto ſuch brethren. Solomon doth ſignifie aſmuch, ſaying, *Neither enter thou into thy brothers houſe in the day of thy calamitie.* Hee meaneth not that it is yll doone of vs to reſorte vnto our brother to haue ſuccour of him in aduerſitie: but he ſignifieth that moſt often wee gaine nothing in beſeeching him. As Ioſeph in mans iudgement got nothing in beſeeching his brethren: they tooke no compaſsion or pitie on him, but ſold him for a poore ſlaue. And ſo it is far better to haue good neighbors neere vnto vs, and willing to helpe vs, then brethren that care nothing for vs, and are farre from vs. Let vs therefore vnderſtande, that neighbours are admoniſhed to mainteine peace, concorde and loue amongeſt themſelues, and to helpe one another: and brethren are rebuked for their crueltie, when they refuſe and deny brotherly duetie. For albeit that they kil not their poore brethren, as Cain ſlue Abel: yet are they the brethren of Cain, and are murtherers, when in not helping their brethren, they declare their hatred which anſwereth to murder.

11 *My ſonne, be wiſe, and reioyce mine hearte, that I may anſwere him that reprocheth mee.*

Bee it that Solomon ſpeaketh heere in the perſon of God, or of the miniſters of the worde, or of fathers and mothers, or other ſuperintendents, let vs knowe that when hee asketh of vs that wee ſhoulde giue our ſelues vnto wiſedome, and that in ſo doing, wee ſhoulde inwardly reioyce him, hee admoniſheth vs carefully to frequent the woorde, and that thereby wee ſhoulde learne to amende our liues, forſaking al infidelitie and incredulitie, al ſuperſtition and idolatries, al malice and iniquitie, al offences, inſolences and diſſolutions: and that wee ſhoulde conuert by true faith, and by true repentance to truſt vpon the goodneſſe of our God, to loue the good that hee commandeth, and to giue our ſelues to doe it. For wee cannot otherwiſe reioyce our good God and father, then in turning to him, and obeying with a free minde his worde: as hee hath well
Gen.6.& 19 ſhewed, when he repented to haue made man, and that Noe found fauour in his ſight: and when hee ouerthrewe Sodome, and deliuered Lot: When hee raiſed vp Moſes, and diuers Prophetes, to inſtruct the people in al wiſedome and prudence, and to make them
Eze.18.30. turne vnto his God: and when he ſaith expreſly, Returne you ther-
& 33.11.18 fore, and repent you of al your tranſgreſsions, and wickedneſſe

ſhal not deſtroy you, &c. As ſure as I liue ſaith the Lorde, I deſire not the death of a ſinner: but that hee ſhoulde conuert and liue. *Deut.30.8.* Thou ſhalt returne and obey the voice of the Lorde, &c. And they *Iere.32.38.* ſhalbee my people, and I wil bee their God, &c. What thinke yee? If a man haue an hundred ſheepe, and that hee hath loſt one, doeth *Mat.18.12.* hee not leaue nientie and nine in the mountaines, & goeth to ſeeke the ſame that went aſtray? It is the wil alſo of your heauenly father, that not one of the leaſt ſhal periſhe. What man among you, who *Luke.15.4* hauing an hundred ſheepe, if hee hath loſt one, doeth hee not leaue nientie and nine in the wildernes, & goeth his way after that which which is loſt? &c. Euen ſo I tel you, there ſhal bee ioy in heauen for one ſinner that repenteth, &c. Heerein, all they which haue charge, ought to learne whereat they ſhoulde reioyce: to wit, for the conuerſion of them that haue gone aſtray, and of their perſeuerance in goodneſſe, that they haue learned by the worde: as S. Paul doeth *Phi.2.14* ſhewe it to the Philippians. And thus, the Papiſtes doe not execute their charge with ſuch ioy as they ought to doe: for they reioyce at the profite of the purſe that they receiue, and not for the edification and ſaluation of the people. Now albeit that the poore faithfull which are the children of God, and of wiſedome, doe giue thẽſelues vnto wiſedome, and labour to pleaſe God, and their gouernours by holy life: yet the wicked ceaſſe not to trouble them, to doe them iniury, to reuile them, and to ſlaunder them: as in al times the true & faithful ſeruantes of God haue beene ſubiect thereto: but they ought not care for it: for our good God and father taketh theſe reproches as done againſt himſelfe, & knoweth wel how to reſiſt thẽ, if wee perſeuer in wiſedome: as Solomon doeth ſignifie when hee addeth, *that I may anſwere him that reprocheth mee*. Anſwering, heere is taken for reſiſting, and to confounde, and to reuenge, as alſo in our language we vſe it in this ſignification. Now as God thinketh him to bee prouided of anſwere and defence againſt our oppreſſors and ſlaunderers, if we apply our ſelues vnto wiſedome: euen ſo, ſo much as in vs lyeth, we make God to be dumbe, & make him aſhamed, when wee giue our ſelues vnto vanitie, fooliſhneſſe, and wickedneſſe: and likewiſe thoſe which haue charge ouer vs: as Saint Paule complaineth of the Galathians. *Gala.4.20.*

12 *A prudent man ſeeth the plague, and hideth himſelfe: but the fooliſh goe on ſtill, and receiue hurt.*

Pro.22.3. Albeit that Solomon hath pronounced this preſent ſentence worde for worde before, and that it hath beene largely handeled, yet foraſmuche as Solomon hath not thought the repetition thereof ſuperfluous, wee ought not to thinke it vnprofitable, if wee handle it heere againe. And therefore, let vs note that this preſent life is repleniſhed with miſeries and calamities, with hurtes & dangers, and that wee are heere as it were in an high way, which is, occupied with theeues and robbers, which wait for to cut the paſſengers thotes, and to ſpoyle them. And firſt of all, there are ſubtil and malicious diuels, which demand nothing els but to kil vs: and therfore to auoide their clawes and griping, wee muſt bee very wiſe: as *1.Pet.5.8,9.* wee are admoniſhed: and to arme vs wel, as Saint Paul doth teach *Ephe.6.10.* vs. Thus doing wee ſhal not be counted of the number of the ſimple and rude, which are indamaged, not taking heede of the diuels craftineſſe, but by ſuch meanes wee ſhal hyde our ſelues vnder the *Pſal.91.* protection of our God, who wil preſerue and ſaue vs from hurt.

Secondly, there is the worlde of the wicked, who haue alwaies exerciſed, and doe dayly ſtil exerciſe great tyranny againſt the poore ſeruants of God, and that after diuers ſortes: for ſome ſeeke riches for to become riche, and therefore doe violence to the body for to winne and to get them: and other (which are yet worſe) by falſe doctrines and traditions of men, not onely deuoure the houſes of the poore ſimple, but alſo deſtroy both their bodies and ſoules, ſending them to the fire of hel. Againſt the which we muſt reſiſt, not with worldly and carnal pollicie to doe them violence: but ſeeing they *1.John.5.4.5* are inſtruments of the Diuel, wee muſt fight againſt them with the *Luke.21.19.* ſelfe ſame wiſedome that wee doe againſt the Diuels: and as we are *Rom.7* admoniſhed, wee muſt poſſeſſe our ſoules with patience. Thirdly, *Gala.5.* wee haue our owne fleſhe which watcheth and ſpieth vs, and doth vs great violence and oppreſſion: as Saint Paule complaineth thereof, If wee withſtande not our fleſh, we are but ſimple and fooliſhe which receiue hurt, as we wel deſerue, For the more we obey to our *Iam.1.13.* fleſhe, and the luſtes thereof, the more are wee made the enimies *1.Cor.14.20.* of GOD, by whome onely wee liue and die. Therefore if wee wil ſurely hide vs from the plague, and receiue no hurt, obeying the admonition of Saint Paule, for we muſt not thinke that Solomon would aduertiſe vs to be wiſe after the worldly ſort.

13 *Take his garment that is ſuertie for a ſtraunger, and a pledge of him for the ſtraunger.*

This preſent ſentence is conteyned in the.20, chapter and.16. verſe.

14 *A curſe ſhalbe imputed vnto him that prayſeth his freende with a loud voyce, riſing vp early in the morning.*

Becauſe that the ſlouthfull and negligent lye ſnorting in their beddes, and are not diligent to riſe early in the morning, when wee wil ſignifie any thing to be done, or that it ſhal be done with great care and diligence, or haſtily and without tarriance, we attribute vnto him early riſing: for they that haue care, & wil haſten to diſpatch ſome work, do not as the ſlouthful do, but hauing taken their reaſonable reſt and ſleepe, doe riſe earely and betimes in the morning. And alſo the Scripture ſignifiyng ſome thing that is done with diligence and with ſpeede, ſayth that he roſe earely in the morning to doe it. And thus when Solomon ſayth:

A curſe ſhalbe &c: Let vs vnderſtand that he woulde not that we ſhoulde be readie and haſtie to publiſh and proclaime the prayſes of men, how great freendes ſoeuer they bee: otherwiſe wee ſhould giue occaſiõ to other to think vs to be hypocrites, & that by faire words and flatteries, we ſhould ſeek to enter into their fauour whom we would bleſſe with our moth, and yet curſe them in our hearts: or els alſo we giue occaſion to them whom we bleſſe openly to be greeued with our bleſſings, and to holde and count vs for curſed, yea, if ſo be they be modeſt & hũble. For we ſhall ſee ſome arrogant and ambitious, which are greatly delighted, that men ſhoulde blow the trumpet, and pipe out merily with a loud voyce their praiſes. Now we may ſay that *a curſe ſhalbe imputed vnto him,* that ſhal bleſſe his freend with a loud voyce: riſing vp earely in the morning.

Gen.49.27
Pſal.5.4.& 46.6.& 143.8.
Eſay.5.11.

Luke. 6. 26. And this agreeth with that which Ieſus Chriſt pronounceth: Woe be to you when al men praiſe you: for euen ſo did your fathers to the falſe Prophetes. Let vs learne heere not to bee curious to ſet foorth the praiſes of men: but let vs bee careful and diligent to giue glory and honour vnto our onely God, as it behoueth: and let vs take good heede in any wiſe to hurt the good name of our neighbours by ſlaunderings, flatteries, leaſings, and falſe tales.

15 *A continuall dropping in the day of raine, and a contentions woman are a like.*

The woman is giuen of God vnto man for his eaſe, helpe, and comfort, that man being not alone, might the better mainteine and vpholde his houſe, and preſerue the ſame in a good ſtate, and that al thinges ſhoulde bee doone betweene them for the edification of their familie, and that it ſhoulde not fal into decay and deſtruction. Wherefore, when wee wil marry, wee muſt not looke vnto high eſtates, neither to riches, neither to nobilitie, or to an ancient ſtock, neither to credite, authoritie, or to the power therof: but the chiefe point ſtandeth in enquiring after the honeſtie, genleneſſe, humanity, wiſedome, holineſſe: and innocencie of the partie that wee deſire to haue in marriage. For it may come to paſſe that wee may bee married highly and rightly, for to raiſe our houſe, and to liue at our eaſe: but therewith wee may meete with a loftie and arrogant partie, whome nothing may pleaſe: and there ſhal be continual criyng and ſoule wether, wherevpon ſtriſes and debates wil ariſe, and one of the parties ſhal withdrawe on the one ſide, and the other on the Pro. 19. 13. other: the which is cauſe of great ruine and deſtruction: as Solomon hath wel ſhewed it before, and at this preſent doth pronounce the ſame againe, ſaying,

A continuall dropping in the day of raine, &c. Albeit that hee doth not ſpeake but of the wife, yet when the husband is contentious, the dropping is very dangerous. And as by the continual dropping an houſe falleth to decay: euen ſo when either the man or the woman is giuen vnto contention, the children and houſholde ſeruants are euil edified. The which is much worſe thẽ if any ſumptuous and gorgeous houſe fal into decay, without being repaired. For the children and ſeruants which are brought vp by an euil example, do not only periſh concerning the body, but the ſoules alſo go vnto eternal deſtruction : yea if the children folow the euil trade of their fathers and mothers. Wee ought then to bee very careful to looke narrowly and ſtraightly what partie wee take in marriage : for if the wife be contentious and riotous, ſeeing it is a vice very natural vnto women to bee riotous, it is almoſt vnpoſſible to quiet it : no more then it is poſsible to ſtoppe the winde when it bloweth vehemently that it ſhoulde goe no further : and no more it is poſsible to forbid any man to ſmel the ſweete and pleaſant baume or ointment that is carried open in the hand. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, ſaying,

Eze.18.

16 *He that hideth her, hideth the winde, and ſhee is as the Oyle in his right hande that vttereth it ſelfe.*

The more that we labour to withſtande the winde, the more doe we feele it vehement and ſtormie : and the more that the ointment is preſſed in the hande, the more greater is the odour : euen ſo alſo when we labour to ſuppreſſe a riotous woman, and to make her to holde her peace, ſo much the more wil ſhee crye out, and take on the more. Neuertheleſſe it is not to ſay, that we ſhould not labour to reduce women vnto modeſtie and humilitie : as S. Paule doeth in diuers places, ſhewing what ought to be the conuerſation of the wiues : euen as hath beene alleadged heretofore. Now when Solomon ſpeaketh thus at diuers times of women, making them like vnto the couering of a houſe perced through in a ſtormy wind, and becauſe that for their ſakes he doeth attribute crying vnto the oyntment, they ſhoulde be greatly aſhamed, and carefull to keepe themſelues ſilent, and to behaue themſelues humbly and modeſtly. And foraſmuch as the huſbandes ought to bee the more wiſe, and to ſhewe the way vnto the wife, who is the weaker veſſel, let them therefore vnderſtande, that their leſſon is heere giuen them, that they may learne not to liue in theyr houſes like fierce & cruel Lions, but to be modeſt & quiet. It were expedièt to ſhewe heere the decay and deſtructions that commeth of the riots and contentions betweene the husbandes and the wiues: but it hath beene already largely handeled. *Pro.21.9.19 & 25.24.*

17 Iron ſharpeneth yron: ſo doth a man ſharpen the face of his freende.

Wee knowe by experience that when we rubbe or whet the edge of a knife that is blunt, vpon ſome harde or ſharpe thing, as vpon ſome peece of yron, or whet the ſame vpō an other knife, it is made to cut better then it did before: euen ſo alſo when man, which of him ſelfe, is not throughly awake, nor quick vnto worke, is ſtirred vp, and as it were pricked & ſpurred vp by an other, which wil not let him ſleepe, then is his face ſharpened: then doth he take courage, and ſhewe him ſelfe free and willing to yeelde his duetie, and to doe his office more readily then he was before, except he be vntractable, obſtinate, and hardened. For then ſo farre it is of, that hee ſhould be ſharpened to doe wel, that rather his minde is ſtirred vp vnto wrath and furie, to contentions and debates, vnto murmurings and ſeditions againſt him that prouoketh him: as Noe, Lot, Moſes, the Prophets, Ieſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles haue tried it by experience: and alſo nowe we haue trial thereof, in the ſcorners and contemners of the woorde of the Lorde, when wee labour to ſharpen and quicken them vp by wholeſome doctrine, by holy admonitions, exhortations, and declarations, by reprehenſions, corrections, and threatninges. Such kind of men are like vnto ſwords which haue their edge ſo thicke and ſo blunt, that it wil not cut, doe what you can, albeit that you take great paines to whet and ſharpen it. Now to the end that we may not be of the number of ſuch indurates, let vs be counſelled to awake out of our ſinnes, when dayly we are laboured to be ſharpened by the word of the Lord, without any regarding whither we be ſtrong & mighty, learned and wyſe. We muſt therfore be folowers of Dauid, in that that hee patiently ſuffred Nathan to ſharpen his face: and of S. Peter, which wept, when Ieſus Chriſt ſharpened his face by his countenance: and reſiſted not: when S. Paule did alſo ſharpen by his reprehenſion.

18 *Hee that keepeth the Fig tree, ſhal eate the fruit thereof: ſo hee that waiteth vpon his maiſter, ſhal come to honour.*

By the *Fig tree*, we may vnderſtand al things that are brought out of the earth, and carie fruite. And ſo, Solomon doeth ſignifie, that he which is careful of keeping the bleſſings that his lande bringeth foorth, ſhal be ſuſtained and nouriſhed with them, ſo that hee ſhal neuer want, nor neuer ſhalbe conſtrained to begge his bread, nor neuer ſhalbee blamed for negligence, nor for contempt of the good creatures that God hath giuen vnto him for his vſe: as are the ſlouthful, the prodigal, and light people, which haue no conſideration of not waſting the ſubſtance that God giueth them, for to keepe it wel, and for to diſtribute the ſame wel vnto their houſhold, and to the poore that neede and want. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, when he ſaieth,

Hee that keepeth the Fig tree, &c. Neuertheleſſe, this is not onely to ſhewe vs of the foreſaide care, but to make compariſon: as he doeth ſhewe it, when he addeth,

So he that keepeth his maiſter, &c. Wherein he warneth ſeruantes not to forſake their maiſters, promiſing vnto them, that as the Fig tree bringeth foorth his fruite for his vſe, that keepeth good watche, euen ſo, the maiſter ſhal helpe al the neceſſities of his ſeruaunt that forſaketh him not, but doeth keepe him at home with him, and is careful to ſerue him. And thus, as he honoureth his maiſter, keeping him, and not forſaking him: euen ſo, his maiſter wil honour him, not blaming, nor caſting him off, but wil ſuccour him in al his neceſſities. Wee haue heere then, diuers inſtructions. The firſt is, that wee ſhould not contemne the earthly bleſſinges as vnprofitable, but that we ſhould keepe a good watche, for to vſe them as God hath ordeined. So doing, wee ſhal not be beggers, but enriched by the bleſſing of God, who wil giue vs the right and profitable vſe of the riches hee giueth vs into our handes. Yet notwithſtanding in keeping watche of our goods, let vs take heed that we be not careful of to morowe, but rather let vs be careful of this, to folowe the doctrine of Ieſus Chriſt. The ſeconde point, That al

Mat.6.24.
25.
Luk.12.15
22.
1.Tit.6.8.
Hebr.13.5.6

ſubiectes and inferiour perſons, al children and ſeruantes ought to helpe their Superiours, to be readie at their commandement, and diligently to doe their wil, as it hath beene to fore ſhewed by the ſcriptures. The third pointe, That al they which are in authoritie ſhould keepe wel that they contemne not, nor deſpiſe their ſubiects and inferiours, which are not diſobedient, nor forſake them, but do honour them, doing their office, and paying vnto them, that which belongeth to them: as they are warned to doe in the places before alledged. The fourth, If it is not lawful for ſubiects and inferiours to forſake their carnal maiſters: by a more ſtrong reaſon muſt wee bee careful to keepe and hold faſt our heauenly great maiſter: and he wil not deſpiſe vs, but giuing vnto vs abundãtly al things in this world to vſe, in the ende hee wil honour vs, glorifying vs in his heauenly kingdome for euer.

Rom.13.1.
Ephe.6.1.
1.Tim.6.1.
Tit.2.9.
1.Pet.2.13

19 *As in water, face anſwereth to face: ſo the hart of man to man.*

When a man looketh into a cleare ſpring of water, he ſeeth his image, euen as if he ſawe him ſelfe in a glaſſe, or little difference: and ſo he ſeeth howe taul he is, by the correſpondancie or repreſentation that is ſhewed in the water: and as he remooueth and changeth place, euen ſo doeth his repreſentation: and if he ſtande ſtil, it ſtandeth ſtil alſo: ſo that it might ſeeme to them which are not accuſtomed to ſee ſuche a thing, that the repreſentation had moouing, life, & vnderſtanding: the which is falſe neuertheleſſe, as we know: for it is nothing but a dead ſhadowe, and which ſoone vaniſheth away. Euen ſo, when we apply our heartes and mindes to behold the natures, cuſtomes, & maners of our neighbours, we ſee our image, and may iudge what we are: for wee are like vnto our ſelues, and are the liuely images, and the true repreſentations one of an other, in as much as we are al the children of Adam. And ſo, if we ſee any malice in our neighbours, let vs not be pleaſed in our ſelues, & flatter vs, in prayſing our ſelues more then they: for we haue the roote of al euil in vs, as we ſhewe wel, when God doeth ſlacke vs the bridle. It may ſeeme at the firſt ſight, that Solomon doeth admoniſhe vs hereof, when he ſaieth, *As in water,&c.* But there is another ſenſe and meaning, which agreeth better according to the nature which is in the water and in the heart of man. For as one water agreeth & is like vnto another, but yet it runneth, & hath no ſtedfaſtneſſe to come and ſtande by the other: euen ſo albeit that the hearts of men are one like to another, and that they haue ſome likeneſſe togither, and ſome knitting and coniunction, yet is there no tenure and holde: for as one man doeth eaſily ſeparate himſelſe from another, and turneth away his minde, not caring for his acquaintance, alliance, or confederacy: To day, a man wil ſhew himſelf wel minded towards his neighbour, & in leſſe while then turning of a hande he wil be gone, and ſhewe diſdaine, or wil declare to be his enemie. And thus Solomon teacheth vs, that we muſt not looke to men to truſt in them, no more then to the water which rometh, and is not knowne where it becōmeth: but the Lord is faythful, and changeth not, in whome we muſt truſt: and ſay with an aſſured heart with Dauid, it is better to truſt in the Lord, then to truſt in men, &c. Thus dooing, though the heartes of men doe runne away from vs as doeth water, yet ſhal wee not remoue. For they that truſt in the Lord, are as mount Sion, which cānot be remoued, but ſtandeth faſt for euer. Contrarily, if forſaking our God, we put our truſt in men, we ſhalbe fruſtrate and voide of our hope, and ſhalbe accurſed. Albeit then that God hath created, & ſet vs in this worlde for to ſerue one another, yet for to haue a ſure helpe we ſhould looke to the Lord, as Dauid teacheth vs. *Pſa.118.8.9.* *Pſal.125.1.* *Iere.17.5.* *Pſal.129.1.*

20 *The graue and deſtruction can neuer be ful, ſo the eyes of man can neuer be ſatiſſied.*

At the beginning man was created after the ymage of God, after the which he was exempted from death and deſtruction: into the which the Angels fel, to wit, thoſe that ſinned. Now the Deuil ſeeing himſelf thus depriued of glorie and felicitie, and to bee damned for euer, did enuie the glory & bleſſed eſtate wherin mā was placed: & therfore from the beginning he hath made his batteries, that he might throw man headlōg into the ſame damnatiō. Now man hath not reſiſted the aſſaultes of the Deuill, but hath eaſily yelded vnto him: by his rebellion & diſobediēce hath put out this ymage, introducing *Gene.1.27.* *2.Pet.2.4.* *Iude.6.* *Gene.3.*

Rom.5.12. ducing ſinne into the world,and by ſinne death. And as the Deuill
Iohn.8.44. from the beginning hath beene a lyer and murtherer, euen ſo doeth
1.Peter.5.8. hee not ceaſe to purſue his worke. S. Paule doeth wel ſignifie the
Ephe.6.10. ſame.And thus the Deuil is neuer filled nor ſatiſfied with the dam-
Mat.12.43. nation of mankinde:as alſo Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde doeth ſignifie
Iohn.8.44. it wel.And foraſmuch as by the continual enuie of the Deuill, and
by the ſinne of man,who hath conſented to the Deuil, al humaine
creatures tende to death, and goe to the graue, and that in mans
iudgement and outwarde experience, the ſepulcher or graue corrup-
teth and bringeth al the body which it receiueth to nothing, and
neuer refuſeth any, nor neuer yeeldeth any backe againe, but con-
ſumeth them,without any remedie, as the worldlinges and carnall
men eſteeme,and as it is ſeene before our eyes,and by experience in
al worldes: for this cauſe, that which is proper to the Diuel,is attri-
buted vnto the graue, and is called *deſtruction* that neuer can bee
ful. For when Solomon, hauing named the graue,ſetteth afterwards
deſtruction, this is by Repetition or expoſitiõ, For it is as if he ſaid,
the graue which conſumeth, and ſwalloweth what ſoeuer is giuen
too it,is neuer wearie of receiuing & corrupting al that is brought
vnto it. Nowe that which Solomon pronounceth in thisplace, is
ſeene by experience to the eye: and therfore, Solomon tendeth not
to teache vs the nature of the graue, the which is knowne: but ra-
ther he wil ſet before vs our miſerie,and partly ſhewe vs the fruites
of our ſinnes,which are death and deſtruction. For if there had
beene no ſinne,we had had no neede of graue : and without ſinne,
Iohn.11.25.26 there had bin no temporal nor eternal death: but becauſe of ſinne,
we muſt dye,and be buried. Notwithſtanding if we dye in the feare
of the Lord,being aſſured that he is our reſurrection & our life,the
graue ſhal not be our deſtruction,but as a reſt,wherein our bodies
doe ſleepe,looking for the bleſſed reſurrection : and our death is a
ready paſſage from death to life. Contrarily,to the vnfaythful the
graue and temporal death are their entrance vnto eternal deſtructi-
on. For albeit that at the laſt,they ſhal riſe againe,yet ſhal it not bee
to liue,but to be tormented in paines euerlaſting: the which is a ve-
Dan.12.2. ry ſharpe & hard death, & which neuer ſhal haue end. Solomon thẽ
Ioha.5.29. doth rebuke mẽ for their vnſatiablenes,cõparing their greedy deſires
vnto the graue and deſtruction: as he doth ſhewe, when he addeth,

So the eyes of man can neuer be ſatisfied. Wherin we haue to note, that hee ſpeaketh of the man that is left in his natural corruption, who ſuffereth him ſelfe to be tranſported by his euil concupiſcences and diſordinate affections. For they that are regenerate, and made newe creatures by the holy Ghoſt, are ſatisfied, and craue nothing further, but onely that the good wil of God ſhould be done and fulfilled. *And for to conſerue this ſatisfying wel,* they fight, labouring for to deſtroy and kil the relikes of ſin, which are ſtil in their fleſhe, the which, becauſe of the ſame relikes, luſteth againſt the ſpirite. And ſo, Solomon ſpeaketh not of the eyes of the children of God, but of the euil affections of the children of Adam, which alſo are the children of the Deuil. And as the Deuil is not filled nor ſatisfied to ſee, & to purſue the decaie and deſtruction of men: euen ſo his children haue neuer ſatisfied enough their affections, but doe daily growe, as we prooue it by experience in many: as in the ambitious, couetous, & vſurers. Solomon calleth ſuch affections, eyes, and not without cauſe: for whatſoeuer is ſet before mans eye, hee ſtil deſireth to ſee more. Euen ſo wee can neuer ſatisfie our affectiôs, and chiefly when they tende to ruine and deſtructions wherunto they which tende thither, are like vnto their father the Deuil, who is neuer ſatisfied with the deſtruction of men. *Gal. 5. 17.*

21 *As is the fining pot for ſiluer, and the furnace for gold: ſo is euerie man according to his dignitie.*

Wee haue alreadie had this ſame ſentence, ſauing that in place of, *So doeth the Lorde trye the heartes:* we haue heere, *So is euerie man according to his dignitie.* This is not to ſay, that man of him ſelfe hath any dignitie or excellencie, wherby he ſhould deſerue to be ſo handled: or thus, or to haue ſuche and ſuche reputation: for al men of them ſelues are nothing worth, they are nothing but earth and durt, filthineſſe and corruption, and are filled with malice and wickedneſſe: and ſo they deſerue not to be eſteemed nor prayſed. But as the gold is more precious then the ſiluer not of it owne ſelfe, for it is a dead creature, and ſerueth to no vſe, except becauſe that we trimme and dreſſe it for to ſerue vnto profite, & vnto delight: euen ſo, one man ſhal be more woorthie and more excellent *Pro. 17. 3.*

then an other, becauſe that God by his fauour eſteemeth him, and
dreſſeth him for to make him ſerue as he ſhal thinke good: as Saint
1.Cor.4.7. Paul ſaith: For who ſeparateth thee? and what haſt thou, that thou
haſt not receiued? &c, And daily, the more that God eſteemeth and
ſetteth by an humane creature, ſo much the more doth he examime
and trie him the more narrowly, & exerciſeth him by great aſſalts:
as our holie auntient fathers haue alwayes tried by experience, and
aboue al, Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde, who of him ſelfe onely was worthie
to be eſteemed and prayſed: for he is the Lambe without ſpot.
It is he that hath not ſinned, neither was there any guile founde in
Mat.3. his mouth. It is he onely, of whome the Father ſaieth, This is my
welbeloued Sonne, in whome I am wel pleaſed, And yet, hee hath
bene tempted in al thinges, yea, euen to the going downe to hell.
Wherefore when God ſendeth vs afflictions, let vs not thinke that
it is becauſe he hath reiected vs, or doeth hate vs: but let vs know,
that it is becauſe that of his grace and mercie, he iudgeth vs woorthie
for him ſelfe, doeth loue vs, and that hee receiueth vs for his
houſholde ſeruantes and children: let it be, that hee doeth afflict vs
for our ſinnes, be it, that he would prooue our Fayth and patience,
Pro.17.3. and humilitie and obedience. For (as it hath bene handeled) God
doeth prooue vs by afflictions for diuers cauſes. As touching the
reprobate, foraſmuch as by the afflictions which are ſent them, they
returne not vnto God by repentance, and that they doe not beare
them patiently, but doe murmure and deſpight God, and are deſperate,
they are neither like vnto gold nor ſiluer, but to drye wood, to
chaffe, and to haye, which is eaſily conſumed in the fire.

22 *Though thou ſhouldeſt braye a foole in a Morter, among wheate brayed with a Peſtel, yet wil not his fooliſhneſſe depart from him.*

When we bray wheate in a Morter, we vnhuske the ſkinne, ſo that afterwards it is eaſie to ſeparate the good floure from the bren: but the foole is ſo obſtinate and hardened in his follie, that for any chaſteninges, howe grieuous and ſharpe ſoeuer they be, yet can he not be depriued of it: as in diuers places here before, Solomon hath complayned of it: and as we may ſhewe by examples of the ſcripture: and amongeſt other of Pharao and of the Iewes, which God corrected by diuers and ſharpe afflictions. Wherein wee haue to note, that albeit naturally we are al fooles, yet the ſcripture calleth the mockers and contemners of God & of al religion chiefly fooles, which wil not amend for any thing that may happē. And ſo, though he looſe his time in correcting and chaſtening ſuch kinde of people, yet is it not to ſay, that we ſhould forbeare to chaſten them whome wee count fooles: for fooliſhneſſe is bounde in the heart of a child: but the rodde of correction ſhal driue it away from him. And albeit that for their ſake, and for their profite we looſe time, and winne nothing, yet it is verie neceſſarie to *bray* them, that firſt of al they ſhould ſerue for example, and other ſhoulde feare to commit follie. Secondly, that troubles might ceaſe, and that they which loue wiſdome, and folowe it, might liue in peace. Let vs therefore vnderſtande, that Solomon doeth not pretende to forbid that Iuſtices ſhould not puniſhe fooles, but he reprooueth the fooliſhe of obſtinacie, and of hardneſſe of heart: and for this cauſe doeth foreſhew them priuily their eternal deſtruction: as Saint Paul ſaith, But thou, after thine hardneſſe, and heart that can not repent, heapeſt vntoo thy ſelfe wrath, againſt the day of wrath, and of the declaration of the iuſt iudgement of God. *Pro.22.15.* *Rom.2.5.*

23 *Be diligent to knowe the ſtate of thy flocke, and take heed to the heardes.*

Many doe thinke it a vile and a baſe thing, and greatly to bee contemned, that man ſhould be contented to rule his familie, and the affayres of his houſe in ſimplicitie, which are fit and meete to helpe the neceſſities of his children and houſholde, and ſhould not aſpire as concerning the matters of this worlde no higher. Suche a man ſhalbe counted faint hearted, and a man nothing woorth: and they wil ſay, he is a cowarde and a foole. And therefore they that would exalt them ſelues, ſet vp their feathers (as is ſaid) and labour to flye, higher and higher: and to doe this, they folowe the Eryers, which finde no houſe worſe then their owne. And ſo, theſe men which would be eſteemed and be aloft, doe go away farre from their ſamilie, and ſeeke to dwel with Kinges, Princes, and Lordes of the earth, for to get riches, and to obtaine glorie and honour, credite and authoritie, and to make their name perpetual for euer. This deſire is verie diſordinate: and therefore Solomon woulde not haue vs to folowe them: as he doeth ſhewe it vs, when he ſaieth, *Be diligent to knowe, &c.* Notwithſtanding, let vs not thinke that it is euil done for a man to giue vp and forſake his lowe eſtate, when God doth place him in higher ſtate, and doeth exalt him. As we wil not accuſe Ioſeph, when from the going out of the priſon, receiued it, inſteede whereas he was a poore ſlaue, to be the ſeconde in the countrie of Egypt: nor Moſes, when he left the flocke with Iethro, and receiued the gouernment of the people of God: nor Dauid, when he left his fathers flocke, and folowed the court of Saul, and obtained the Crowne, &c. For we muſt folow the calling of God: but if we be not aſſured of his calling, let it ſuffice vs to take care of the riches which are in our poſſeſſion alreadie: the which Solomon doeth ſignifie by the *flocke and heardes*. For in olde time men were verie diligent to rayſe and bring vp cattel: as we may ſee it in Abraham, Iſaack, Iacob, and other children of Iacob, which were Paſtours, and had many great flockes. If we be not contented therewith, and that we aſpire more high after the worlde, thinking to bring vs eaſe for a long time, and during which time, to poſſeſſe great riches, and to enioy glorie and honour, & to be in credite and authoritie, we are deceiued: as Solomon doth ſhew vs, ſaying.

Gen. 41.
Exo. 3.
1. Sam.

24 *For riches remaine not alway, nor the crowne from generation, to generation.*

The worldlings and carnal men, by the experience that is ſeene in the worlde, wil ſpeake according to this ſentence: they wil ſay, that there is nothing here beneath that is ſure and ſtable, and that al thinges are ſubiect vnto changinges, and that ſodeinly they are remooued and altered, yea, that eaſily they vaniſh away. We ſhal ſee riches to vaniſh out of their handes which poſſeſſe them, either by fire, or by water, or by theeues and robbers, or by ſuttle meanes, or by lawe and ſutes, or by exceſſe and diſſoluteneſſe: we ſhal ſee at this day, great Lordes to flouriſh and proſper, to be mightie and fearful, which quickly vaniſh away, either by warre, or by death, either violent or natural. As theſe alterations are ſeene with the eye, euen ſo do they confeſſe them, but it is not as they ought. For al they which haue not knowne, neither doe know the prouidence of God, doe attribute ſuch alterations vnto the violence and malice of men, or to fortune and chance, and ſo much as in them lieth, they depriue God of his gouernment, and doe ſpoile him of his Maieſtie, glorie, & power. And ſo, it is not true, that the worldlings and carnal men ſpeak agreeable to this ſentence, but in apparance onely: for Solomon doeth not here in any wiſe pretende to derogate the gouernment, glorie, power, and Maieſtie of God, but rather to mainteine them, when hee pronounceth that the riches and honours of the worlde are of no long continuance: and heerein hee confeſſeth the prouidence of God. Otherwiſe, he ſhould not haue ſpoken in true wiſedome: and alſo he ſhould ſpeake againſt him ſelfe. For here before ſpeaking in the perſon of wiſedome, he hath ſaide, I haue counſel & wiſedome, I haue vnderſtanding, and I haue ſtrength, &c. And the bleſſing of the Lorde doeth make men riche. And the heart of man purpoſeth his way: but the Lorde doeth direct his ſteppes. The lot is caſt into the lappe: but the whole diſpoſition thereof, is of the Lorde. Daniel alſo did wel knowe the prouidence of God: as appeareth in his booke. Wherefore, let vs not be careful to attaine vnto high degree: but whileſt it ſhal pleaſe the Lorde that wee are in a lowe ſtate, let vs not looſe that which our fieldes bring foorth, but let vs with care and diligence gather them, according as God hath ſent it vs, and ſhewed in our earthly poſſeſſions: the which Solomon doeth ſignifie by the mountaines, ſaying,

Pro.8.14.15 16.& 10.22 & 16.9.33

Dan.2.20. 21.22.& 4 14.

25 *The heye diſcouereth it ſelfe, and the graſſe appeareth, and the hearbes of the mountaines are gathered.*

He ſpeaketh thus, after the ſituation of the lande that the Lord had giuen to the children of Iſrael, wherein there were a multitude of mountaines. And as we muſt be diligent to gather the goods that God giueth vs, euen ſo alſo, ought wee not to be curious of braue and coſtly garments, which may be of great ſhewe, and great price, nor a multitude of men liuing of our wages, for to doe our worke with ſo great ſuperfluous exſpences, or to be about vs to reuerence vs : but according to the profite that we can lawfully ſpend by our reuenue, let vs be clothed, and holde ſeruantes to doe our worke, Solomon doeth teach the ſame, ſaying,

26 *The Lambes are for thy clothing, & the Goates are the price of the field.*

Likewiſe we ſhould not be greedie of daintie and delicate diſhes, nor to be ſuperfluous and exceſſiue in eating and drinking, as wantons, gluttons, drunkardes, nor to deny foode to thoſe which doe our worke, as vnmerciful and cruel men which ſucke the blood and the ſubſtance of their hirelinges as much as they can : but let vs be ſober and temperate, contenting our ſelues with litle : and as we would be nouriſhed, euen ſo, let vs adminiſter neceſſities vnto our ſeruantes, maydes, and hirelings : according to that which Solomon doeth teach vs, ſaying,

27 *And let the milke of the Goates bee ſufficient for thy foode, for the foode of thy familie, and for the ſuſtenance of thy maydes.*

And as we muſt be ſober, ſo muſt wee mainteine our familie, our children and houſhold ſeruantes in ſobrietie. And thus in theſe fiue laſt ſentences, we are taught to flye couetouſneſſe, and to content our ſelues with thinges preſent, not to be ambitious, but to continue and holde ſtil the ſtate wherein God hath placed vs, walking in the ſame with al humbleneſſe, to abhorre al braueneſſe and gorgeous attires, walking with ſimple and honeſt garments : and to hate daintineſſe, gluttonie & drunkenneſſe, vſing common meates with ſoberneſſe and temperancie.

The

The xxviii. Chapter.

1 *The wicked flye, when none purſueth: but the righteous are bolde as a Lyon.*

WE do al naturally deſire to haue peace and reſt, to liue ſafely and without feare, and alſo to flouriſhe, to triumphe and to proſper in this world. This deſire of it ſelfe is not euil: but the meanes moſt often times are vnlawful and wicked, by the which men labour to inioy their deſires: and alſo our minde and heart is fixed and ſet ſo much therevppon, that wee ſuffer our ſelues by them to bee tranſported and carried away, neither doe wee care what wee doe, prouided that wee may come to enioy them. The wicked for to accompliſh their deſires, will not care what they doe, but wil runne hyther and thither, vp and downe, doing oppreſſion and violence vnto the innocent, which can not bee reuenged: as Cain againſt Abel his brother: the ſonnes of Iacob againſt Ioſeph their brother, Pharao againſt the children of Iſrael, and Iudas againſt Ieſus Chriſte. But as theſe haue obteined nothing by their violence and oppreſſion, euen ſo al wicked mé ſhal profite little better. And albeit that in mans iudgement & outward apparance wee tremble and quake vnder them, and that wee on the one ſide doe greatly feare their preſence, and that they on the other ſide are bolde and ſafe, and feare no man, yet for al that in ſpyte of them, and let them doe what they can, their conſcience doeth reprooue and rebuke them ſo liuely, that though no man doe purſue and hunt them, but that al the world (as a man might ſay) doth commende and praiſe them, yet doe they not ceaſe to feare and tremble within: as wee may knowe by the confeſſions which the wicked before alledged haue made, and by witneſſes of the ſcriptures. And according vnto the threatenings conteyned in the lawe, Solomon ſaith, *Leui.26.36. 37. Deut.28.65 66.67. Eſai.57.20. 21.*

The wicked flye,&c. Wherein wee haue to note, that Solomon ſpeaketh of the flight of the wicked in the plural number, and of the purſute in the ſingular: and is as much as if hee did ſay, Albeit that no man purſueth a wicked man, no, not one, yet do they al flye, and are al troubled and feared by their owne conſcience, which fighteth againſt them. Contrarily, although that in mans iudgement, and outwarde appearance, the iuſt and innocent be poore and miſerable, and that they are alwayes in danger, and bee neuer in ſafetie, and are not ſuffered to liue in reſt, and that men labour to feare & trouble them by great purſutes that are made againſt them, and that it ſeemeth they haue neither place nor time, where they may be ſafe and in peace: yet God maketh them inuincible, becauſe hee hath purified their conſciences, the which doe not condemne them, and becauſe they deſire nothing more then to obey his worde. And this is according as hee hath promiſed in his law. And by his Prophetes hee doeth often promiſe, that hee wil deliuer his poore ſheepe, and make them dwel in ſafetie, that none ſhal make them a fraid. Whervnto Solomon accordeth, ſaying,

Leuit.26.3 Deut.28.

But the righteous,&c. Wherein let vs note, that as the Lion of himſelfe hath no power to defend and ſaue his pray, and cannot aſſure himſelfe, and be bolde, except that God had giuen him ſuche a nature, and mainteined him therein: euen as wee of our owne ſelues are not righteous, but the ſame commeth of the grace and mercy of God, which changeth our nature and imputeth the righteouſneſſe of his Sonne Ieſus Chriſt vnto vs: euen ſo of our ſelues wee ſhoulde fly as wicked, but by the free promiſes he aſſureth and maketh vs bolde, printing them in our heartes by his holy ſpirite. And this is the cauſe for the which we ſee the poore faithful to bee ſo conſtant in bearing the perſecutions with ioy and patience. And as the Lyon, (according to the nature hee hath receiued of God) knoweth wel how to vſe his ſtrength, to aſſure himſelf, and be bolde: euen ſo the righteous truſting in the righteouſneſſe of Ieſus Chriſt, the which is imputed vnto them, doe feare no power, whither it bee earthly or helliſh, carnal or ſpiritual: but ſay with Dauid, The Lorde is my light and my ſaluation, of whome ſhal I bee afraide? &c. And thus it is not in their owne power that the iuſt doe truſt, aſſure themſelues, & are bold, but in the power & might of GOD, in his grace and mercie. For as of themſelues they

Pſal.27.1.2, 3

are bare and voide of righteouſneſſe, as they knowe wel enough : euen ſo alſo they knowe wel, that they want al ſtrength, except that the almightie doeth vpholde them, and worke in them both the wil and the deede. Notwithſtanding, let vs vnderſtand, that albeit none of him ſelfe is iuſt, but that of our own nature we are wicked & vngodly, yet doeth the holie ſcripture cal vs righteous, when we referring & giuing vnto the grace & mercy of God, by the meanes of the obedience that Ieſus Chriſt hath rendred for vs, and truſting that he is our righteouſneſſe, our ſatisfaction, & redemption, we mourn and lament our ſins, & ſtriuing to bring foorth fruites worthie of repentance, in loue vnfained. For the principal fruites that God requireth that we ſhould bring forth towardes our neighbours, is, that whatſoeuer we would that men ſhould do vnto vs, we ſhould doe vnto them the like. And the ſcripture calleth thoſe wicked, which vtterly deſpiſe theſe things, & ſcorn thē, & delight in al kind of wickednes.

2 *For the tranſgreſſion of the lande, there are many Princes thereof: but by a man of vnderſtanding and knowledge, a realme likewiſe endureth long.*

If we diligently read the holie ſcriptures, wee ſhal finde that the children of Iſrael in ſmal time haue had many Gouernours, Iudges, and Kings. And if we ouerlooke the profane Chronicles, we ſhal ſee that in al nations there hath beene often mutation and changing of gouernors, Princes, & Kings. The worldlings & carnal, do not think from whence theſe alterations come, but doe chiefly attribute them vnto fortune: yea, when a King hath bene ouercome by his enemy, we wil ſay, *That fortune was againſt him.* But the holie Ghoſt by the ſcripture doeth teach vs farre otherwiſe : to wit, that it is God who changeth Kinges, and kingdomes, as ſeemeth him good : and *Dan.2 & 4.* albeit that hee doeth change them after his wil, yet is it not without good cauſe. Sometimes he doth remoue & take away Kings becauſe they be wicked : as he tooke away Saul & others: ſometimes, becauſe the people was vnwoorthie to haue good Kinges : as hee tooke Ioſias the King of Iſrael, from the children of Iſrael, in the 18. yeere of his reigne, or there aboutes: for he was verie angry againſt *2.King.23.* Iuda, becauſe of their iniquities. And this is the cauſe that Solomon ſetteth before vs, when hee ſaieth,

For the tranſgreſſions of the lande, there are many, &c. And becauſe that oftentimes we ſee it happen, that the people followe the maners of their King and of his gouernours, wee ought to bee verie careful & diligent to pray vnto God, that it would pleaſe him not to giue vs a King in his wrath, but that hee woulde place ouer vs ſuche rulers as are of a ſounde and perfect conſcience, and that wil walke honeſtly and religiouſly, iuſtly and vprightly before vs, to the end, that after their example, we might liue holily and chaſtly vnder them, ſeparating our ſelues from al iniquitie, fooliſhneſſe, and wickedneſſe. Thus doing, the Lorde wil not ſodeinly change our gouernours, after he hath giuen vs good, for to puniſh our iniquities: but becauſe that through vnderſtanding and knowledge, we haue bene turned from al offences, diſſoluteneſſe, and inſolencie, from al malicionſneſſe, wrong dooing, and crueltie, the Lorde wil haue pitie vpon vs, and hauing giuen vnto vs by his grace, good Superiours and vpright Magiſtrates, he wil continue his grace towardes vs, in prolonging, and making their kingdome and gouernment long to endure. This is it that Solomon meaneth, when hee ſayeth, *And by a man of vnderſtanding. &c.* Albeit that Solomon ſpeaketh in the ſingular number, yet becauſe of the Antitheſis, we muſt vnderſtande that he ſpeaketh of many men, by whoſe wiſdome and good counſel, Kinges and Rulers are confirmed and ſtabliſhed, and are not ſodeinly changed. True it is, notwithſtanding that whatſoeuer commeth to paſſe by the vnderſtanding & knowledge of many, may alſo be done by the wiſedome and good counſel of one: as the Eccleſiaſt. declareth. Eccle. 9. 13. 14. 15. We may alſo ſay, that a King of vnderſtanding and knowledge, may long vpholde and mainteine him ſelfe in his eſtate, and to let and ſtop his enemies from ſtealing his Empire and kingdome from him: as it happened in the dayes of Dauid, Solomon and Ezekias. But howe ſoeuer we take this ſentence, yet haue Kings, Princes, Gouernors, and Iudges of the earth, their leſſons therein, by the which they are admoniſhed to bee attentiue and diligently to heare the lawe of God, as it is appointed them: and that they ſhould not be ignorant, but learned in the feare of the Lord: as the holie Ghoſt doeth counſel them. Deut. 17. 18 19. 20. Psal. 2. 10. 11. 12. Psal. 20. & 21. So doing, they ſhal not periſh in the wrath & anger of God: but he wil giue vnto them their deſires, & raiſe them vnto glorie & dignitie: as the faithful doe craue and require the ſame, & as they affirme & confeſſe it. And as they ſhould be thus ruled by the word of the Lord, euen ſo, alſo ought they to be diligent & careful in nouriſhing and mainteining of their people. And for to finiſh this wel, they muſt be diligent to mainteine & defende the good & quiet, & to roote out the wicked & ſeditious: as Dauid doth teach them, by the proteſtation hee maketh, & as S. Paul doth teach them. The people alſo haue therein their leſſon, to wit, that they are admoniſhed to liue holily & innocently, & not to prouoke God to wrath by their iniquities, leaſt God giue them a King in his wrath: as hee hath threatned before this time, the children of Iſrael.

Pſal. 101. *Rom.* 13. *Eſai.* 3. 2. 3. *Oſee.* 13. 10. 11

3 *A poore man, if he oppreſſe the poore, is like a raging raine, that leaueth no foode.*

It is a verie euil thing that is daily committed in the worlde, that the mightie & rich do polle & eate the litle & poore: though God hath expreſly forbidden it in his lawe, & that hee doeth often complaine therof by his Prophets. But moreouer this is worſe, when hee that is poore, ſhal extort & ſhew ſuch crueltie to them which are in neceſſitie & pouertie, that hee will pil & eate them. Solomon doth ſignifie it, when hee compareth ſuch a poore man which ſpoileth the ſubſtance & goods of the poore, vnto *raging raine*, that carieth away with it the ſeed & trees with the fat of the earth: and after the ſame, is great want & ſcarcitie of vittailes. Such a raging raine doth not onely not profite it ſelfe, but alſo bringeth great hurt vnto the earth, & to them which haue dreſſed, ſowne, & planted it. Euen ſo, ſuch a pooreman as extorteth & wringeth from an other poore mā, hath ſoone conſumed that which he hath rauiſhed, & cannot be enriched therewith: for that which hee can get, & take from a man in neceſſitie, is not much, but a verie ſmal thing, in compariſon of the great deſire wherwith he is caried to make a ſpoile vpon the needy. And not gaining ought therby, he doth great hurt & deſtruction to him whom he pilleth and ſpoileth: and afterwardes he cannot helpe him, though he would. But if he that is rich & mightie, doth take pitie & compaſſion of the poore man that he robbed, he hath wherewith to help him. And ſo, as it may ſeeme, he is not ſo dāgerous nor hurtful, as is the poore that extorteth from the needie.

Exo. 22. 21. *Leuit.* 19. 13. *Eſai.* 1. 23. & 3. 13.

Wherefore,let vs vnderſtand that the poore which haue neede of charitable almes,reliefe,and mercie ſhewed vnto them,are admoniſhed to turne away from al rauening and extortion, and chiefly of the needie: otherwiſe as the worldlinges and carnal, which looke not to the hande of God, which ſendeth ſuche ſeaſons as him pleaſeth, doeth curſe the raging rayne that bringeth famine: euen ſo, the poore which doe extort vpon the needie, ſhalbe curſed of God, who wil caſt them into an horrible neceſſitie,wherein they ſhal be perpetually tormented.

4 *They that forſake the lawe, prayſe the wicked: but they that keepe the lawe, are angrie with them.*

There is none howe wicked ſoeuer he is,that doeth not deſire to haue good reputation, and to be placed in the number of honeſt men, as if he ſubmitted him ſelfe vnto the lawe of God as he ought to doe. And for to haue this reputation,they wil doe many goodly things which ſhal haue ſome ſight of goodneſſe, righteouſneſſe,and religion,the which ſhal dazel the eyes of the ſimple & ignorant: but they that haue a quick and ſharp ſight, & diligent eares, & wil apply themſelues rightly,to know what they ought either to ſay or to do, for to ſubmit them ſelues vnto the lawe of God, and not to decline either on the right, or on the left hande, may iudge and diſcerne, that ſuche ſhadowes are of no value. Solomon doth giue vs markes and tokens thereof,by the which we may ſo iudge, when he ſaieth, *They that forſake the lawe,&c.* When we ſhal know what it is *to praiſe the wicked,* we ſhal vnderſtand who they are that forſake the lawe. And therefore wee muſt note,that to praiſe the wicked,is to commend him,to allow of him,to fauour him,to reuerence him,to helpe him,to mainteine and vphold him,to take his part,to defende and to iuſtifie him: as doe flatterers,lyers, ſlanderers and falſe witneſſes: as doe al Iudges and Magiſtrates,which are corrupted with couetouſneſſe, ambition,acception and regarding of perſons, with crueltie and tyrannie: as do al Kings,Princes,and Superiours of the earth, which care not to folowe right and equitie, but wil haue their wil for euerie lawe: as alſo doe al they which cal them ſelues Prelates and men of the Church in Poperie,which are ledde with auarice, and ambition, and deſire to liue in pleaſures & wantonnes.

All ſuche kinde of people do forſake the lawe : for they haue no reuerence vnto the worde of God, nor loue to their neighbours, and deſpiſe al good order, and al pollicie wel ruled. The preſent expoſition of praiſing, may be drawne out of Saint Paule, Saint Peter, and others. And alſo Solomon doth ſhew vs that we muſt ſo vnderſtand it, when hee addeth,

Rom.2.& 3
1.Pet.2.

But they that keepe the lawe, are angrie with them. For againſt prayſing, hee ſetteth to bee moued, or to bee angry. Wherein hee declareth that they which giue and apply themſelues rightly and with a pure deſire to refourme their ſpirite and vnderſtanding, their maners and conuerſation according vnto the word of God, and to keepe good order and pollicie wel ruled, that they ſhalbe ſo farre of, from praiſing the wicked, or ſhoulde fauour them any thing, that rather being inflamed and ſtirred vp againſt them, becauſe of their wickedneſſe, they will rebuke, chide, and reprooue them, they wyll threaten and condemne them, and according to the power that God hath giuen them, they wil deſtroy and roote them out : the which chiefly is the duetie and office of good kings, princes, and ſuperiours of the earth : as Moſes doeth wel ſhewe it them. Moreouer let vs note, that as to forſake the lawe, is to deſpiſe and reiect it, and to turne al our minde from it : ſo alſo to keepe the lawe, is to eſteeme and receiue it, and to giue our heartes altogether to bee ruled and gouerned thereafter : and not perfectly to fulfil it : for it is vnpoſſible by reaſon of their weakenes of the fleſh, for the corruption of our nature, & for the relikes of ſinne which cōtinualy dwelleth in vs : as Saint Paule doeth wel ſhewe it : but for Ieſus Chriſte his ſake who hath fulfilled it for vs, we are deliuered from condemnation. Some ſay that they which forſake the lawe, are mooued againſt them that keepe the lawe.

Exod.32.27
Numb.16.
Rom.7.
Gala.5.
Rom.8.

5. *Malicious men vnderſtande not iudgement : but they that ſeeke the Lorde, vnderſtand al thinges.*

When a man delighteth not to doe a thing, or doth not accept and take in good part that which is tolde him, hee wil ſay he vnderſtandeth nothing. According to the which ſenſe it is ſaide of the wicked, that hee forbeareth to vnderſtand, and to doe wel. And

Pſal.36.3.

according thereafter, Solomon ſaith, *Malicious men vnderſtande not iudgement:* for when men are giuen vnto malice and wickedneſſe, and that they thinke to doe nothing but hurt, they vnderſtand not iudgement: that is to ſay, they take not in good part, that they are ſhewed what is good and right, neither delight to apply themſelues thereto, yet, foraſmuch as for to puniſhe the malicious, God doth abandon and giue them vp vnto a reprobate ſenſe, we may ſay that the malicious are ſo dul, ignorant and blinde, that they cannot knowe what is good and right: and for this cauſe doe turne away, and doe cleane contrary, as if they had conſpired to turne al vpſide downe. In the number of ſuche, we may chiefly place al wicked iudges, of whom it is ſaide, they wil not be learned, nor vnderſtande, but walke on ſtil in darkeneſſe: and al they alſo which falſely vſurpe the title of Paſtours and Miniſters, of whome it is ſaide, The Prieſtes ſaide not, Where is the Lorde? and they that ſhoulde miniſter the lawe, knewe mee not: the paſtours alſo offend againſt mee, and the Prophetes propheſied in Baal, and went after things that did not profite. And finally, wee may place al contemners and ſcorners of God and of his worde: for they vnderſtand not iudgement, but are rebellious againſt God, and outragious and cruel againſt their neighbours, without any remorſe or care of amendment: the which is a certaine argument that they doe not delight in any thing that is good and right, and wil vnderſtande nothing therein. This kinde of blindneſſe or blockiſhneſſe doeth proceede of contempt of God, whome they wil not vouchſafe to call vppon, nor accknowledge as they ought. Solomon doeth ſignifie this ſame, by his Antitheſis or contrary, when he ſaith,

Pſal. 82.5.

Iere. 2.8.

But they that ſeeke the Lorde, &c. And therewith hee ſheweth vs that if wee wil take delight in goodneſſe and righteouſneſſe, and willingly to heare admonition, and to bee ſet in the right way, wee muſt ſeeke God, in calling vpon him, praiſing, thanking and confeſsing that hee is the authour of al goodneſſe, & therfore muſt needes wholy ſubmit our ſelues vnto his worde, which is the rule of al righteouſneſſe and equitie. Thus doing, wee ſhal vnderſtand whatſoeuer we ought to doe, for to ſerue God in a ſounde conſcience, and our neighbours in true loue. Heerein conſiſteth & ſtandeth the right vnderſtanding of the iudgement that God requireth of vs: as we may vnderſtand by the ſcripture, when Dauid ioyneth vnderſtanding with the ſeruice of God. To the end therefore that we may vnderſtand iudgement as we ought, and that wee may want nothing of that which wee ought to vnderſtande, but may vnderſtand whatſoeuer is neceſſary for vs to walke rightly, let vs bee diligent to ſeeke the Lord, as Eſay doeth admoniſh vs. Now as it is neceſſary for vs to ſeeke the Lord al the daies of our life, and in any wiſe not to turne from his preſence, euen as we are admoniſhed, Seeke the Lorde and his ſtrength, ſeeke his face euermore: euē ſo muſt wee increaſe and profite from day to day in the vnderſtanding of iudgement: ſeeing that wee neuer vnderſtand it ſo al, that wee can learne no more: for al that wee knowe and vnderſtand is neuer perfect in this worlde, as S. Paul dot pronounce it. Wherefore, when Solomon ſaith, that *wee vnderſtand all, if wee ſeeke the Lord*: let vs therfore imagine a ſtate of perfection in this life, wherunto nothing may be added: but that wee haue a right ſounde, and true vnderſtanding, according as the Lorde ſhal ſee to be expedient, and as it ſhal pleaſe him to giue the meaſure and portion of his graces. And when wee ſee that the wicked are mooued to ſeeke the Lorde: and alſo that Ieſus Chriſte ſaith, I am not come to cal the righteous, but ſinners to repentance: let vs knowe that the malicious whereof Solomon ſpeaketh heere, are ſuch as are obſtinate and durate in their malice, of whom Solomon ſpeaketh.

Deut. 29. 9.
Pro. 2. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.
Eſay. 55. 6. 7
Pſal. 105. 4.
1. Cor. 13. 9. 12.
Mat. 9. 13.
Eph. 14 17, 18 19.

6 *Better is the poore that walketh in his vprightneſſe, then he that peruerteth his waies, though he be rich.*

When Solomon is not contented to haue exalted the poore that walketh in his integritie, therby the poore ought to be admoniſhed to bee contented with their ſtate, without murmuring, or diſpiting of God, and without giuing themſelues to deceipt, to euil trades, or to rauiſhing and theeuery. And when hee ſuppreſſeth and blameth the riche which is peruerſly and wickedly ledde, then let vs al remember the admonition of the Apoſtle Saint Iames, Let the brother of lowe degree, reioyce when hee is exalted: contrarily, hee that is riche, in that hee is made lowe, &c.

Iam. 1. 9. 10.

And alſo let the riche tremble at the thereatninges of Ieſus

Chriſt.

Luk.16.24.25 Iam.5.1. Chriſt, who ſaith, Woe be to you, yee riche men: for ye haue your conſolation, &c. and of Saint Iames, Nowe goe to, yee rich men, weepe, and houle, for the miſeries that ſhal come vpon you, &c. Not to the ende that they ſhould diſpaire, but in true humilitie of heart they ſhoulde be turned vnto the Lord, whoſe bleſsing maketh rich, and not the labour that is taken to gather goods together with great couetouſneſſe: and that renouncing the ſame, they ſhould vſe the goods which God giueth them, with thanks giuing: as haue doone the holy Patriarkes, which had abundance of riches, the which they held, not with blame and offence. Likewiſe Solomon doth not ſimply and abſolutely beate downe the riche, nor riches, which are the good creatures of God, but the riche that gouerneth himſelfe euill to the ſlaunder and hurt of his neighbours, in gathering riches on al ſides, and hauing gotten them, denieth to ſhewe mercy vnto the poore and needie, fearing leſt his goods ſhould decay and diminiſh, and the earth ſhoulde faile. Pro.19.1. The ſimple poore man is better then ſuch a riche man: and that for diuers cauſes, as hath beene ſhewed already.

7 *Hee that keepeth the lawe is a childe of vnderſtanding: but hee that feedeth the gluttons, ſhameth his father.*

When fathers and mothers are godly, wiſe, and prudent, and doe followe the word of God, then are they careful to inſtruct their children, and to ſhew them howe they ſhoulde followe God, and howe they ſhoulde liue vnder the lawe. For when the parentes are wiſe, they greatly delight that their family ſhoulde bee giuen vntoo wiſedome, that God may bee honoured and ſerued amongſt them, and that the houſe and affaires thereof ſhould bee in good ſtate, and that nothing ſhoulde bee waſted nor conſumed. The children which follow the minde of their parentes (which is this,) are wiſe: as Solomon doeth pronounce, ſaying,

Hee that keepeth the lawe, &c. By the law, Solomon doth not onely vnderſtande the chiefe commandements of God, which doe teach vs to ſerue him with true religion, but alſo al inſtructions which ſhewe vs howe wee ſhoulde gouerne our houſes in al ſoberneſſe

neſſe,modeſtie,and temperancie, that may ſhunne and auoide all ſuperfluities,exceſſe,diſſoluteneſſe and wantonneſſe, by the which the goods of an houſholde are vnprofitably ſpent. Solomon doeth ſhewe it,when he addeth,

But hee that feedeth,&c. Wherein he ſheweth rightly vnto children,that if they wil keepe the lawe wel,that is to ſay,the doctrine that is giuen them by their godly wiſe parentes,& wil themſelues alſo bee wiſe,that they ought to bee contented to liue ſoberly in their houſe, without deſiring the company of gluttons and drunkardes,for to ſpende exceſſiuely with them: for if they feede gluttons,ſo much as lyeth in them,they ſhewe that their fathers & mothers neuer made any account to teach them: and ſo they doe diſhonour vnto their parents and make them aſhamed. This that is ſaide of fathers and ſonnes,may wel bee applied vnto ſuperiours and ſubiectes.

8 *Hee that increaſeth his riches by vſury,and intereſt,gathereth them for him that will giue almes vnto the poore.*

Riches are the good creatures of God,and to get them and poſſeſſe them is lawful: but al wayes and meanes to come by them are not lawful, becauſe that God doeth blame, forbid,and condemne them,for that,that in following them we do diſtruſt the prouidence of the Lorde,and wounde the charitie of our neighbour, not helping him in his neceſſitie,but rather bringing him to more pouertie: *Ezo.22.25.*
as they do which lend their money to their poore neighbors vpō vſury, *Leui.25.35.*
againſt the commandement of God. And therefore,if wee *36.37.*
wil righteouſly get goods,& poſſeſſe them lawefully, let vs beware *Deut.23.19*
wee oppreſſe not our poore neighbors with vſurie and ouer plus,in taking profit of them for the money or other goods that wee haue lent them: but let vs folowe the doctrine of Ieſus Chriſt.Thus doing, *Mat.5.42.*
wee ſhalbe bleſſed,following righteouſneſſe: and doing contrarily, *Luk.6.34.35.*
wee are wicked and accurſed. Neuertheleſſe when Solomon *Pſal.15.5*
ſaith, *Ezo.18.8.13*

Hee that increaſeth his riches,&c. It may ſeeme at the firſt ſight that he alloweth vſury,and that he praiſeth and commendeth him who by vſury and increaſe doeth augment his riches : ſeeing it is a meane and inſtrument by the which hee that is merciful getteth wherewith to giue almes vnto the poore : the which is a very acceptable ſeruice vnto God. To this ſame wee may anſwere in two ſortes : firſt of al, that God often vſeth wicked inſtruments for to acompliſhe a good work : as for to ſende Ioſeph into Egypt, that hee might bee gouernour of the countrie, and might ſuſteine his father and his brethren in the time of famine, hee vſed his brethren, who were wicked inſtruments, miſerably ſelling their brother Ioſeph. And when God pleaſed to chaſten his people, hee ſtirred vp wicked and vngodly enimies of true religion : as Pharao, the Aſſyrians, and Babylonians, and other nations. When it pleaſed him to deliuer vs from tyranny of the Diuel by Ieſus Chriſte, hee ſtirred vp againſt him, the Scribes, Sacrificers, and Phariſees, and Iudas, who deſired nothing but to ſheede innocent blood. And ſo the vſurers are wicked inſtrumentes, whereby God gathereth riches, for to diſtribute them afterwardes in almes deedes vnto the poore by merciful men. But for al this, the vſurers are neuer the more iuſtified, either before God, or before men that rightly vnderſtande the trueth. It happeneth then by the prouidence of God that the riches euil gotten are afterwardes by other meanes imployed : and yet for al that they that haue geathered them, are neuer the better : for in gathering them they haue laboured to hurt their neighbors: and in keeping them, they haue (ſo much as in them laye) famiſhed and ſtarued the poore. The ſeconde, ſeeing that it is not lawful for to doe euil, that good may come thereof, let vs knowe that the holy Ghoſte, for to allowe and commende a lawful & good woorke, doeth not reſpect what proceedeth thereof, though it bee good & profitable : otherwiſe hee ſhould allow al the euils that are doone againſt his faithful ſeruauntes. For wee knowe that al thinges worke together for the beſt vntoo them that loue GOD, euen to them that are called of his purpoſe : and ſo the moſt wicked ſhould be iuſtified before GOD : the which we muſt neither thinke nor ſay : but for to alowe a lawefull and good worke, the holy Ghoſte reſpecteth the wil and minde of him that hath done it: to wit, if that his minde were ſet wholy to follow

Oſeas.6.6.
Mat.12.7.
Heb.13.16.
Gen.37.27.28.& 45.5.
Rom.8,28.

followe that which God teacheth him by his woorde, after the which all our woorkes ſhoulde bee ruled. Otherwiſe, what goodneſſe ſoeuer proceedeth thereof, and what fayre colour ſoeuer they haue, yet are they wicked and abhominable. Notwithſtanding let vs note, that it is not euil done to augment our riches, prouided that wee doe no wrong to any man, and that we oppreſſe not the poore, but that wee gouerne our ſelues towardes our neighbours, as wee woulde that they ſhoulde gouerne themſelues towardes vs, as if we were in their place and ſtate, and they in ours: as Ieſus Chriſt doeth admoniſhe vs. *Mat.7.12.* And wee muſt take good heede from following the opinion of thoſe which ſay, that they doe no wrong vnto their neighbours, when they woulde gladly receiue and take money at the price that they giue it to their neighbours: for Ieſus Chriſt ſpeaketh of a minde wel gouerned by vnfayned loue.

9 *He that turneth away his eare from hearing the lawe, euen his prayer ſhalbe abhominable.*

For to ſerue God as we ought, it is not ynough, to heare that which hee teacheth vs, but alſo we muſt giue our heartes theretoo, and with a right affection ſet our ſelues to conforme our manners vnto his word, for to obey him: and in this wiſe we ſhal pleaſe him, and he wil heare our prayers. But for to bee counted rebells before God, and to haue our ſeruice counted abhominable, there needeth not but the turning away of our eares from hearing of the doctrine which he preſenteth and offreth vnto vs: as Solomon doeth wel ſignifie, ſaying,

Pſal.50.14.15 & 145.18.19 Mat. 7. 21.

He that turneth away his eare, &c. For he ſtraightly commandeth vs to heare his worde, and hath in al times ordeined miniſters thereof. And alſo whoſoeuer deſpyſeth to heare the doctrine, doeth fall to al diſobedience and rebellion: and as hee deteſteth all honeſtie and vertue, euen ſo doeth God abhorre al the ſeruice that ſuch a contemner doth offer vnto him, howe faire and holy ſoeuer it appeare. And thus al the ſeruice that the Papiſtes doe call diuine, is nothing but filthineſſe and ſtincking puddle. Wee muſt therefore bee carefull to heare the doctrine, that wee

may

Rom.10.17. man obtaine faith, which is the true foundation of our prayers. As except wee haue faith, beeing aſſured that God doeth loue vs, and wil giue vs whatſoeuer wee require, ſo farre as ſhalbee expedient for our ſaluation, wee can not with a free heart and earneſt *Mat.21.22.* minde make our prayers vnto GOD. Euen ſo can wee not *Iohn.15.4.* bee hearde, except wee pray in true faith. And therefore, Ieſus *Iames.1.6.* Chriſt doeth admoniſhe vs to aſke in faith, and promiſeth vs that wee ſhal obteine. Wherefore, let vs knowe that the prayer whereof Solomon ſpeaketh heere, is not properly praier, but crying, which proceedeth of no right affection, but onely of hypocriſie, or of feare of tormentes, or of cuſtome, and as if a man woulde acquite a thing, in hope of gaine and profite. With ſuch kinde of clamours poperie is filled. But Solomon doeth cal it *prayer*, becauſe it hath ſome ſhewe thereof, and that the wicked doe ſo cal it, &c. For alſo true prayer is neuer abhomination before God, ſeeing that it is the principal ſeruice that wee can doe vnto God: not that hee hath neede thereof, but foraſmuch as calling vpon him in our neceſſities, wee hope to receiue al good things of him, and not of any other, confeſſing that he is the only authour of al good things, and that wee can haue them no where elſe. And alſo vnder the inuocation of the name of GOD, the ſcripture comprehendeth al the ſeruice that wee owe vnto him. Let vs note then that albeeit the lawe was not written vntil the time of Moyſes, yet in al *Gene.4.26.* times there hath beene doctrine, whereunto it behooued to giue *Ioel.2.32.* eare, that ſuch as hearde the ſame, might beleeue in God, and obey *Rom.10.13.* him. Otherwiſe the ſacrifice of Abel coulde not haue pleaſed God, no more then the oblation of Caine. For without faith it is vnpoſſible to pleaſe GOD, Heb. 11.6. It is not to ſay that faith muſt needes bee perfect, for to make our prayers to pleaſe God: but it ſuffiſeth vs to folowe the ſteppes of Cornelius, Actes 10. Furthermore let vs note, that if their prayers which turne from the lawe were abhominable, by a more ſtrong reaſon then muſt theirs which turne away from the Goſpel, bee much more abhomi- *Heb.10.29.* nable: and they that are ſuch, muſt looke for wonderful great tormentes.

13 *Hee that cauſeth the righteous to goe aſtray by an euill way, ſhall fal into his owne pit, and the vpright ſhall inherite good things.*

By the corruption and malice of our nature we are all blinde and ignorant, and knowe not howe to gouerne our ſelues, nor what way wee muſt holde to walke, and to ſaue our ſelues from dangers, and chiefly from them which leade our ſoules to deſtruction. Now albeit that by our tranſgreſsions and diſobedience wee had wel deſerued to haue remained in darkeneſſe and blindneſſe, and to go vnto deſtruction, yet God hath had mercy on vs, and for to open the eies of our vnderſtanding, hee hath giuen vs his worde, the which ſerueth vs as a lampe vnto our feete, and a light vnto our ſteppes: yea it is the way whereby wee muſt walke, if wee will not erre. *Pſa.119.105* And for to doe this wel, the Lorde doeth print the ſame in our heartes, by his holy ſpirite, according to his promiſe. *Iere.31.32.* Let vs then follow the guiding of the holy Ghoſt, and we ſhal not wander aſtray by the euil way of offences & diſſolutions, of ſeditions, of vprores, of doctrines and inuentions of men, nor of other enormities, and ſhal not fal into the pit of ruine, of deſtruction, of damnation and eternal death: but walking by the ſtreight way, wee ſhal come vnto life, wherein wee ſhal inherite the true bleſſedneſſe which neuer ſhal faile.

Nowe as the Lorde of his meere grace doeth giue vs ſuche a guide, euen ſo woulde he haue vs direct the blinde, the ſimple, & ignorant: and that ſo much as wee poſsibly can, wee ſhoulde keepe them from going aſtray into the euil way. And for to doe the ſame, let vs exhort them to aſcende vp to the hil, following the propheſie of Eſay. *Eſay.2.3.* Otherwiſe, if wee giue offence by euil doctrine, or euil conuerſation vnto our neighbours, and chiefly to them which are ſingle of heart, & deſire to liue ſincerely in trueth, iuſtice & holineſſe, wee prepare a pit for them, but we ſhal fal into it our ſelues: as Solomon threateneth, ſaying,

Hee that cauſeth the righteous to goe aſtray by an euill way ſhal fal into his owne pit, &c, And in this threatening he doth wel ſhewe vs, that when God hath refourmed our heartes by his

worde,

worde, wee muſt take diligent heede with what people wee walke,
and wee muſt needes flie a company of offendours and diſſolute
men, whoſe liues are an euil example. Otherwiſe, what righteouſneſſe
& integritie ſoeuer there is in vs, yet are we in dãger to be corrupted,
and to forſake the good way for to ſtray by the euil. For alſo
without ſuch companions wee are ſo weake, that without the offence
of other wee doe eaſily runne aſtray by an euil way. Beholde
Dauid (of whome we ſay that hee was a righteous and perfect man,
ſeeing that God doeth giue him witneſſe, that hee had found a man
2.Sam.11. according to his owne hearte) who by the regarde of his eies went
Luke.22.32 fouly aſtray, by the euil way, in committing adulterie and murder.
Mar.14.17. Saint Peter (for whom Ieſus Chriſte had praied, that his faith might
1.Kin.11. not faile) went aſtray by the euil way in renouncing his maiſter, by
ſwearing, curſing, and forſwering. And Solomon himſelfe, who was
ſo wiſe, was carried into the euil way, by committing whoredome
with ſtrange and Heatheniſhe women, and by committing of idolatrie.

Nowe albeit that ſuche going aſtray is wicked, dangerous, and mortal vnto them which giue offences, and not contented too bee corrupted them ſelues, labour to corrupt others and to deſtroy them: albeit (I ſay) that the going aſtray of ſuche men is deadly: as Solomon doth marke it, when he ſaith, *Shall fall into his owne pit:* yet is it not deadly vnto the righteous and perfect, to whome God of his grace and goodneſſe doeth reueale, giuing faith and repentance, to the end that in ſteede of the pit of ruine and deſtruction, they might obteine the eternal bleſſedneſſe which God hath prepared for his children, for their inheritance: as Solomon doth note it, ſaying,

And the vpright ſhall inherite good thinges. Wherein
wee haue firſt of al to note, that ſith that Solomon, againſt the pit,
ſetteth good thinges, hee ſpeaketh not onely of worldly thinges,
which are commõ both to the good and euil, and are of no continuance:
but hee ſpeaketh chiefly of the kingdome of heauen,
and of euerlaſting life. True it is neuertheleſſe that the iuſt & faithful
Pſal:33.18. doe inherite the good things of this worlde, and do obteine
19.& 34.10 them in ſuch abundance and ſufficiencie that they haue enough: and
11.& 37.9 the offendours, caſtawayes, and diſſolute doe often fal euen in this

life, into great miſerie: as the Pſalmes before alledged doe pronounce it, and as it might bee ſhewed by diuers examples. In Ieremie there are great threatninges againſt the falſe Prophetes which cauſed the people to goe aſtray: and ſo were foure hundred and fiftie falſe Prophetes ſlaine. Secondly, that the vpright and perfect are the children of God: otherwiſe they coulde not inherite this good thing: for the inheritance belongeth vnto the children. Thirdly, foraſmuch as this good thing is an inheritance, therefore it can not be deſerued, but is obteined by grace: as alſo it is by grace that God hath adopted vs for his children.

Iere.23.
1.Kin.18.40

11 *The rich man is wiſe in his own conceite: but the poore that hath vnderſtanding, can try him.*

The riches of this worlde are the good creatures of God, and by them in wiſdome and prudence, we may and we ought to bring foorth good fruites of loue, pitie, compaſsion and mercy, in helping with a free heart and readie wil, the poore and needy. And ſuche fruites are of ſweete ſauour before God, who deſireth mercy, and not ſacrifiſe. And they that are careful to bring them foorth, are very wiſe and prudent, in the wiſedome of the Lorde, but ſuch wiſemen are very rare and thinly ſowne. As we may ſee by the great contempt and diſdaine that the poore are in, by the negligence, vnmercifulneſſe, crueltie, rauening & theuery of the rich: who are neuer ſatisfied, and haue neuer made an end in gathering of riches, but heape vp ſtil without ceaſsing: and ſo doing, they thinke they worke diligently and carefully. For as ſaith Solomon, *The rich man is wiſe in his owne conceit.* He ſaith expreſly, *in his owne conceite:* for to ſhew vs that albeit the rich eſteeme themſelues wiſe, & that they would be ſo counted of other, yet are they not ſuch in deede, for God iudgeth thẽ far otherwiſe: as we may ſee it, when he rebuketh, threateneth and condemneth ſuch rich men, calling thẽ fooles theeues, robbers, & murderers, & depriueth thẽ of the heauẽly heritage. Euen ſo when by the worde of the Lord, we haue learned to deſpiſe riches, & to gouerne vs wiſely in being contented with that which the Lord ſhal giue vs, we may try the worldly rich mẽ & hauing foũd what they are by the worde, to iudge thẽ fooles. Solomon doeth declare it ſo, ſaying, *But the poore that hath vnderſtanding, can trie him out*. Yet Solomon doeth not ſimply ſay, the wiſe ſhal try him out: but he ſaith, The poore that hath vnderſtanding. And this commeth becauſe that the poore being in neceſsitie, is more inclined and hath more occaſion to enquire out the riche, and to iudge that they are not ſuche as they eſteeme them ſelues to bee, when they are voide of pitie and compaſsion, and vſe not their riches as they ought. But either they locke them too faſt (as doe the couetous and vſurers, which are afearde that the earth wil faile them) or els they fat themſelues onely as hogges in a ſtye, or els do ſpende them in play, in ſumptuouſneſſe and pompes, in ſuperfluities and exceſſe, in gluttonies and drunkenneſſe, in whoredome and other filthineſſe, as prodigal perſons: and yet neuertheleſſe care not a whit for the crie of the poore. He alſo ſaith not ſimply, *the poore:* For if the poore beee not wiſe and learned, hee wil deſire to bee like vnto the rich: and thus hee ſhal not try him out for too iudge him to bee other then wiſe, ſeeing hee is of the ſame affection.

Furthermore, let vs knowe that Solomon giuing ſuch wiſedome of imagination vnto the riche, doeth priuily denounce their malediction: for it is ſaid, Woe be vnto you that are wiſe in your owne conceite, and prudent towardes your ſelues. *Eſay.5.21.* Therefore if GOD hath giuen vs riches, let vs not delight in them, as though for them wee were more excellent then other, and as if it were lawful for vs to vſe them after the luſtes of our fleſhe: but let vs humble our ſelues, and behaue our ſelues faithfully, knowing that we haue nothing but what wee haue receiued, and alſo that wee haue receiued it as diſpoſers, for to diſtribute them according to the will of our maiſter. And therefore, let vs not eſteeme and bragge neuer the more for our riches, but let vs followe the admonition of the Apoſtle Saint Paule, Charge them that are riche in this world, that they bee not high minded, and that they truſt not in vncertaine riches, but in the liuing God, which giueth vs abundantly all thinges to enioy. *1.Tim.6,17 18.19.*

12 *When righteous men reioyce, there is great glory: but when the wicked come vp, the man is tryed.*

Wee mightily reioyce when we are at eaſe, and proſper, and come to the ende of our enterpriſe, and that wee are not gaineſaide nor reſiſted: and for theſe very cauſes doe wee reioyce, as experience teacheth. And therefore when Solomon ſaith, *When the righteous, &c.* it is as much as if hee ſaide, the people feele themſelues exceeding happie, and doe much reioyce when the righteous doe proſper and haue ſuch credite and authoritie, that they wil rule quietly, without troubling or moleſting their neighbours: then haue wee alſo matter of reioyſing and gladneſſe: as alſo Solomon hath declared the ſame heere before, when he ſaith, *In the proſperitie of the righteous, the citie reioyceth.* *Pro. 11. 10.*

Nowe that wee muſt ſo vnderſtande this firſt part of the preſent ſentence, the ſeconde part doeth plainly ſhewe it, when it is ſaide, *But when the wicked come vp, &c.* The which is as if hee ſaide, when the wicked doe proſper, and haue credite and authoritie, euery where they treade vnder feete, and doe greatly vexe their neighbours, and trouble them, greatly extorting, doing wrong and violence, robbing, ſpoyling, and murthering them. Beholde how *the man is tried, or ſifted out*, in the lifting vp of the wicked. For the ioy that wee haue for the righteous, wee may bring foorth Ioſeph the ſonne of Iacob, Moſes, Ioſua, Dauid, Ioſias, and Ezekias. And for the trial of the man, when the wicked are raiſed vp, wee bring foorth Pharao, Saule, Achab, and other wicked ones which troubled the people of Iſrael. Moreouer, let vs note that Solomon doeth ſhewe vs that wee ought greatly to deſire the proſperitie of the iuſt, and to pray that God would mainteine them, and not ſuffer them to bee greeued and vexed. Contrarily, hee ſheweth, that wee ought to hinder and to ſtoppe ſo muche as wee poſsibly can, that the wicked may not come into credite and authoritie, to haue power and gouernement: for in their exaltation and lifting vp, the world is troubled and moleſted, and chiefly thoſe which liue religiouſly and godly.

13 *Hee that hydeth his ſinnes, ſhall not proſper: but hee that confeſſeth, and forſaketh them, ſhall haue mercy.*

Albeit that the hypocrites are wicked and malicious, and are filled with diuers filthineſſe and infections, and are very abhominable before God, yet as if they were righteous and innocent, as if they were pure and cleane, they bragge not onely before men, for to bee counted of them holy and righteous, and to obteine praiſe
Mat.23.5. and glory before them: for they do the workes which haue a good-
Eſay.58.1. ly ſhewe of holineſſe and religion, to bee ſeene of men: but alſo
Luke.18.9 they boaſt euen before God, as hee complaineth of it by his Prophet Eſay. And Ieſus Chriſt doth alſo declare it vnto vs by the example of the Phariſee. And thus ſo much as they can, they hide their miſdeedes, and ſeeke to be rewarded of God, as though they were worthy of it, and had iuſtly deſerued it. But they ſhal neuer get or obteine that which they thinke and deſire to doe. For, as Solomon ſaith,

Hee that hideth his ſinnes, ſhall not proſper. Caine (as hee thought, and as he woulde faine haue had it) did hide his ſinne, ſay-
Gen.4.9. ing, Am I my brothers keeper? but hee proſpered neuer the more, ſeeing he was a runnagate and a vagabond. When Iudas by a kiſſe betraied the innocent blood, he hid his treſpaſſe: euen ſo alſo he proſpered not, but did miſerably hang him ſelfe. And ſo they that thinke to hyde their ſinnes from God, ſhal not proſper, but the curſe of the Lorde ſhal fal vpon them, and ſhal neuer obteine forgiueneſſe: as neuer had Cain, Saule, and Iudas: and alſo al their like ſhal neuer obteine it: for malediction lieth vpon them, which
Eſay.29.15. thinke to hide their counſel from the Lorde. Contrarily, if in deede and truely, wee feele our ſelues greeuouſly faultie before God, if we confeſſe out ſinnes, and that through great diſpleaſure and ſorrowe we forſake and turne from them, and aske forgiueneſſe thereof of the Lorde, hee wil graunt vs mercy, as he did vnto Dauid, Daniel, Matthew, Peter, Zacheus, and to the publicane, and to the ſinful woman, to Mary Magdalin, out of whom Ieſus Chriſt caſt ſeuē Diuels:

euen ſo wil hee doe to al poore which wil turne vnto him with an vnfeigned hart: as Solomon doth pronoũce it, ſaiyng, *But he that confeſſeth and forſaketh them, &c.* Whereunto agree theſe places of ſcriptures, Seeke the Lorde, whiles hee may bee founde: cal vpon him whiles hee is nigh. Let the vnbeleeuing man forſake his way, and the Lorde wil haue mercy vpon him. Returne you, and repent you for your offences, and your ſinne ſhal not deſtroy you. Wherein wee ſee that to obteine pardon & forgiueneſſe, it is not enough to confeſſe our ſelues ſinners: as Pharao, Saul, and Iudas haue proued it, and felte it: but in confeſſing of our ſinnes, we muſt leaue them: as did the holy olde fathers: and amongſt others Dauid, Peter, Matthew and Zacheus. But ſome wil ſay that during this life ſinne doeth cleaue ſo faſt and vnſeparably vnto vs, as wee may wel feele, and as the Apoſtle Saint Paule doeth wel ſhewe it, by the complaint hee maketh: and therefore they conclude that wee cannot leaue nor forſake it: and ſo wee neuer obteine mercy: or for to obteine it, it is not required to forſake ſinne, & that it is enough to confeſſe the ſame. Whereunto I anſwere, Albeit that ſinne doeth not forſake vs, yet doe wee leaue it, when wee abhorre and deteſt it, and that wee ſuffer it not to reigne in our mortal bodies, but doe folowe what the Apoſtle Saint Paule doeth teach vs of the mortification of the olde man, and of our earthly members. Thus doing, we forſake ſinne, and do obteine mercy. For as ſaith Saint Paule, There is nowe no condemnation to them that are in Ieſus Chriſte, which walke not after the fleſhe, but after the ſpirite. Beſides this, wee haue to note firſt of all, in this woorde to *Confeſſe*, that auricular confeſsion hath no foundation in this place. For when Solomon wrote, there was no popiſhe Prieſt, but euery man priuately confeſſed him ſelfe to GOD, and the people in common confeſſed their ſinnes, not in numbring them one by one, as the Pope woulde haue vs to doe: the which cannot bee doone ſeeing alſo that no man can rehearſe the faultes that hee doeth in an howre ſpace. Neuertheleſſe I wil not condemne the confeſsion that is made vnto men: for it is neceſſarie. Firſt of al, if GOD doe aduertiſe mee of my ſinne by men, I muſt confeſſe them vnto him, that GOD may bee gloryfied.

Eſay.55.6.7
Eze.18.30.31.32.
Rom.7
Gala.5.
Rom.6.
Gala.5.
Ephe.4.
Colo.3.
Rom.8.1.

Ioſu.7.19. As Ioſua doeth admoniſh Acham thereto. And Dauid being admoniſhed by the Prophet Nathan, confeſſed hee had ſinned. *2.Sam.12.13* Secondly, when wee haue offended our neighbours, for to reconcile vs vnto them, we muſt confeſſe the ſinne that we haue doone againſt them. Thirdly, it is very profitable that wee ſhoulde open vnto our brethren our imperfections, to the ende that knowing our neceſsitie, they might bee ſtirred vp to pray for vs, and that by their prayers, wee may bee holpen: as wee are admoniſhed. *Iam.5.16* Fourthly, let vs note, that he which forſaketh his ſinnes, ought to eſteeme himſelfe neuer the more for it, but to humble himſelfe, and acknowledge that hee forſaketh not his ſinnes of himſelfe, but becauſe that God hath mercy vpon him, and giueth him true repentance, and the guiding and gouernement of his holy Spirite. *Iere.31.18.19.* Thou haſt chaſtened mee, and I haue beene as an vntamed calfe. Conuert mee, O Lorde, and I ſhal bee conuerted. Euen ſo, Solomon doeth not promiſe him that hee ſhal not obteine as hee hath deſerued, but that hee *ſhall obteine mercy*. Wherein wee ought to learne that wee doe neuer ſo cleane forſake our ſinnes, but that wee bee alwayes ſtil faultie: otherwiſe wee ſhouldehaue no neede of mercy, and ſhoulde not need to aske forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes: but that wee ſhoulde bee rewarded according to our deſertes. The which wee neither ought to thinke nor ſay, except that wee wil be vnthankeful vnto the goodneſſe of our God, and renounce his mercy.

14 *Bleſſed is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his hearte, ſhall fall into euill.*

Wee are often admoniſhed by the holy ſcripture to feare the Lorde, by admonitions, promiſes, and examples. Gather the people vnto me, and I wil make them to heare my words, the which they ſhal learne, that they may feare mee al the dayes of their life, &c. *Deut.4.10. & 6.13. & 10.12.* Thou ſhalt feare the Lorde thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerue, &c. And now Iſrael, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but onely that thou ſhouldeſt feare the Lord thy God, & walk in al his waies? &c. *Pſal.22.24.25. & 33.18. & 34.8.10.* Yee that feare the Lord, praiſe the Lord: & feare him

all

al the ſeede of Iſrael,&c.But the eye of the Lord is ouer them which feare him,and looke for his goodneſſe, &c. The Angel of the Lorde doeth pitch his tentes rounde about them which feare him, and to deliuer them. Yee that are his Saintes,feare him, for they that feare him ſhal want nothing that is good. As touching examples, we haue the holie Patriarkes and Kinges, the Prophetes and Apoſtles, which feared the Lord, in diſtruſting them ſelues: and alſo haue done wel. Nowe albeit that in this booke, Solomon hath alreadie at diuers times exhorted vs to feare the Lorde: yet foraſmuch as wee neuer thinke thereupon as we ought, and that wee truſt too much to our ſelues,and that it is moſt neceſſarie for vs to walke in feare & trembling,ſeruing the Lorde,as Dauid doth admoniſh vs: for this cauſe by promiſe he doeth exhort vs nowe againe to feare,ſaying,*Bleſſed is the man that feareth alwayes,&c.* Him,that he calleth now bleſſed,he hath before called wiſe, ſaying, The wiſe man feareth, and departeth from euil. And indeed, he that departeth from euil,doth ſhewe great wiſedome,wherin there is great proſperitie & felicitie. But he is not contented ſimply to ſay,He that feareth,but he addeth, *alwayes*. Wherein hee ſheweth, that wee muſt perſeuer vnto the ende, in the feare of the Lorde: otherwiſe wee ſhould not woorke out our ſaluation,but ſhould fal into euil, as Solomon doth declare it, ſaying, *Pſal.2.11.* *Pro.14.16* *Pro.3.13.*

But he that hardeneth his heart, ſhal fal into euil. That which nowe he calleth, hardening of the heart, he calleth before, is careleſſe, ſaying, But a foole rageth, and is careleſſe. Therefore hee that hardeneth his heart, is a foole: whereupon it doeth wel folow, that he deſerueth to fal into euil, as he is nowe threatned. And foraſmuch as Solomon ſetteth hardening of heart,and to be careleſſe, againſt fearing, therein he ſheweth vs, that for vs righly to feare, we muſt humble our ſelues, and diſtruſt our ſelues, and become gentle and eaſie to be taught, vnder the yoke of the Lorde, confeſſing that therein is reſt,and out thereof is falling and deſtruction. And whileſt we doe thus feare, diſtruſting our ſelues, let vs take good heed from diſtruſting the helpe of God, or to dout what loue hee beareth vs. In this ſort,in fearing and beeing careful and diligent to keepe vs in the obedience of our God, we ſhal not feare to be forſaken nor rejected of our God and Father: for there is no feare in loue: but *Pro.14.16.* *1.Ioh.4.18* perfect loue caſteth out feare, &c. If we beleeue that God loueth vs, his loue is ſo perfect and accompliſhed, that when we haue any knowledge thereof, we reſt quietly out of feare, neither are troubled with any fearefulneſſe. And although we be not altogether exempted from feare, yet doeth it not let that wee ſhould not enioye peace, which we obtaine by fayth, when we haue our refuge vnto God, as vnto a ſtil and ſafe harborowe or Hauen from al daunger, of tempeſtes and perils. Furthermore let vs note, that as their felicitie which doe alwayes feare, doeth chiefly ſtande in the remiſſion of their ſinnes, and in eternal life; euen ſo the euil, whereinto the hardened of heart doe fal, lieth chiefly in this, that hauing heaped ſinne vpon ſin, they neuer obteine pardon, but are caſt downe headlong into eternal death.

15 *As is a roaring Lion and a hungrie Beare, ſo is a wicked ruler ouer the poore people.*

It is knowne that the Lyons and the Beares are wilde and cruel beaſtes: and chiefly when they deſire the pray, after they haue bene long without meate, to meete with them is verie dangerous: for if they haue once caught their praye, they teare, and deuoure it, without any remedie: foraſmuch as they are mightie, and do proceede therein with ſo great violence, that none can deliuer the pray from their pawes or iawes. Euen ſo the holie ſcripture willing to declare the crueltie, violence, and power of men, doeth compare them vnto Lyons and Beares. And nowe Solomon compareth the wicked (vnto Lyons and Beares) which haue power & domination, and exerciſe their crueltie vpon their ſubiectes, which are ſo pulled downe, that they can not reſiſt their power, nor deliuer them ſelues from the oppreſſion of the wicked rulers: and euen ſo they are as poore ſheepe betweene the pawes and teethe of Lyons and Beares. Solomon for to ſignifie the weakeneſſe & ſmal power of poore ſubiectes, vſeth a word in his language, which commeth of a verbe that ſignifieth to attenuate, or to leſſen and to make weake. And ſaieth expreſly, *Ouer the poore people*, feebled and brought downe, the which is for to taxe the cowardize and ſlackneſſe of the wicked, which dare doe nothing againſt their equals and like, but doe counterfeit the valiant captaines againſt thoſe that cannot be reuenged.

Pſal. 7.3. & 17.12. & 22 22. Eſai. 5. 29. 30

We may daily ſee that wicked rulers wil fauour the wicked, which ſhalbe amõgſt the people, & wil oppreſſe the poore ſimple. We need not to go farre of, to ſeeke examples hereof. It is not long ſince, that we might haue ſaid to the Citie which did boaſt her ſelfe of the reformation of the Goſpel, that which Eſai reprocheth to the Citie of Ieruſalem, ſaying, How is the faithful Citie become an harlot? Shee was ful of equitie, and iuſtice lodged therein, but nowe they are become murtherers. Now albeit that the wicked rulers are mightie & cruel as Lyons & hungrie Beares, yet as Dauid tooke away the pray from the Lion and the Beare, and ſlue them: euen ſo the wicked rulers cannot alwayes come vnto the ende of their enterpriſes, and to haue their deſires: for the Lions ſhal ſuffer want, & be hungerſtaruen. And this is by the power and might of the Lord, which rayſeth the poore, & beateth down & ſuppreſſeth the high minded: as haue Pharao, Saul, Achab, Nabuchodonozer, & many other proued true. Wherfore though the wicked gouernours be cruel & mightie, yet ought we not to ſtand in feare of them: ſeeing that the ruler of heauen & earth is on our ſide, againſt them: ſo that we may ſay, The Lord is mine helper, I wil not feare what man can do vnto me. And though we feare them not, yet muſt wee not leaue of from obeying them, when they do not turn vs away from the true ſeruice of God by their oppreſſion & extortions. On the other ſide, when the rulers are the Lieftenants of God (who is of a pitiful & merciful nature) they ought to be greatly aſhamed for degenerating by crueltie from him who hath done them this honour, to communicate his name vnto thẽ, & inſteed to be gẽtle as lambes, they ſhould become like vnto Lions & Beares. And when as they ſhould trẽble for their deſtruction. For if God doeth giue power vnto his faithful ſeruantes to tread the Lion vnder feete, he can alſo deſtroy the wicked which become Lions & Beares: for he is the great & mightie Lion: as hee is called by the ſcripture, Moreouer let vs note, that whẽ the wicked rulers are compared vnto Lions & Beares, that wee be admoniſhed for to take heed of thẽ: by a ſtronger reaſon then, of that Lion the Deuil. For theſe ſame make no warre but for to get riches, & to take our bodies, but the Deuil ſeeketh to deuour vs. And thus on al ſides, wee are open as a praye: but, for al that, wee muſt not feare nor bee diſcouraged, for as muche as we haue the Almightie on our ſide, who in time conuenient can and wil ſafely

Eſai.21.22 23.
1.Sam.17.34
Pſal.34.11
Pſal.118.6.
Rom.13.
1.Pet.2.
Pſal.9.13.
Eſai.31.4.
Oſee.11.10. & 13.7.8.
1.Pet.5.8.

deliuer vs from al dangers and perils, and to place vs in ſafetie.

16 *A Prince deſtitute of vnderſtanding, is alſo a great oppreſſour: but he that hateth couetouſneſſe, ſhal prolong his dayes.*

It ſeemeth vnto the Princes of this word, that they haue nothing to doe to labour to learne wiſdome, either humane or diuine: and therefore they are blockiſhe and brutiſhe, and doe ſuffer them ſelues to be tranſported with a looſe bridle, by their luſtes and carnal affections: but God hath wel ſhewed them, that they ought not to be ſo beaſtly and ignorant, when for to guide his people of Iſrael, he ordeined Moſes, who was inſtructed in al wiſedome of the Egyptians, and was mightie in doings and ſayings: and that for his better inſtruction, and to make him more wiſe, hee gaue him his lawe, his ſtatutes, and ordinances. He alſo hath ſhewed them by Iethro, when he ſaide, And doe thou prouide amongſt the people men of ſtrength, fearing God, & true, & place them ouer the multitude. Thirdly, he ſheweth it, when he willed the King to write out a booke of the lawe for him ſelfe. Fourthly, when he hath placed ſo many wiſe Kings ouer his people: as Dauid, Solomō, Ioſaphat, Ioſias, and Ezekias. Furthermore, he doth ſhewe it by diuers admonitions that he pronounceth againſt them. It is therefore a moſt wicked thing, that the Princes and rulers of the earth, ſhould bee voide of wiſedome and vnderſtanding, and it is alſo verie hurtful and dangerous: as their ſubiectes doe prooue it by experience. For how great deſire ſoeuer they haue, to get wherewith to furniſhe out their eaſie liuing, and to mainteine them ſelues long in credite, authoritie, and power, and to doe al thinges after their deſire, yet doe they oppreſſe the people by extortions. Solomon doeth pronounce it ſo, ſaying, *A Prince deſtitute of vnderſtanding, &c.* When he is not contented to ſay deſtitute of vnderſtanding, but in the plural number, ſaieth, *Of vnderſtandings:* hee ſheweth that it is not enough for Princes to be wiſe, gentle, and prudent, after the iudgement of the fleſh, but that they muſt be verie diligent to heare the word of God, the which is our wiſedome and prudence. And that they doe commit extortions, of couetouſneſſe of getting. Solomon doeth ſhewe it

Act.7.22.
Exo.18.21.
Deut.17.18
19.20.
Pſal.2.& 82
Eſai.1.& 3.
& 56.

it when hee ſetteth the hatred of couetouſneſſe againſt extortions, ſaying, *But he that hateth couetouſneſſe, &c.* Hee ſheweth alſo that the fruites of couetouſneſſe are extortions, & that they which doe them, are couetous, though they doe exceſſiuely waſt the riches that they rauiſhe. He ſheweth alſo that they which are giuen vnto extortions, are of no long continuance, when he affirmeth, that hee which hateth couetouſneſſe, *ſhal prolong his dayes*. The which is true. For albeit that after mans iudgement, it ſeemeth that the oppreſſours and rauiſhers doe liue long, yet foraſmuche as when they thinke leaſt, and rather then they woulde, they are taken out of this worlde, they doe not prolong their dayes. But though they which hate couetouſneſſe, ſhould deceaſe this life in the flower of their age, yet foraſmuch as they deſpiſe the worlde, and aſpire vnto the heauenly riches, they content them ſelues with ſuche number of dayes as it pleaſeth God to giue them, and had rather to dye then to liue: and thus they prolong their dayes: for alſo they obteyne eternal dayes: and contrarily the couetous which worke extortions, doe periſh eternally. And before their ende it often happeneth, that they which doe extortions are hated, and meete with many euil thinges which ſhorten their dayes, after mans iudgement. Contrarily, they which hating couetouſneſſe, doe no extortions, but vſe gentleneſſe and liberalitie, are loued: and therefore they are preſerued and ſaued, ſo much as may be. The Princes here then, are admoniſhed to giue them ſelues vnto wiſedome and prudence, and therby to flye auarice. For ſo farre is it of, that wee ſhoulde prolong our dayes by couetouſneſſe, that rather thereby we are deſtroyed. For, as we haue ſeene, the couetous of gaine, doth trouble his houſhold. *Pro. 15. 27.* Hereunto we may adde, that which is treated of in the 12. Chapter of Saint Luke, and 1. Tim. 6. & Iames. 5.

17 *A man that doeth violence againſt the blood of a perſon, ſhal fly vnto the graue, & they ſhal not ſtay him.*

Violence againſt the blood of a perſon, is done in diuers ſorts. Firſt of al, in killing of our neighbour, as Cain ſlue his brother Abel: and as the infidels and Idolaters doe, perſecuting and burning the poore innocents. *Gen. 4. 8.* Secondly, in dooing ſome wrong vnto our neigh-

Gen.34.28 & 42.21.22. neighbour : as did the ſonnes of Iacob, ſelling their brother Ioſeph vnto the Iſraelites. They wrought violẽce againſt his blood: as they afterwardes confeſſed it. As Iudas betraying the innocent blood, and as doe al thoſe which fayning to knowe the trueth, doe betraye the poore faithful. Thirdly, violence is done to the blood, by thefts, rauenings, exactions, and extortions: as did the great men of Eſai.1.& 59 Eze.22.17 Miche.3.9 10.11.& 7 2. Ieruſalem, and the common people of Iuda & Iſrael, towards the poore and feeble: euen as the Prophets doe reproch them for it. Fourthly, violence is done vnto the blood, when we doe not our duetie in helping the needineſſe of the poore. For after wee are deſtitute of loue, there is nothing but hatred, which is counted murther. Nowe after which of theſe foreſaid maners ſoeuer we do violẽce vnto the blood, we think to make our profit, and to take our eaſe, and to be in credit and authoritie, and out of danger. And in deede whileſt God doeth diſſemble and patiently giue the looking on, the wicked beare the ſway, doe flouriſhe and proſper in the outwarde apparance: and therefore euerie man is at their commandement, & they are mainteined as if they were honeſt men: and it ſeemeth that they ſhould neuer periſhe, nor bee deſtitute of people to mainteine or ſupporte them, but though he tarrie, yet muſt they them ſelues (as they tend to deſtroy other) fal headlong into deſtruction, without hauing any man to giue them ſuccour for to keepe them from it. Solomon doeth threaten them therewith, when he ſaith, *A man that doeth violence, &c.* And for to ſhewe that they ſhal not auoide deſtruction, he maketh them like vnto them which flye and can not be kept backe, and alſo finde no man to pul them backe, if they meete with a pit, they fal therin. In the number of ſuch people we may place Pharao, which periſhed in the ſea: Saul, who ſlue himſelfe with his own ſword: Abſolom, who remayned hanging by the heare of his head: Iudas, who hung him ſelfe. Theſe haue done violence againſt the blood: and alſo they haſted to their deſtruction, without that any man hath preſerued them. We may here place the conſpirators of this Citie, which had earneſtly determined (as they thought) to haue done violence againſt the blood: but by the iuſt vengeance of God, they haue of them ſelues run vnto the pit, and could finde no helpe to profite them.

18 *He that walketh vprightly, ſhalbe ſaued: but he that is froward in his wayes, ſhal once fal.*

The worldlings and carnal men haue in their heart and mouth this diueliſhe prouerbe, Hee that becommeth a ſheepe, maketh him ſelfe a praye for the Wolfe: and therfore they gouerne them ſelues in al vngentleneſſe, violence & crueltie, for to mainteine themſelues not onely againſt them which labour to do them wrong, and to be reuenged of them, but alſo to oppreſſe the ſimple, feeble, and innocentes. And in deede, they make them to ſuffer much: as experience teacheth: and alſo the innocents do complaine therof. And euen becauſe of the infirmitie of their fleſh, they think that God maketh no account of them, therefore they are tempted with the proſperitie of the wicked. But albeit, that the faithful feele ſtrong afflictions, and that euen vnder the ſame they dye, yet do they not periſh: for God doth ſtrengthen them and ſuſteine them, giuing them patience and conſtancie, and verie often breaketh the enterpriſes of the wicked, and deliuereth his faithful from their oppreſſion & violence, & thus he ſaueth them: as the Patriarks, Moſes, the people of Iſrael, the Prophets & Apoſtles, & ſome good Kings, as Dauid & Ezekias. After the ſame experience Solomon pronounceth, that *hee that walketh vprightly, ſhalbe ſaued.* But the principal part of ſaluation lyeth not in that which is ſaide, but in the remiſſion of our ſins, & in the poſſeſſion of the crowne of immortalitie, the which they that walk vprightly & innocently, & in the ſame ſuffer temptation. Contrarily, albeit that the wicked which liue diſorderly in al wickedneſſe, doe flouriſh & proſper for a time: yet at the laſt, they fal ſodeinly to deſtruction: as many wicked haue felt by experience: To wit, Pharao, Saul, Abſolō, & Iudas. And according to the ſame experiēce, Solomō addeth, *But he that is froward in his wayes, ſhal once fal.* As alſo, they which haue conſpired to deſtroy the Church of God haue felt. But the principal part of their fal, lieth in the hardening of thēſelues in their frowardneſſe, they are not only contented to do frowardly in one ſort, but run vnto many wickedneſſes: as Solomon doth note it in his tongue, when hee ſaith not ſingularly, hee that is frowarde in his waye: but in the plurall number, Hee that is frowarde

*Pſal.*10.1.2 & 17.8.& 44.10.23.
*Pſal.*37.7.
*Iam.*1.12.
*Mat.*5.10.

in his wayes. And thus hardening them ſelues, they obtaine not remiſſion of their ſinnes, but periſh in them, & go vnto eternal death.

19 *He that tilleth his land, ſhalbe ſatisfied with bread: but he that foloweth the idle, ſhalbe filled with pouertie.*

Solomon knew wel enough, that God had not created man to be as a ſtone, or ſome other vnmooueable thing, but to the end that he ſhould ſpend the time about ſome good work. He knew alſo that man, becauſe of his corruption & vitious nature, is much more enclined to ceaſe from wel doing, then to occupie him ſelfe faithfully. And in this ſort, rebelling againſt the ordinance of his Creator, hee wel deſerued to bee depriued of the vſe of the good creatures that God had giuen him from the beginning of his creation, and to be brought to great neceſſitie. And therfore, hauing compaſſion of his neighbours, he doth admoniſh them to labour, & to be occupied about ſome worke: and doeth the ſame ſometimes in threatning the idle and ſlouthful, & ſometimes in making large promiſes vnto the careful and diligent: as we haue alreadie verie often ſeene. But becauſe we are deafe, & wil not vouchſafe to occupie our ſelues about that which we ought, Solomon is not cōtented with the former admonitions & promiſes, but to ſtir vs vp the more, he ſetteth downe here word for word the promiſe that hee hath made heretofore, ſaying, *He that tilleth his land, ſhalbe ſatisfied with bread.* Wherunto he addeth a threatning agreeable to the ſame, out of the *6.* Chapter, when he ſaith, *He that foloweth the idle*, ſhalbe filled with pouertie. As touching the promiſe, it hath bin handled alreadie, & concerning the threatning, it hath bin alſo explicated & expounded. But beſides that which hath bin ſaid, we haue to note, that Solomō compareth pouertie, vnto meat, & that very fitly: for as whē a man hath abūdantly filled his belly with meat, he is grieued & pained: euen ſo, whē a man hath long faſted, it greatly troubleth & vexeth him. Now ſithēs we wil not be filled with ſuch meat, which is nothing but pouertie, ſorow, & famine, euen a bitter death, let vs take heede we folow not the ſlouthful, but diligently to apply our ſelues to doe our worke, according as we are called of God. Thus doing, we ſhal haue want of nothing that is neceſſarie for vs.

Pro.12.11

Pro.12.11.
Pro.6.6.

30 *A faythfull man ſhall abound in bleſſings: and hee that maketh haſt to be rich, ſhall not be innocent.*

The worlde is filled with falſhood, vntrothe, deceites, lyes, rauiſhinges and euill trades, as it is both heard and ſeene in deedes and wordes, in ſuch wiſe, that it is not certainly well known whom a man may truſt. For this cauſe alſo the holy ſcripture maketh great complaintes of ſuch wickedneſſes, and condemneth all the world: and amongſt other places it is ſayd, The earth is filled with wronges *Gene.6. 13.* and extortion. And alſo it is ſaid, that God is true, and euery man *Pſal.12. 2.3* a lyar. And if Eſay made ſo great complaintes for the vntroth of the *& 114.1.2.3* people of God, muſt we not thinke that there where God was not *Rom.3.4.* preached, all was much more gone aſtray? And indeede, if God of *Eſay.59.* his grace did not except ſome from the common condition of men, there ſhould be none righteous, true nor faythfull: for we are all of one nature corrupted and defiled. And thus, ſo long as the corruption of the world laſteth, it is ſaide that Noe was a man iuſt and *Gene.6.9.* perfect, we muſt vnderſtand he was ſo, not of himſelfe, but becauſe that he found fauour before the Lord. Likewiſe whatſoeuer fayth, troath, veritie and righteouſnes was in Abraham and other Patriarkes, in Moyſes and other Prophets, in Dauid and in other moſt holy Kinges, in the Apoſtles and other holy ſeruauntes of God, the ſame came of the mercie he had on them, and regenerated them, and *Epheſ.1.* ſanctified them by his holy ſpirite, for to ſeparate them from the corruptions of this world. And therefore, when Solomon ſaieth, *A faythfull man ſhall abound, &c.* Let vs not imagine that there may bee found in all the world a man that is faythfull of himſelfe: but let vs confeſſe that it hath pleaſed God of his meere mercie, eternally to electe whome hee would, whome alſo afterwardes hee *Ephe.1.* would call by his worde, that hee might bring them to righteouſneſſe and innocencie of lyfe in Ieſus Chriſt.

And therefore, if the faythfull man doe abounde in bleſſinges, that is to ſay, if GOD doe endowe him with his graces and giftes, if hee giue vnto him abundaunce of wealth, if he giue him reſt and peace, if he place him in glory and in honour amongſt his neighbours: to be ſhorte, if al things come to paſſe as he woulde haue it, and that hee wanteth nothing: and that which is much more worth, if God giue him witneſſe by his ſpirite that hee is of the number of his children, and inheritours of thoſe number to whome Ieſus Chriſt wil ſay, Come ye bleſſed children of my father, poſſeſſe the kingdome which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world: yet this is not to ſay, that he doth deſerue by his faythfulneſſe. But as he is faythful by grace, euen ſo by grace doth he abounde in bleſſings: for alſo God ſhould haue no neede to promiſe vs bleſſings, if we coulde deſerue them. Now foraſmuch as there is none of vs, but woulde gladly enioy the foreſaide bleſſings, let vs therefore vnderſtande that Solomon promiſing them vnto the faythful, true, vpright, and perfect man, doeth labour to bring vs to abhorre lying, falſhoode, vnfaithfulneſſe, deceites, and wicked trades, and doeth exhorte vs vnto faithfulneſſe, trueth, integritie, and vprightneſſe, for to walke honeſtly with our neighbours, as we ought to doe, without labouring to bee riche to their hurte and hinderance. Otherwiſe in ſteede of obtayning the former bleſſings, and promiſes in the lawe, the curſes ſhal fal vpon vs: as Solomon doeth wel ſignifie briefly, ſaying, *And hee that maketh haſt to bee riche, &c.* Hee ſaieth not, which is riche: for albeeit that for the greateſt parte, the riche are curſed and depriued of the kingdom of God, becauſe they truſt in their riches, and are not ſtayed vppon the prouidence of the Lorde, and becauſe they fil themſelues, and haue their comforte, and care nothing at all for the affliction of the poore, and paſſe not to feede the hungry ſoule: and alſo becauſe they riſe vp and waxe proude, deſpyſing the little ones, and ſo much as they can, doe treade them vnder feete, and that worſt is, not caring for God nor his woorde, but blaſpheming his holy name, and by their violences and oppreſſions, cauſe him to be blaſphemed, yet the riches are the good creatures of God, and the riche men that vſe them wel, are bleſſed of God: as Abraham, Iſaack, Iacob, Iob, and the good kings of the people of God. But hee ſaieth, *that maketh haſt*, which is tranſported by his vnbrydeled concupiſcences and affections, and burneth with couetouſnes, & runneth about in ſuch wiſe that he careth not what he doeth, be it good or euil, be it wrōg

Mat.25.34.

Deut.28.

or right, prouided that hee can ſoone bee riche. Such a man wil hold neither fayth nor trueth, and therefore hee ſhal not abounde in bleſſings: but foraſmuch as hee ſerueth ſtrange Gods, ſetting his hearte vpon riches, and turning his hearte from God, and that againſt loue hee proceedeth againſt his neighbours by vnlawefull meanes, to enriche himſelfe and to make them poore, hee ſhalbee accurſed: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, ſaying, *that he ſhal not be innocent*. And it is according to the manner of ſpeaking of the ſcripture, the which threatening the wicked with malediction and puniſhement, ſaith, that they ſhal not bee innocent. True it is that the chiefeſt paine for ſuch riches, ſtandeth in eternal death: as the riche glutton and Iudas the traytour doe feele: but in abyding ſuch confuſion, they feele greate ſorrowes in this world: as Saint Paule doth ſhewe it. Nowe to the ende that wee may bee exempted from ſuch ſorowes, let vs flye couetouſneſſe: and if wee haue abundance of thoſe worldly riches, let vs poſſeſſe them as wee poſſeſſed them not. And that wee may wel doe the ſame, let vs obey the leſſon that Saint Paule teacheth the riche.

Exo.20.7.
Deut.5.
Ier.25.29.
& 40.12.
Nehe.1.3.
Luke.16.
1.Tim.6.9.10
1.Tim.6.17.

21 *To haue reſpect of perſons, is not good: for ſuch a man for a peece of bread wil deale vnfaithfully.*

Hee ſaith, that God is no acceptour of perſons. S. Peter ſpeaketh thus after Moyſes and the Prophetes. And becauſe that the ſuperiours and gouernours of the earth haue the preheminence and power from God, whoſe lieftenants (as it were) they are, and euen are called Gods, they are often admoniſhed in the ſcripture not to haue reſpect of perſons, but to bee folowers of the moſt higheſt. Solomon in folowing ſuch doctrine hath ſaid, it is not good to haue reſpect of any perſon in iudgement. But albeit that the ſuperiours of the earth are ſo often admoniſhed of their duetie, and threatened with deſtruction and damnation for their diſloyalty & vnfaithfulnes, notwithſtanding it is ſeene that almoſt euery where the fauour & reſpect of perſons taketh place, and iudgement is giuẽ in reſpect of perſons, and that the one is borne vp to oppreſſe the other, that wrong is done to him that hath the right, & right to him

Act.10.34.35
Exo.23.3.
Leui.19.15.
Deu.1.16.
& 17.
2.Chro.19.6
7.
Prou.24.23.

that hath the wrong, that the wicked is cleared, and the iuſt and innocent blamed & condẽned. For this cauſe Solomon is not contented with the admonition that he hath made heretofore, but to ſtirre vp and awaken the ſuperiours of the earth, to rule them, or to make them vnexcuſable and more guiltie, he doth admoniſh them againe ſaying, To haue reſpect of perſons is not good, &c. For to do ſhame vnto their ſuperiours, and to ſhew them their filthines, hee compareth them vnto knaues and varlets, who for a morſell of bread, or meſſe of pottage, or other thing of ſmall price, will doe, or take in hand to doe whatſoeuer a man would haue, when hee ſaieth, *for ſuch a man, for a peece of bread, &c.* And indeede it is a thing very diſhoneſt and fowle, that they whome God hath placed in ſeate, and doeth ſo much honour vnto them, as to call them Gods, ſhould fall into the order of the moſt vile and abiectes of the world, and ſhould become knaues and villaines. It is not to ſay, that they which haue reſpect of faces, in iudgement are cõtented with the offering of a peece of bread: we will giue ſo much to a dog: but by a peece of bread Solomon doeth ſignifie great preſentes and giftes that are giuen vnto Gouernours, Iudges and Magiſtrates, for to corrupt them, and to cauſe them to giue wrong iudgement: And doeth ſhew thẽ, that it is no great matter, nor of any great profit, for to take gifts, and that if they had a noble heart, right & perfect, they would in no wiſe take giftes, how great and excellent ſo euer they were, no more then a varlet, which feeleth not himſelfe an hungred, woulde not gladly receiue an almes of bread, but would haue a peece of money: and euen ſo a daintie curre being vſed to the greaſie kitchen, will not care for a peece of bread. And thus the wicked ſuperiours *Eſa.56.10.11* are heere compared vnto hungry dogges, which cannot bee filled.

22 *A man with a wicked eie haſteth to riches, and knoweth not the pouertie that ſhall come vpon him.*

An enuious man is vexed, when he ſeeth that his neighbours do proſper, and he that is not ſtayed vpon the prouidence of God, feareth that he ſhall not be ſoone enough rich. For this cauſe both the one and the other do poſte hither and thither to get riches, ſo much are they caried away with ſiniſter and euil affection, the which Solomon doeth ſignifie by a wicked eye, ſaying, *A man with a wicked eye, &c.* It is not needful to expounde what it meaneth, to haſte after riches: for it hath beene expounded heere before in the 20. verſ. and alſo it may be vnderſtoode by that which hath beene ſaide at the beginning: but wee muſt note that it ſeemeth to them which haſte both by enuie and by diſtruſt, that if they can gather riches, that they ſhal neuer want. Solomon doeth pronounce it ſo, ſaying, *and knoweth not the pouertie ſhal come vpon him.* He ſpeaketh after the opinion of thoſe which haſte to bee riche, and yet for all that hee threateneth them with pouertie, and declareth vnto them that their actiuitie ſhal not exempt them from want: as wee dayly ſee the experience thereof: and this commeth becauſe that God bloweth vpon the riches of ſuch men, & their riches conſume as ſmoke: and S. Paule doeth note it well, when hee attributeth vncertaintie vnto riches. And this is according to the ſcripture, which doeth attribute vanitie vnto the riches of this worlde. And thus we are admoniſhed to clenſe our eyes, and not to ſet our heartes vpon worldly riches, that wee bee not tempted to rauiſh the ſubſtance of other men, but rather that by loue wee ſhoulde bee enclined vnto liberalitie: and wee may aſſure our ſelues that wee ſhal neuer want. Moreouer let vs note that the worlde eſteemeth ſuch men for honeſt, of good wit and vnderſtanding, that can quickly become riche, and doeth reuerence them, but the holy Ghoſt pronounceth that they are filled with enuie and falſhood, the which doeth blinde them, & feede them with vaine truſt: as they ſhal feele, chiefly when they are with the riche glutton.

1. Tim. 6. 17.
Pſa. 34. 10. 11.
Luke. 16. 19.

23 ***Hee that rebuketh a man, ſhall finde more fauour at the length, then hee that flattereth with his tongue.***

Thoſe that are feeble and needie, or that are not contented with their ſtate, deſire to make their gaine at them that are great & riche, and ſeeke by al meanes for to obtaine good wil, and to get the fauour of thoſe which may raiſe their ſtate. And amongeſt other meanes they vſe to flatter, knowing that ſuch woordes are pleaſant and acceptable in the eares of ſuch as are delicate, boaſters and proude, which ſeeke after nothing but the praiſe of men, and would be exalted as high or rather more high then God. But they which walke in the feare of God, and in al humbleneſſe, doe confeſſe, that they haue neede to bee admoniſhed, yea corrected and rebuked, and not flattered, but rather are thankeful to them, which are ſeuere & ſharpe. As Dauid did receiue the reprehention of Nathan with all humbleneſſe: as alſo Ezekias did patiently heare the threateninges *2.Sam.11.* of the Prophete Eſay. They then that feare God, which are wiſe & *2.Kings.20.* humble: are not troubled when they bee rebuked, but rather honour them which rebuke them, wil gladly heare them, and followe their counſelles. It commeth to paſſe alſo that euen they themſelues which loue to bee flattered, thinke not wel of themſelues for hauing giuen eare to flatterers, and at laſt come to knowe that they which rebuked them, ſpake the trueth, and that for their profite: and therefore at length they deteſt the flatterers, and do loue them that are ſharp and ſeuere. And this is it which Solomon pronounceth, *Pſal.141.4.5* when he ſaith,

Hee that rebuketh a man, &c. Dauid doeth well ſhewe vs, that they which rebuke vs, ought to be beſt welcome, ſaying, *Inclyne* not my heart to euil, that I ſhoulde commit wicked woorkes with men that worke iniquitie: and let mee not eate of their delicates, let the righteous ſmite mee: for that is a benefite, &c. Let vs then learne, not to reſiſt, nor deſpite them, which reprooue vs, but rather let vs giue them thankes, and to loue and reuerence thē: for in rebuking vs, they ſeeke not our hurte, but they ſeeke our bene- *Eccle.6.* fite, our honour and ſaluation: where they which diſſemble to ſee *Pro.15.5.12* our faultes, care not though wee goe to deſtruction. Let vs learne *31.32.* this ſame of this ſentence. To this purpoſe it is ſaide: It is better to *& 19.20.25.* heare the rebukes of the wiſe, then the ſong of fooles, &c. If wee paſſe not after this ſorte to abaſe and to humble our ſelues, wee ſhewe that wee are fooles and mockers, wherevpon foloweth deſtruction and damnation. Let vs therefore vnderſtande that they which rebuke vs when wee fayle either in woordes or deedes, are organes and inſtrumentes by whome God wil pull vs backe from death, and bring vs to life.

24 *Hee that robbeth his father and mother, and ſaith, it is no tranſgreſſion, is the companion of a man that deſtroyeth.*

The fathers and mothers which gouerne and guide their childrẽ as it behoueth, are not without great care and great paine: for they deſire that their children ſhoulde profite and proſper, and ſhoulde chiefly growe in wiſedome and diſcretion: and heerein they beare a great loue vnto their children. For this cauſe, God not willing that children ſhould be vnthankful towardes their parents doeth commande, Honour thy father and thy mother. This honor ſtãdeth not in words and geſtures of the body only, but in reuerence and feare, in obedience, helpe, ſuccour and ſeruice alſo: ſo that the children, for to giue the honor they owe vnto their fathers and mothers, ought to haue ſuch affection towardes them, that they ſhould loue them, commend them, and greatly to feare their diſpleaſure, and to do all thinges in ſuch ſorte, that their parents doe ſuffer no loſſe, through their faulte: but ſo much as in them is, they ſhould helpe them to eaſe, and be altogether at their commaundement. Solomon doeth teach vs briefly, ſaying, *Heare thy Father*, who hath begotten thee, &c. The ſame doeth our Lorde, and S. Paule. Wherefore, when in ſteede that the children are bounde to ſuſtaine Father and Mother, they ſpoyle them of their wealth, ſo farre is it of, that they honour them, that they rather vſe crueltie, as theeues doe againſt poore paſſengers. The theeues will ſay they are honeſt men: euen ſo the children, becauſe they are the heires of their parents, will not thinke they haue offended, though they draw vnto themſelues the ſubſtance and goodes of their parents: but Solomon doth denie, that they doe well, but ſaieth that they exerciſe the tranſgreſſion of theeues, which lye in waight for to robbe and ſpoyle ſuch as paſſe by them, when he ſaieth: *He that robbeth his Father and Mother &c.* This ſentence might well ſeeme ſtraunge vnto children, which will not obey their Fathers and Mothers, but will bee maiſters ouer the goodes of their parents, and ſpend them at their pleaſure, becauſe they thinke themſelues to be heires of them. But Solomon doeth handle them very gently, when hee compareth them but vnto theeues: for truely, they are woorſe,

Exo.20.12.

Prou.23.22
Mat.15.3.
Mar.7.9.
Ephe.6.1.
Col.3.20.

ſeeing they are bounde vnto their fathers and moth ers by a double bande, yea threefolde: to wit, for creation, generation and bringing vp: and very theeues wil haue reſpect to doe no wrong nor violence vnto them of their blood: and to holde their hande, wil goe farre from them, and bee afraide to meete with them. Children then are admoniſhed to preſerue the wealth of their fathers and mothers, & in no wiſe to ſpoyle them of it: otherwiſe they ſhalbe like theeues, and conſequently deſerue death.

25 *He that is of a proude heart, ſtirreth vp ſtrife: but hee that truſteth in the Lorde, ſhalbe fat.*

The worldlinges and carnall minded, which deſire to proſper & to be riche, and to make their particular profite, bee it to the hurte of another, or otherwiſe, are led and caried with an ouerboldneſſe, arrogancie & proude heart, ſo that where they eſteeme their neighbours to giue them ſome let, whereby they cannot attaine to their purpoſe, they are incontinently ready to ſhewe that they are not faintehearted, but that it is whole right, as it is ſaid, And for to ſhew the ſame, they beginne to braule and contende againſt them which minde them no hurte, and doe dogge them, labouring to deſtroy them, for to come vnto their purpoſe and deſire, that is, to be fat, and to be at their eaſe, to the hurt of their neighbors: as did Caine, Pharao, Saule, and other proude heartes: and as wee haue ſeene it, and do ſtil ſee by experience. According to the which Solomon pronounceth, ſaying,

Iames.4.1. *Hee that is of a proude heart, ſtirreth vp ſtrife.* Heereunto agreeth S. Iames, from whence commeth ſtriſe and debate amongeſt you? Is it not heereof, to wit, of your luſtes? &c. Nowe that the proude, whoſe heart is groſſe, doe ſtirre vp ſtriſe, thinking to bee fat and to take their eaſe, Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when againſt the ſame hee addeth, *but hee that truſteth in the Lorde, ſhalbee fat.* And alſo therewith hee ſheweth that the highminded do not come to that whereunto they pretende, and obtaine not their deſires: for it is aſmuch as if hee ſaide, yee luſt, and haue not: yee enuie, and haue indignation, and cannot obtaine: yee fight and warre, and get nothing, becauſe yee aſke not: but the humble and patient which ſtirre vp no ſtrifes to maintaine themſelues thereby in proſperitie, and to lyue in wealth, at their eaſe, but rather ſuffer to bee ſpoyled: ſuch humble minded truſting in the Lorde, and depending of his prouidence, goodnes and liberallitie, ſhall abounde in wealth. For the Lorde neuer fayleth them that put their truſt in him: as wee ſee that many Saints haue prooued it true by experience: and alſo God who neither lieth nor cā lye, hath ſo promiſed. Moreouer let vs note that the ſcripture vſeth this worde to bee fat, after our manner of ſpeech. For when a man is welthy, we wil ſay of him he is very fat, or ful. And albeit that fatnes is promiſed vnto thē that truſt in the lord, yet let vs take good heed, from eſteeming that our truſt may be ſuch that therfore we ſhould deſerue to be made fat: but let vs acknowledge that it is the gift of God, proceeding of his meere & pure grace And therefore if wee bee fatte, let vs not abuſe the abundance that God giueth vs in diſſolutenes and wantonnes, in pompe and exceſſe in ſuperſtitions and ydolatries, as did the children of Iſrael, as wee may ſee by the rebukes that Moſes giueth them. Let vs note alſo that to truſt in the Lorde, is not to hope in him, and to doe nothing but to be ydle. They which ſo vſe it ſhalbe made fatte. In truſting in the Lorde we muſt beſtow our time in well dooing, and by the fattning we haue receiued, to fat alſo the needie and poore, and thus we ſhal abound. chapter. 11.24.25.

Pſal.10.11.
& 33.18.19.
& 34.8.
Iere.17 7.8.

26 *Hee that truſteth in his owne hearte, is a foole: but hee that walketh in wiſedome, ſhall bee deliuered.*

The gentle hearted doe take great matters in hande, and doe put themſelues in hazarde of many dangers, and it commeth of the greate courage they haue, and that they thinke they haue witte and vnderſtanding ynough, for to end their matters, and to knowe to auoyde the dangers. When they doe thus, they thinke themſelues to be wiſe and quicke witted, but the holy Ghoſt pronounceth contrarily, ſaying,

He that truſteth in his owne heart, is a foole. Wherein we haue too note, that to truſt in our heart, is too make account of our ſelues, and to be gouerned and ruled after our owne fantaſie, without taking heede what ende wee ſhall come to,and haue, and without knowing whether GOD doeth allowe our enterpriſe, or not,and if we put our ſelues in daunger, whether hee will giue deliuerance,or no. Solomon doeth ſhew it by the Antitheſis,attributing deliueraunce vnto wiſdom, when he ſaieth, *But he that walkethin wiſdome,ſhal be deliuered.* Many haue tried it by experiẽce, as the Patriarkes, and other Saintes. And albeit, that in mans iudgement and outward apparaunce, the moſt wiſe doe periſhe, yet doe they not ceaſe to haue deliueraunce: for dying temporally, they are ſet free, and deliuered from the power and tyranny of ſin, death,and the deuill, and are exempted from the torments of hell. For walking in wiſdome, we renounce our ſelues, and cleaue vnto the guiding of the Lord, as he teacheth vs by his word, which is our wiſdome and prudence.

27 *He that giueth vnto the poore, ſhall not want: but hee that hideth his eies,ſhall haue many curſes.*

There is none that deſireth want,nor that wiſheth to be poore. And therefore the worldly and carnally minded, for to ſaue themſelues from it,and carefully to gather together,and encloſe ſo much wealth, as they can by any meanes poſſible: and they thinke, that by ſuch meanes they ſhall auoyde lacke: and indeede, after mans iudgement, it is the beſt way that a man can take: but the holy Ghoſt doth teach vs an other meanes,cleane cõtrary to natural reſon, when he ſaieth by Solomon, *Hee that giueth to the poore.* This is much againſt naturall reaſon, the which ſaieth,that we muſt gather and hold faſt,for to auoyde pouertie. She looketh not to that God can and wil doe: ſhe is blinde in the workes of the Lord, and chiefly in thoſe that he worketh according to his free promiſe: the which notwithſtanding are vnfallible: for it is true, He hath promiſed bleſſing to him that giueth vnto the poore: wherevpon it foloweth well, that he ſhall neuer want. For bleſſing ſignifieth aboundaunce of riches, and contrarily, curſing ſignifieth want of riches, miſeries,calamities and ſorowes. And after this ſignification,Solomon threatneth the churliſh and cruell, the theeues & robbers, the couetous and inſatiable throtes, which regard the poore nothing

Deu.15.7.8.9 & 24.19. Deu.28.

pittifully, nor haue any compaſſion of them: he threatneth them, I ſay, that as they are not mercifull, and ſuffer the poore to endure many griefes, afflictions, and ſorowes, yea and diſdaine, and abhor them, and are rather ready to curſe them, then to bleſſe them, and to trouble them, then to maintaine them: euen ſo ſhall God greeuouſly puniſh them, and in diuers manners: as Solomon doeth ſignifie rightly, when hee is not alone contented to ſay, that hee which hideth his eies ſhalbe curſed: but ſaieth, alſo, that hee ſhall haue many curſes: that is to ſay, that he ſhall ſuffer many miſeries. But his greateſt and chiefeſt wealth, aboundance & fulneſſe that he giueth to the poore, ſtandeth not in aboundaunce of earthly bleſſings, but as he is mercifull, ſo doeth he obtaine mercie: the which conſiſteth in this, that God doeth not impute his ſinnes vnto him, but in forgiuing him, doth count him alwaies righteous, and maketh him to perſeuer in righteouſnes, that hee may continue in vſing liberalitie towardes his neighbours. And for the full meaſure of his felicitie, Ieſus Chriſt counteth the almes done and giuen vnto him ſelfe, that is giuen vnto the poore, and doth promiſe to recompence it with the kingdom of heauen. Euen ſo the woorſt and greateſt curſes, that ſhall fall vpon the churliſh and cruell, which care not to ſhewe mercie to the poore, are not the ſorowes that be ſuffered for want of earthly riches: but becauſe that God imputeth their ſinnes vnto them, and condemneth them without mercie. For becauſe they haue deſpiſed the Sonne of God in his members, therefore ſhall they bee ſente into the fire, that neuer ſhall bee quenched.

Mat.5.7.
Pſal.112.
2.Cor.9.
Mat.25.
Deu.15.5.
Iames.2.13.
Mat.15.

28 *When the wicked ryſe vp, a man hideth himſelfe: but when they periſh, the righteous encreaſe.*

They that haue the election and free choyce of placing rulers and gouernours, either in the Church for to preach the worde, and to adminiſter the Sacraments: or in the common wealth for to miniſter iuſtice, in rendring right to him, to whome it appertaineth, in maintaining the good, and puniſhing the badde, ought diligently to take heede to commit the ſame to ſuch people, as S. Paule teacheth vs, writing to Timothie and Titus, and Iethro and Moyſes.

Exo.18.21.
Deut.1.13.

For if in ſuch offices and authorities we raiſe vp wicked men, or that they themſelues riſe vp, vſurping the places and ſeates, orders and degrees conſecrated for to ſerue God and his people, the good, righteous, holy and innocent, knowe not where to become. For ſo much it wanteth that they may haue audience, for to pronounce that which ſhalbe true, and to declare what is lawe and right, that rather they are conſtrained to flye and to hyde themſelues, becauſe of the great ſearching that is made after them. Many holy men haue tryed this true by experience: and amongſt other, Moſes, Dauid, Elias, and other Prophetes, and the Apoſtles of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: who were perſecuted from citie to citie, and were not ſpared, till they were cruelly and ſhamefully ſlaine. And as they haue bin vſed, ſo do the Papiſtes ſtil continewe the ſame againſt the folowers and ſuch as hold the ſame trueth preached by the foreſaide Prophetes & Apoſtles. And to leaue the Papiſts, we know that of late in freſh remembrance, there hath beene a company of wicked, which bragged of holding the reformation of the Goſpel, which not only haue laboured to cauſe that the good, righteous, innocent and quiet ſhould hide themſelues, but alſo had deuiſed to deſtroy them by treaſon, to the end that they ſhould haue no leyſure to hyde themſelues. And therefore wee ought to take very good heede, what people we raiſe vp to the ſeate of Iuſtice, leaſt we make thereof a denne of theeues, robbers, ſpoylers, and murtherers. Solomon doeth admoniſhe vs heereof, ſaying, *When the wicked riſe vp, &c.* Wherin we haue to note: firſt of al, that he ſpeaketh of the wicked in the plural number becauſe the worlde is fall of them: as the ſcriptures doe complaine thereof. And alſo, when the wicked riſe vp, many cleaue vnto them, and ſhewe their wickedneſſe, the which before they helde couered vnder the cloake of hypocriſie, and of feare to be taken: but when they perceiue themſelues to be a great company, then are they bold to followe their wicked enterpriſes, to oppreſſe and torment the good and innocent, then they thinke none can reſiſt them, nor let them to accompliſhe fully their euil wil, as it ſeemed wel vnto Pharao, vnto Saule, and vnto Achab, to the Scribes and Phariſees, & to al the perſecutors of the faythful. Secondly let vs note, that when he ſpeaketh of the good, wiſe, iuſt, and innocent, which are not hearde ſo long as the wicked, and their tyranny beareth rule, and cannot tell where to hide themſelues, ſo that they are compelled to flye, and not to be ſeene: he ſaith not, that men hide themſelues: for the number of them is ſo ſmall in compariſon of the wicked, that as we haue already alledged once, the ſcripture complayneth that there is none righteous, none that vnderſtandeth, none that ſeeketh after God: and therefore he ſaieth in the ſingular number, *a man hideth himſelfe.* For as it hath beene ſaide, the number is very ſmall: And euen ſo the Preacher concludeth. Now that by the man that hideth himſelfe, we muſt vnderſtand the ſmall number of the righteous and innocent: Solomon ſheweth by the Antitheſis he maketh, ſaying, *but when they periſh, &c.* This is not to ſay that the deſtruction and perdition of the wicked is cauſe of the great number of the righteous: for there is none but the grace of God which maketh vs righteous, and that for Ieſus Chriſt his ſake, whoſe righteouſnes he imputeth vnto vs: but it is that when we ſee the wicked are reiected and puniſhed, or otherwiſe we ſee their deſtruction manifeſt, and that the vertuous and people fearing God, are in authoritie and beare rule, many feare, and abſtaine from doing of euill before the world, and alſo wil doe the workes of the righteous, that they may bee had in good eſtimation, and auoyde rebuke, ſhame and puniſhment. And alſo the good people which did not appeare, and had no credit during the authoritie of the wicked, and ſeemed to haue beene cleane gone, come againe into light, are commended and honoured, as they are worthy: they floriſh and proſper, and liue in peace. Now albeit that we muſt ſtoppe and let ſo much as we can, that the wicked riſe not vp, yea euery man in his place, yet it belongeth to none, but vnto the Magiſtrates to puniſh them, neyther is it lawfull for any man to wiſh or deſire their deſtruction, but rather we muſt pray for their conuerſion: except that we ſee manifeſtly they be obſtinate, and paſt amendment, and are of the number of the reprobate.

Eccle. 7. 29.

The xxix. Chapter.

1 *A Man that hardeneth his necke, when he is rebuked, ſhal ſodainely be deſtroyed, and cannot be cured.*

THe doctrine of God, which conſiſteth in commandements, admonitions, exhortations, declarations, corrections, reprehenſions and threateninges, is compared vnto a yoake that is bound vpon the necke of oxen. Nowe as there are ſome oxen which cannot bee tamed, nor *Iere.5.5.* made to carie the yoake: euen ſo is *Mat.11.29* the world filled with rebelles which harden their neckes, that is to ſay, which waxe obſtinate againſt the lawe of God, and againſt his admonitions, reprehenſions & threat- *Deu.9.23.24* nings, as wee may ſee by experience: and the complaintes thereof are contained in the ſcripture, euen againſt the people of God. And as the oxen which refuſe to beare the yoake, doe tende vnto death: (for when we ſee that we can vſe them no longer, then we fat them for to kil them) euen ſo doe the rebelles and indurate which haue neede of the yoake of correction and reprehenſion, and doe with obſtinacie reiect it, doe thinke wel to play the valiant captaines to defende themſelues, and to deſpyte them which correct & reproue them. But God, againſt whome of ſet malice they bend themſelues, can ſodainely deſtroy them without helpe: as diuers rebelles doe feele it wel: and Solomon doeth pronounce it, ſaying,

A man that hardeneth his necke, &c. And thus we are admoniſhed to bende our necke to the yoake of the Lorde, that is to ſay, to become gentle and tractable, eaſie to bee taught and humble, when in his name and by his worde we are exhorted, admoniſhed, *Pſal.95.7.* corrected, rebuked, and threatened: yea, if we wil bee preſerued and *Heb.3.7.* exempted from deſtruction. We are often admoniſhed heereof. Let *Acts.7.51.* vs humble our ſelues therefore, and become obedient, that it may not bee reproched vs that we are people vncorrigible: euen as Saint Steuen doeth reproche the Iewes therefore. For ſithens wee haue the worde more cleerly and plainly then had the Iewes, we deſerue wel to be ſodainely deſtroyed and that without remedie, if we harden our neckes againſt the doctrine. For ſeeing that it is not of ignorance or of infirmitie onely, that wee erre and faile, but doe wilfully alſo reſiſt the holy Ghoſt: and thus by our ſinne wee deſerue to bee bruſed without helpe: and alſo wee cannot be holpen: for ſinne againſt the holy Ghoſt cannot bee pardoned: neither alſo can it bee repented of. Wherefore wee can finde no reconciliation. We haue to note further, that they which take in hande to correct and iudge others, and in the meane while deſpiſe that which they themſelues doe teache, and alſo doe as euil, or worſe then they whome they reproue, ſhal not bee exempted from deſtruction: as Ieſus Chriſt and Saint Iames doe wel ſhewe. Saint Paule alſo doeth attribute hardneſſe of hearte vnto them, and doeth threaten them with deſtruction. Wee might apply this preſent ſentence to this matter, and ſay, A rebuking man hardharted, &c. But the firſt expoſition is receiued of al expoſitours, and is the moſt meeteſt: For this cauſe we wil followe it. Notwithſtanding wee may learne, whether we be reprooued, or rebuke other, that wee ſhoulde not harden our neckes: that is to ſay, If wee bee rebuked, that we ſhoulde yelde our ſelues tractable and eaſie to bee taught, receiuing correction with humilitie, feare and obedience: and if wee reprooue other, to bee our ſelues of an vnreproouable conuerſation, deſiring of God without fayning that hee woulde correct and chaſten vs. For albeeit that men finde nothing in vs to bee reprooued, yet can wee not iuſtifie our ſelues before God: for before him none of vs of our ſelues are innocent, and hee ſhal finde but too much to bee rebuked in vs all.

Mat.12.31. 32. Heb.6.4. & 10.26.

Mat.7.2. & 23.4. Iam.3.1. Rom.2.3.

2 *When the righteous are in authoritie the people reioyce: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people ſighe.*

There is no people or nation howe ignorant and barbarous ſoeuer it euer it is, which doeth not deſire to flooriſh and to proſper, to liue at eaſe and in reſt, to reioyce and triumph. And for to obtain ſuch pleaſures, we arme and fortifie our ſelues, we gather vittalles together abundantly, and labour to growe riche mightily: wee ſeeke friendſhip and couenantes of them, whom we eſteeme moſt mightie, or the meeteſt to helpe vs, and ſaue vs from daunger. And when we are thus armed, we thinke our ſelues happy, and are pleaſed: And therefore we laugh, wee reioyce, we leape, we daunce, we ſleepe, wee reſt, and make vs good cheere, without caring for any man. The worlde in the time of Noe lyued after this faſhion and manner: euen ſo, did the Zodomites in the time of Lot: euen ſo, did the Babylonians in the time of Balthaſar. But the end of all theſe people hath well ſhewed that they were not happy, in that ſorte that no man ought to reioyce therefore: for they miſerably periſhed. And for this cauſe alſo Solomon doth ſhewe vs, wherein chiefly the proſperitie of a nation conſiſteth, and wherein they ought to reioyce, ſaying,

Gene.6.
Mat.24.38.
Gen.18.&19
Eze.16,49.
Luke.17.28.
Dan.5.1.

VVhen the righteous are in authoritie, &c. Hee ſetteth the ruling or multiplying of the righteous. For the people is neuer more happy, neither ought they at any time more to reioyce, then when the iuſt doe rule and reigne ouer them, and is gouerned by a multitude of them. It is a very commodious and profitable thing, for a nation, when it wanteth not righteous men, as we may well vnderſtand it: firſt of all when God preſerued, and deliuered the family of Noe frō the flood, becauſe he was righteous: Not that he had deſerued the ſame by his righteouſnes: for in that that he was righteous, it came of the onely grace of God. Secondly, when God promiſeth vnto Abraham to ſaue Sodome, if there were fiftie righteous therin. Thirdly, the people felt it by experience in the tyme that Ioſeph gouerned in Egypt: alſo vnder the reignes of Dauid, Ioſias and Ezekias they haue knowne it: and nowe where the righteous doe rule, bee it eyther in the Churche, or in the ciuile pollicie, the people are very happy: and *ſo they reioyce.* For to reioyce, after this ſorte, is to haue the poſſeſſion of the thinges for the which wee ioy. Contrarily, to lament them (when Solomon addeth,

Gen.7.1.
Gene.6.8.
& 18.26.
Gene.41.

But when the wicked are in authoritie) it is to be depriued of proſperity, & to be in miſery & trouble, & to go vnto ruine & deſtruction. Otherwiſe, the preſent ſentence could not be verified. For the worldly & carnally minded, do not delight that the righteous ſhold multiply, or haue domination, but they reioyce when the wicked, which are their like, doe growe in number, & beare the authoritie. They can not taſte the proſperitie they haue vnder the reigne of the righteous: euen as the children of Iſrael, when Dauid, Ioſias, Ezekias, & other righteous reigned. As they haue wel ſhewed, when they confeſſed not the bleſſings and graces that God beſtowed vpon thẽ, when ſuch men ruled, and when they triumphed during the reigne of the wicked, as if they had won al. They were accurſed, not knowing that the wrath of God was kindled againſt thẽ, & his vengeance prepared for to deſtroy them. Let vs therefore vnderſtande, that we haue good cauſe to be glad, when we are ruled by righteous men: for therin God doth ſhew vs that he loueth vs, fauoureth & mainteineth vs. And when he giueth vs wicked rulers, we haue cauſe to ſigh and lament, and to confeſſe that we haue grieuouſly offended: and therefore, that God reiecteth vs to deſtroy vs, except wee returne vnto him. Let vs alſo vnderſtande, that the principal of the world are admoniſhed to giue them ſelues vnto righteouſneſſe, whereby they handle the wicked rigorouſly and ſharpely, and the good, gently and ſoftly, that their ſubiectes may liue vnder them in peace, and therein to reioyce, not after the deſires of the fleſhe, but after God: and that they which haue to ordeine Magiſtrates, let them diligently and ſtraightly looke of what conuerſation they haue bene from their youth, that they bring not in ſuche wicked men as were Pharao, Saule, Roboam, Achab, and other wicked: vnder whome the people ſuffered much, as the holie hiſtories doe witneſſe. And if in the common wealth and adminiſtration of the ciuil pollicie, we ought to be thus careful to chooſe good men, by a ſtronger reaſon then muſt we haue regard vnto the Eccleſiaſtical miniſtrie, where the gouerning of ſoules is required, which are farre more precious then the bodie and the goods. For the wicked Prelates, by the tyrannie of their traditions and inuentions, doe greatly torment mens ſoules, and ſo do make them to lament and ſigh: firſt of al, in this worlde: ſecondly, in hel, But the good and faithful

Preachers of the pure truth, do cõfort the children of God, aſſuring them of their ſaluation: as they are commaunded to doe. And the people which haue ſuche Miniſters, ought to reioyce: as they are admoniſhed to doe.

Eſai.4.1.& 52.7.

3 *A man that loueth wiſedome, reioyceth his father: but he that feedeth harlots, waſteth the ſubſtance.*

Pro.10.1.

Solomon hath ſaide before, that the wiſe ſonne reioyceth the father: and nowe he ſaieth, *A man that loueth. &c.* Wherein hee ſheweth, that wiſedome is meete for euerie age, and alſo that olde age exempteth not vs from the duetie that God requireth and commandeth that wee ſhould giue vnto father and mother: the which Solomon doth not now name, yet his intent is not to exclude her: but it is only to auoide prolixitie and tediouſneſſe. For he laboured to giue vs quicke & ſhort ſentences, without any derogation to the commaundements of God. And this is not without cauſe that hee ſheweth not onely vnto children, but alſo vnto the aged, that ſuche is their duetie towardes fathers and mothers: to wit, to bee giuen vnto wiſedome, to loue him not onely with worde, but with deed, learning thereby to leade an honeſt, holie, righteous, and vpright conuerſation, by the which God may be honoured, and our parents ſuccoured: in ſuch ſort that they may reioyce, & haue cauſe in their children of praiſing God, and to giue him thankes. For, for the greateſt part, when men are aged, they perſuade them ſelues that they haue nothing to doe to obey their fathers and mothers, & in deed, they caſt off and reiect the fatherly yoke. Some thinke their fathers and mothers liue too long: as did Abſolon, who perſecuted his father to death. Some againe doe ſcorne their fathers, as old dreamers and doaters: as did Cham vnto his father Noe. Other ſome worke wickedneſſe for to grieue and vexe their fathers and mothers: as did Cain, who ſlue his brother Abel: and as Eſau, who tooke wiues for to vexe his father & mother. They that deſire the libertie of the fleſhe, and which by pride & arrogancie do reiect the fatherly yoke, count them ſelues valiant, and not to be fainte hearted: and doe count them doltes which perſeuer and continue in the obedience

2.Sam.15.
Gen.9.22.
4.8.& 26.34
35.& 28.8.9

of fathers and mothers: but contrarily, the holie Ghoſt pronounceth that they are wiſe, and doe loue wiſedome: and ſo, haue no faint heart, neither are doltes, but ſtrong and valiant: for they can wel tame their carnal and vnbridled luſtes. Solomon doeth ſhew it vs briefly, *By louing of wiſedome*. For whoſoeuer loueth wiſedome, is alſo againe, loued of her: and ſhee inſtructeth him in al knowledge and vnderſtanding, and armeth him with counſel & diſcretion, with power and conſtancie, with modeſtie, ſobrietie and temperancie: ſhee decketh him with chaſtitie and ſhamfaſtneſſe. Solomon doeth ſhewe this ſame, when againſt louing of wiſedome, hee ſetteth to feede or to entertaine harlots: and againſt reioycing of the father, he ſetteth, waſting of the ſubſtance, ſaying,

But he that feedeth harlots, &c. Vnder feeding of harlots, hee comprehendeth al maner of vntemperancie: as pompes & ſumptuouſneſſe, gluttonies and drunkenneſſe, daunces and games, and other diſſoluteneſſe, whereby wee are ledde to make exceſſiue exſpenſes, and to ſpoyle muche ſubſtance vnprofitablie, and to the hurt of other: the which is not to reioyce him, but rather for to vexe him and to bring him ſorowe. Let vs alſo note, that reioycing of the father, is by wiſedome to mainteine him, and to preſerue his goods, and to feede him therewith: or if he haue no ſubſtance, that the ſonne ſhould learne to bee a wiſe ſtewarde of that which hee poſſeſſeth, ſo that hee may helpe the neceſſitie of his father. Solomon had good regarde heereunto, when he ſaide not, He waſteth the ſubſtance of his father: but generally and indefinitely he ſaith,

He waſteth the ſubſtance. For where the fathers and mothers want, the children are bounde to beſtowe their owne ſubſtance for to ſuccour them. Diuers doe vnderſtande by waſting of the ſubſtance, the looſing of the goods and waxing poore: as the prodigal ſonne. And after this ſenſe, a man doeth reioyce his father, when hee behaueth him ſelfe honeſtly in his hoſhold, and that he is contented to ſpend ſparingly, and where it is lawful, neceſſarie and profitable. For alſo fathers and mothers are naturally glad, when they ſee that their ſtocke keepeth a good houſe, and do proſper: and moreouer the fathers and mothers help forward their children ſo much as they can, to make them grow & proſper: & are *Luk.15.*

more careful therof, then to teach them the feare of God, and loue towardes their neighbours: the which notwithſtanding is the chiefeſt point for to lead them to loue wiſedome. Furthermore let vs learne, that if the fathers and mothers wil haue true ioye of their children, they ought to be careful to nouriſh them, & to bring them vp in the doctrine and learning of the Lorde: as Saint Paule doeth admoniſhe them thereto. If the Magiſtrates alſo wil reioyce of their ſubiectes, let them not ſuffer diſſoluteneſſe and waſtful ſpending. Likewiſe if Miniſters wil reioyce of the people that is committed vnto them, let them not diſſemble their follies.

Ephe.6.4.

4 *A King by iudgement mainteineth the countrie: but a man receiuing giftes, deſtroyeth it.*

They that haue kingdomes, rule, and Lordſhip, that haue credite, authoritie, and power, that haue adminiſtration, preheminence and gouernment in their countries, and ouer any people, doe much deſire that their ſubiectes ſhould not breake foorth and rebel, but to liue peaceablie vnder their iuriſdiction, & would that their countrie ſhoulde flouriſhe and proſper vnder their obedience. But there are verie fewe Lordes that knowe howe & by what meanes to mainteine their countrie in ſuch eſtate. Some thinke that by haughtineſſe and pride, by crueltie and oppreſſion they ſhould reigne ouer their ſubiectes, and hold the countrie in their obedience. Some labour to gather riches and to take of al hands. to be wondered at of the people becauſe of their great ſubſtance, and to the end, that none ſhould dare doe any thing againſt them: and they thinke that being riche, they haue enough wherewith to reuenge and to defend their countrie againſt them that woulde inuade and aſſault the ſame: and alſo to tame, and order them, who by rebellions, vprores, ſeditions and treaſons, would reuolt from their obedience & ſubiection. And in the meane while, they paſſe not though the weake bee oppreſſed, as fatherleſſe children, widowes & ſtrangers: they neither reuenge, nor mainteine their cauſe, but are giuen to flatterers, to mealemouthed men, to players, to ieſters, and to ſuche as can make them paſſe their time merily, and alſo to them that labour too corrupt them by giftes and by preſentes. And ſo dooing, they will in no wiſe yeeld vnto them which in the name of the Lord and by his word do declare, that they ought to do iuſtice and iudgement. And becauſe that in this maner they are rebels, not to men only, but to God alſo, who commãdeth thẽ to iudge iuſtly: for this cauſe, in ſteed of mainteining their countrey, they deſtroy it, For becauſe of their wickedneſſes, the Lord, who is Iudge of the worlde, whõ no man can reſiſt, doth take vengeance of them, ſpoiling and deſtroying their country: as in the time of Noe, the earth was corrupted before God, and filled with extortion : and for this cauſe, hee deſtroied the worlde by the flood. In the time of Lot, Sodome thought to defende her ſelfe with pride, oppreſſion, and other abhominations: but God knew wel enough howe to take vengeance. The children of Iſrael were defiled with like iniquities, yea, more horrible, as it is reproched vnto them by the Prophetes, that they exceeded the abhominations of the Gentiles and Infidels: and amongſt other places, they are ſharply rebuked in the 1. Chapter of Eſai, and in the 16. Chapter of Ezechiel, and in the 5. Chapter of Ieremie. Euen ſo could God wel deſtroy them, as it is ſeene by the holie hiſtories. Nowe foraſmuche as God is righteous, and doeth iudge the worlde, hee wil not therefore ſpare that people from puniſhment, wherein there is no iudgement, albeit he ſeeme to prolong the time, & diſſemble the matter. Wherfore, let the Lordes & Rulers of the earth, which deſire to mainteine their countries, yeelde themſelues obedient vnto the lawe of God: let them ſubmit themſelues to the Lorde : let them doe iuſtice and iudgement, in rendring the right to whom it belongeth, and deliuering the poore & weake from the violence of their oppreſſours. Solomon in fewe wordes doeth teach them this ſame, ſaying, *A King by iudgement mainteineth the countrie*. Hee ſheweth alſo what people we ought to place in the gouernment of a countrie : and that they which labour by giftes and preſents to win the fauour of their Superiors and Magiſtrates, are deceiued and beguiled : for by ſuche meanes they thinke to make their profite, but becauſe they labour to hurt their neighbours, and to deſtroy them, their owne wrong ſhal light vppon their owne heades : and thus they deſtroy themſelues, as they ſhal one day feele, come it early, come it late. Furthermore, let vs note, that the Kinges, Princes, and Superiours of the earth ought to offer them ſelues to defende thoſe that are

Exod.23.2.
Leui.19.15.
Gen.6.11.
Gen.18.& 19.
Eze.16.
Deut.17.18.
Pſal.2,10.& 82.3.

iniured and oppreſſed, and to deliuer them : otherwiſe, they doe no iudgement : and that they which ſuffer oppreſſion, ought not to reuenge them ſelues, but to haue their refuge vnto iudgement, and without being ledde with deſire of vengeance. For it is not lawful to aske the helpe of ſuperiours for to hurt our neighbours, but to the ende that we may liue in peace, & obteine that which is ours.

5 *A man that flattereth his neighbour, ſpreadeth a nette for his ſteppes.*

They that vſe ſweete and flattering words to their neighbors, and vphold them in whatſoeuer they ſay, labour by this meanes to be welcome vnto them, & to gaine ſomething by them, not caring whither they doe any pleaſure or ſeruice to them whom they flatter, or is profitable for them : yet neuertheleſſe they perſuade both them ſelues & them whom they flatter, that whatſoeuer they do and ſay, flatteringly, they doe, & ſpeake it for their pleaſure & ſeruice. But whē they know wel they lye, they are conuinced in their conſcience that they goe about nothing els but to beguile & deceiue thē whom they flatter, euen with a moſt dangerous deceite, which bringeth death : as Solomon doeth ſignifie *By the nettes that they ſpread for his ſteppes* whom they flatter. For as the bird that is taken in the net, is in danger of death, euen ſo, they alſo which beleeue flatterers, fal into great perils : to wit, either into ſhame, reproche, and euil name, or into loſſe of goods or friendes, or loſſe of life. Our firſt father Adam, beleeuing and obeying the flattering ſpeeches of the deuil, fel not onely into reproche and loſſe of goods, but alſo hee loſt his life : Dalila flattereth Sampſon, and ſpreadeth the nette for him: for yeelding vnto her demaund, hee could not auoide death. Roboam by the flatterie of young men, loſt al his kingdome, except a tribe and an halfe. Herode delighting in the flatterie of the people, which cryed, The voice of God, and not of a man : was eaten of wormes. Euen ſo, we ſee that flatterers bring great hurt vnto them that willingly heare them. Therefore we muſt giue them no entrance with vs, but to reiect them, and abhorre them : and chiefly they that labour to fil their bellies and their purſes, doe moſt deſtroy the ſoules

Iudg.16.
1.King.12.
Act.12.21.

of them which yelde vnto their wordes. Saint Paule doeth admoniſh vs heereof in diuers places, folowing therein Ieſus Chriſt, *Mat.7.15. & 16.6.* who hath very diligently forewarned his Apoſtles of the ſame. *Rom.16.17.18 Col.2.8.*

6 *In the tranſgreſſion of an euil man is his ſnare: but the righteous doth ſing and reioyce.*

When the wicked doe giue themſelues to thinke or to do euil, it is for to hurte their neighbours, to take them vnprouided and to deſtroy them, though they be innocent, and neuer thought once to *Pſal.31.5.* doe them hurte: as there are many complaintes therof in the ſcripture, *& 35.7.* the which compareth often the wicked vnto foulers, hunters *& 91.3.* & warrenners. And becauſe, that without cauſe & wrongfully they *& 119.110.* ymagine the deſtruction of the innocent, they themſelues fall into *& 124.7.* deſtruction. And thus whyles the wicked lay and prepare their nets, *& 141.4.* ſnares and pitfals for the innocent, they prepare them for themſelues. Wherefore, when Solomon ſaith,

In the tranſgreſſion of an euil man is his ſnare: wee may vnderſtande that the wicked deuiſe the deſtruction of the righteous: and therefore muſt wee beware of them, and pray vnto the Lorde *Pſa.7.16.17.* that he woulde deliuer vs: and chiefly from them that labour to *& 9.16.* turne vs away from the true religion, and to depriue vs of the pure *& 35.8.* ſeruice of God, and conſequently of eternall life: as Dauid maketh *& 57.7.* diuers requeſtes for the ſame. Wee may alſo vnderſtand that Solomon meaneth that there are ſnares in the tranſgreſſion of an euill man, becauſe that intending to hurte his neighbours, and to deſtroy them, hee prepareth ſnares for himſelfe, and is deſtroyed. Theſe two ſenſes are both true, as wee may ſee it in the ſcriptures, and they both agree wel vnto the laſt parte of this ſentence, the which is contrary vnto the firſt, howeſoeuer wee take it. For albeeit the wicked are ſharpe and earneſt in perſecuting of the iuſt, who is weake of himſelfe, and can make no reſiſtance, yet the righteous doeth not ceaſe to aſſure himſelfe of the grace of God and of his helpe, defence and protection. Solomon noteth this aſſurance, by ſinging & reioycing, when he ſaith, *But the righteous doth ſing & reioice.* Dauid in his afflictions hath truſted in GOD: as hee witneſſeth

Pſal.13.6. & 18.2.& 56 11.& 59.17. Pal.5.12.13. & 9.10.& 22 23. Exod.15. Iudg.4.& 5. Pſal.7.18. & 58.11.12. &.59.17.18. 2.Cor.6.10.

in diuers Pſalmes. And as he is aſſured, euen ſo doeth he exhorte others to bee aſſured. When alſo the wicked doe periſh, the iuſt for all that doe not looſe their hope, but rather ſing and are glad. As when Pharao and his people periſhed in the Sea, Moyſes and the children of Iſrael ſange a ſongue. And wen Siſara with his army was diſcomfited and vanquiſhed, Debora and Baracke ſange a ſongue of thankeſgiuing. This truſt or confidence is well ſet forth in diuers places. Now that we muſt take this reioycing and ſinging, it is plaine enough by that which is outwardly and temporally ſhewed: for after the iudgement of the world, and outward apparaunce, there are no people more ſorowfull nor more miſerable then the righteous. I ſay expreſſely, afore the world: for the righteous are alwaies ioyfull.

7 *The righteous knoweth the cauſe of the poore, but the wicked regardeth not knowledge.*

Pro.14.20. & 19.7. Exod.23.3. Leui.19.15. Eſay.1.23. & 3.12.13. 14.& 10.1.2.

For as much as the poore are not able to ſuccour their neighbours, but haue great neede themſelues to bee ſuccoured, they are therefore commonly deſtitute of friendes, though they haue many parentes and kindred. Solomon heretofore, folowing experience, doeth pronounce it. For this cauſe, though that God doeth forbid to haue reſpect of the poore, and to preferre them in their cauſes, yet would he that wee ſhould take pittie on them, to aſſiſt them, to know their matters, to maintaine them in their good right, to defend them, & to deliuer thẽ from wrong and violence of the vngodly and wicked. But yet no man careth to folowe the will of the Lorde therein, ſo that we may rightly complaine of the iniquitie that raigneth on all ſides in the world, with the Prophet Eſay. It is not without cauſe that I haue ſaid, on all ſides of the world: for ſeeing that the Prophets doe complaine ſo ſore of the people of God, ought we not to vnderſtand, that amongſt the Idolaters, there were great opreſſions, and that vnrighteouſnes was ſpread ouer all? And alſo nowe it is very hard to finde ſuch as haue care to doe right vnto the poore, and that wil know their matters, to doe them right. Albeit, that this hath bin in al times, & is ſtil manifeſt enough vnto thẽ that wil ſee: yet Solomõ entending to ſhew how much the poore haue great neede to bee ſuccoured, and howe they want ſuch as ſhoulde fauour them, doeth marke the foreſaide difficultie, when hee ſaith,

The righteous knoweth, &c. Hee hath noted it, I ſay in two ſortes: firſt of all, foraſmuch as he ſaith, that it is the righteous which knoweth. For it is very harde to finde a iuſt man: as we haue ſhewed it heeretofore by the ſcripture. Secondly, when he ſaith not, the righteous men doe know, but ſaith in the ſingular number, the righteous man knoweth: for to ſhew the ſcarcity of ſuch as haue care to doe right vnto the poore, and conſequently the difficultie to finde them out.

Furthermore, attributing knowledge vnto the righteous, hee ſheweth that we haue knowledge enough, if wee bee righteous: for God doeth not leaue them in ignorance, whome hee indueth with righteouſnes, and placeth in his ſeate, for to adminiſter the ſame: but giueth them knowledge and wiſedome, that they may doe their office. Moreouer he ſheweh that the righteous are careful to examine and to enquire: otherwiſe they coulde not knowe the cauſe of the poore: ſeeing the wicked are wittie, and ſtriue ſo much as they can to giue light and faire ſhewe vnto their cauſe, for to darken the right of the poore, that it may bee ouerthrowne. But (as hath beene ſaide) the righteous that deſire to doe iuſtice without acception of perſons, are indued with knowledge and are careful to enquire to the end that whatſouer other go about to darken, the ſame might bee manifeſt vnto them. Contrarily, the wicked iudges and Magiſtrates, which proceede through fauour, by acception of perſons, and by couetouſneſſe of giftes and preſentes, ſhoulde make no account of enquiring for to know to whom the right belongeth: they will knowe nothing thereof, they cloſe their eies, that they may knowe nothing: and alſo when they vnderſtande it, they vnderſtande not that ſame to iudge iuſtly, but of ſet malice doe wreſt iudgement. This is that which Solomon doeth expreſſe vnto vs, ſaying,

Iob.29.16.

But the wicked regardeth not knowledge. And albeit, it is of ſet malice that the wicked iudges wil not vnderſtand to doe well acccording to the duetie of their office, yet the ſame happeneth not without the ſecrete and iuſt prouidence of God, which blindeth the wiſe of the worlde, for to puniſhe the ſinnes of a countrie : as hee hath threatened the children of Iſrael therewith . And as hee hath threatened them therewith , euen ſo haue they had : as wee may ſee by the complaints that are in the ſcripture againſt the vnrighteouſneſſe and oppreſsion which reigned in Iuda and Iſrael

Eſay.3.2.3 & 29.14 Eſay.1.22.23.& 28.7 &.56.10.

8 *Scornefull men bring a citie into a ſnare : but wiſe men turne away wrath.*

Wee haue proued by experience in al times, and yet doe trye that the kinges and princes, the rulers and ſuperiours of the earth riſe vp, and fight one againſt the other, and labor to deſtroy houſes, caſtles, villages & townes. And they do the ſame, being led with ambition and deſire of reigning, to waxe riche, and to be great, or els being mooued with wrath and indignation, with hatred and deſire of vengeance . And albeit that men doe ſuch thinges of their owne will and ſet malice , yet doe they come to paſſe by the iuſt iudgement of God, which by ſuch vprores, diſſentions and warres doeth puniſhe the contempt of his worde, reuenge the violences and oppreſsions, the filthineſſe and vncleanneſſe, the offences and diſſolutions, the deceite & guile that the mightie of the world commit & the common people, who deſpiſe the threatenings that God maketh them by his ſeruants, ſcorning at his iudgements , as though they ſhoulde neuer bee attainted , albeit the examples are ſet before their face : as the iudgementes that hee hath exerciſed in the time of Noe by the flood : in the time of Lot, vpon Sodome and Gomorrha : in the time of Moſes, vpon Pharao and his people , in the time of Dauid vpon Saule : and many times vpon the children of Iſrael and other wicked ſcorners : whome wee may reproche with malediction. Woe bee to them that drawe wickedneſſe as it were with cordes of vanitie, &c. And to declare the puniſhment of ſuche as Eſay doeth foretel them, ſaying, As the flame of the fire conſumeth the reede, and the flame conſumeth the ſtrawe: euen ſo ſhall their

Eſay.5.18.19 & 28.14.15 & 5.24.& 28.7.

roote be like rottenneſſe: and their budde ſhal aſcende as duſt. By the abouesaide examples, and the foreſaide reproches and threatenings, we ſee that *ſcornful men bring a Citie into a ſnare.* For looke howe the deſtruction of birdes is, when they are taken in the net, or ſnare: euen ſo doeth a countrie runne to deſtruction, when the people thereof is giuen vnto the foreſaide ſcornings: & chiefly when the Rulers and Superiours are infected therewith. For if they ſcorne God, when hee ſendeth them his ſouldiours for to chaſten them, they wil eaſily alſo mocke at men: and ſo they wil kindle them more, and haſten them to make deſtruction of the countrie: as it is wel prooued by the warres that are raiſed vp in our time. One Prince doeth ſcorne an other, and doe ſo mooue and ſtirre vp one another, that the one ſpoileth of the one ſide, & another of the other. Contrarily, if through the feare of the Lord, the rulers & ſuperiours of one countrey doe giue themſelues vnto wiſedome, and that they are careful to cauſe the people to walke therein, then they ſhal not ſnarle the citie, but ſhall appeaſe and ſwage the wrath aſwel of God, as of his organs and inſtruments, and ſhal deliuer the people from perdition. This is that which Solomon pronounceth ſaying,

But wiſe men turne away wrath. Hereof we haue diuers examples: firſt of al in Noe, who by his wiſdom turned away the wrath of God from his family. Secondly, Ioſeph preſerued and ſaued Egypt, and the houſe of his father that they periſhed not by famine. Thirdly, Moyſes did often turne away the wrath of God from the people of Iſrael.

Exo.14.10.
& 16.2.
& 17.2.
& 32.1.
Num.11.1.
& 14.1.
& 16.46.

Fourthly it is ſaide that a little towne, where there were but fewe men within it, was beſeeged of a greate king: and there was a poore wiſe man founde, who ſaued it by his wiſedome, &c. Fifthly, it is ſaide that a wiſe woman ſaued a citie from ouerthrowing by the ſouldiours of Ioab.

Eccle.9.14.
2.Sam.20.16

9 *If a wiſe man contende with a fooliſh man, ſomtimes the foole is angry, ſometimes hee laugheth, but there is no ſtay.*

It is not without cauſe that God giueth wiſedome to men, but it is to the ende that thereby they ſhoulde guide themſelues ſo wiſely,that none ſhould iuſtly haue occaſion to contend with them. And not onely ſo,but alſo to the ende they ſhoulde knowe howe to correct the fooliſh, and to contend againſt them,in reproouing them,rebuking and threatning them. They that are wiſe,doe their duetie,when they ſo behaue them ſelues. But they looſe their time in the ſight of the fooliſhe: for the fooliſhe reiect al correction,and doe ſcorne al inſtruction and diſcipline: as it is largely ſhewed here before in the firſt Chapter, and in other places. And beſides that they deſpiſe & reiect, & ſcorne,they doe alſo furiouſly perſecute the wiſe which contend with them,for to bring thẽ vnto amendment: yea,they perſecute them without ceaſing: as Solomon doeth pronounce it,whẽ he ſaith,*If a wiſe man contend with a fooliſh man, ſometime he is angry,ſometime he laugheth &c.* By the anger, we vnderſtand the furious perſecutions: & by the laughter, we may vnderſtand the cõtempt,reiection & mockerie,euen with perſecution: *Gal.4.29.* as it is ſo taken,in Gen.21.9. Albeit,that the Hebrewe hath diuers verbes, yet are they al of one ſignification: to wit, to laugh and to mocke: whome Saint Paule doeth interpret to perſecute. There are ſome that take this ſentence, as if Solomon ſaid,Be it that the wiſe hauing any matter to commen of with the fooliſhe, whither hee be angrie, or laugh, yet can hee not quiet and content the fooliſhe man. The wiſe man ſhal profite nothing to contende with a foole, though he ſpeake neuer ſo gently with al humanitie and clemencie: *Math.11.16* as alſo Ieſus Chriſt doeth reproche the Iewes thereof. Now the diuerſitie of opinons doth proceede hereof. For to auoyde tediouſnes, it is not openly expreſſed, whether it is the wiſe or the foole that is angry and laugheth. But in what ſenſe ſoeuer wee take this ſentence, we ſee that the fooliſh is neuer the more amended, after what ſort ſoeuer we contend with him: yet moſt commonly hee doeth remaine obſtinate,ſcorning all exhortations, euen with choler, which is not ſoone quenched: as Solomon noteth, ſaying, *that there is no ſtay*, or ceaſing, or reſt. Yet is it not to ſay, that wee ſhoulde not continue to ſtriue and contende againſt fooles, in rebuking, and threatning them: For GOD would haue his woorde to be declared vnto all creatures, and that by the ſame woord we ſhould labour to bring al men vnto faith and repentance.

10 *Bloodie men hate him that is vpright: but the iuſt hath care of his ſoule.*

Becauſe that at the firſt ſight there is none ſo ſimple but ſeemeth wel to vnderſtand that the murtherers doe hate the man that walketh vprightly and ſincerely. For this cauſe it might ſeeme that Solomon doeth not pronounce heere any ſentence of excellencie. But there is great difference betweene thinking to vnderſtande, and to vnderſtande in deede and in trueth. For euery man howe ignorant ſoeuer he is, doeth preſume to vnderſtand: but it is very hard to finde ſuch as truely doeth vnderſtand and knowe that *Bloody men hate him that is vpright*. For it appeareth not that a man is a murtherer, except that by deede of violence and oppreſſion hee kill and ſley his neighbour. But wee thinke not that hee doeth hate his neighbour that purſueth him in iudgement, at leaſtwiſe of hatred, for the which he is to be rebuked: though vnder colour of good right he labour to deſtroy his neighbour. And alſo for too ſhewe that they may well hate their neighbour, in pleading againſt him, they wil ſay, that in a whole booke of Lawe, there is not one ounce of loue. And as it is ſaide, ſo it is practiſed by them, which neither can demaunde nor defende their right, with ſuch modeſtie as is required, but ſuffer them ſelues to be carried about of their affections, not reſiſting their paſſions. Now a man is a murtherer that hateth his neighbour, and that without cauſe is angrie with him, and who hauing the riches of this world, hath no compaſſion of his needie brother, is voyde of loue: of what ſtate and degree ſoeuer he be, as it is ſhewed vs, when it is commaunded vs to loue our neighboures and to feede them. Wherevpon it foloweth, that they which hate good men deſerue rightly to be called bloodie men and murtherers. The which notwithſtanding the world doeth not know, nor will vnderſtande. For becauſe that vpright men are contrarie to the worldlinges, which thinke themſelues and woulde bee accounted wiſe and vpright men, therefore the worldlinges labour

1. Iohn. 3. 15.
Mat. 5. 22.
Mat. 5. 44.
Rom. 12. 20.

to perſwade them ſelues that vpright men are wicked : and therefore doe beare them hatred, the which they declare by their fruites: that is to ſay, by outrage, oppreſſions violences and cruelties that they exerciſe againſt thoſe men which walke vprightly and ſincerely. And becauſe that they labour to deceiue them ſelues with falſe and cruel perſwaſion, Solomon doeth cal them murtherers, and ſheweth howe they are blooddy men, when he ſaith, that they hate the *vpright man*, that in no wiſe thinketh to do thē any iniury or wrong, nor to vſe with them fraude and deceite, nor with any other perſon.

Nowe hee iudgeth of hatred : not that hee knoweth the harts, but bicauſe it is ſeen by his euil fruits. And albeit that al hateful men are murtherers, yet is this chiefly againſt wicked kinges, princes, magiſtrates & iudges, that he pronounceth this ſentence: for ſeeing that God, who is right and iuſt, and therefore taketh care to preſerue vpright men, doeth make and ordeine them his liefetenantes, and giueth them his place, they aboue al other ought to bee vpright and careful of the liues of vpright men. And not onely, not to do them any iniurie, but alſo to ſaue and defende them from all oppreſſion, in puniſhing the oppreſſours and wrong doers. Solomon doth wel teach them this leſſon, when hee ſaith,

But the iuſt haue care of his ſoule. Foraſmuche therefore as wee woulde not bee couuted murtherers or bloody men, let vs take heed to put away al hatred, and to turne our ſelues from doing any iniurie and oppreſſion : and chiefly, that wee doe no hurt vnto them that walke vprightly and ſincerely, but rather let vs bee careful ouer them, and that with a franke and free hearte wee bee ready to doe them al the pleaſures that wee poſſibly can. And thus doing, wee ſhall not bee accuſed of murther, but ſhal bee counted vpright, euen before God.

11 *A foole powreth out al his minde : but a wiſe man keepeth it in till afterwardes.*

There are ſome that make a great account of themſelues, & doe alſo deſire to bee reputed of towardes other : and therefore they bragge ſo much as they can, and pronounce from their mouthes all thinges that they thinke may ſerue to winne praiſe, and to be in admiration : and are ſo puffed vp with vainglory, pride and arrogancie : their heartes are ſo infected and corrupted with malice, that if they thinke a man doeth or ſayth any thing that is contrarie vnto their deſire and affections, incontinent they ſhewe the poyſon that lyeth hid in their thoughts, in outraging, iniurying, and curſing thē which either doe or ſay any thing that liketh them not. And when they vſe themſelues ſo, they thinke they are excellent, and haue their heartes in good eſtate : but the holy Ghoſt doth declare vnto them, that they are faynt hearted, when he calleth them fooles, ſaying by Solomon,

A foole poureth out all his minde. Now when the foole deſpiſeth and reiecteth all counſell, all admonitions, corrections and threatninges, it followeth rightly that he hath not his hearte armed with good thoughtes, but filled with all malice and wickedneſſe. foraſmuch as from the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh, it followeth alſo that from a wicked treaſure of his hearte the foole bringeth out wicked things, by the which he openeth al his thought and ſheweth that it is nothing woorth. If then we wil not be fooles, nor counted ſuch, let vs be careful to arme our heartes with wholeſome doctrine, willing to receiue admonitions, corrections, exhortations, and threatnings, that are made vnto vs in the name of God and by his word, that we ſhoulde learne to walke in humblenes of hearte, and in no wiſe to brag, and not ſodeinly to doe iniurie, outrage, and to curſe our neighbours, that make no great count of vs but deſpiſing vs, labour to prouoke vs vnto wrath and anger, and to contende with them. Thus dooing we ſhall be wiſe as followeth,

But a wiſe man keepeth it tyll afterwardes. That is to ſaye : Albeeit that the wiſe, after his wiſedome, beeing ſolde vnder ſinne, is prouoked to ſhewe foorth his wrath and his choler, yet neuertheleſſe, by the wiſedome wherewith hee is indewed, hee reſtraineth it, and powreth not foorth his thought, but keepeth it backe til afterwardes, that is to ſay, till hee ſee that it is needefull to declare it, or til afterwardes,ſignifieth, that hee committeth the matter vnto God,who can at the laſt wel ſhewe what he thinketh, of the fooliſh,and to bee reuenged of them.

12 *Of a Prince that hearkeneth vnto lies,al his ſeruauntes are wicked.*

Foraſmuch as the Princes of the worlde haue great burdens, & that alſo in great number, the which they cannot wel execute by them ſelues,as Iethro doeth declare to Moſes, for this cauſe they haue neede to haue officers and Miniſters vnder them, that they Exod.18.18. 21.22 may beare a part of the charge and burden: as ſayth Iethro.

Nowe the right and true Princes,do deſire to haue good miniſters and good officers,and are careful to admoniſh them to doe 2.Chro.19.6. 7. iuſtice and iudgement: as did king Ioſaphat. They that are like vnto him,doe not deſire to haue about them a great number of Miniſters to ſerue them with a faire ſhewe,to bee magnified and exalted aboue their ſubiectes by pride and arrogancie. They deſire not to bee accompanied in their houſes with ſcoffers and ieſters, talecarriers, Pſal.101,3. flatterers and ſlaunderers: but they followe what Dauid proteſteth to doe. I wil knowe the perfect way, and wil walke in my houſe with a perfect hearte. Contrarily, wicked and vnfaithfull Princes doe gladly hearken vnto flattering tales,falſe reportes, and backitinges: and therefore they loue not to haue either in their townes or houſes vpright and true men: but doe reiect,yea perſecute thē. For this cauſe they can haue none other but wicked miniſters and ſeruantes: as Solomon doeth very plainly pronounce, ſaying.

Of a Prince that hearkeneth vnto lyes,&c. We may heere alleadge,Pharao,Saul,Acab, and other. Wee may ſay alſo that there is a threatning encloſed within this ſentence: to wit, That God for to puniſh the Princes that delight to heare lying tales, wil not ſuffer that they ſhal bee ſerued with good and vertuous men: but as they are wicked, euen ſo doth God giue them for their companions wicked men, which wil bee very readie to ſhew them ſome wicked act of vnfaithfulneſſe: as they alſo are vnfaithful vnto God, when in ſteede that they ſhoulde continually meditate in the lawe of God, and haue al their delight therein, for to learne to followe the way of trueth, they giue themſelues vnto lyes. Therefore, let the princes which deſire to be wel ſerued, become the true & good ſeruants of God, who loueth trueth, the which they ought to follow, for to ſerue him rightly, and miniſter iuſtice truely: otherwiſe they ſerue the Diuel, and iniquitie reigneth in them, by the which the feeble, poore, and innocent are oppreſſed.

13 *The poore and the vſurer meete together, and the Lord lighteneth both their eies.*

Solomon hath ſaide heeretofore, *The rich and the poore meete together*, the Lorde is rhe maker of them al: and nowe hee ſaith the ſame, ſauing that in ſteede of the rich, hee ſetteth the *vſurer*. But there is no great differnce therein: for oftentimes wee ſee the riche men of the worlde to be giuen vnto vſurie, ſpoyling, to deceit and fraude, for to attaine vnto greater riches. Wee ſee almoſt dayly that the vſurers become riche, or at the leaſt labour to bee riche. The poore then that is deſtitute of worldly riches, and the vſurer, whoſe minde and affection is altogether ſet to make profite of, and to multiply his golde and ſiluer, and other goods, to the hinderance of his neighbours, and chiefly of the needie and poore: though they bee of a cleane contrary ſtate, yet doe *they meete together*: that is to ſay, that they are mingled together, and occupie one with another. The poore man hath need that the vſurer ſhould helpe him with his abundance: and the vſurer which is ful and riche, cannot himſelfe doe all his buſineſſe alone: wherefore hee muſt needes ſet the poore man on worke. Beholde howe the poore and the vſurer meete together. Notwithſtanding it often happeneth that the poore man beeing pinched & greeued with his needineſſe and pouertie, and diſtruſting to be able to obteine that which is neceſſary, enuieth the proſperitie of the vſurer: and the vſurer that hath a couetous hearte, and aboundeth in riches, doeth contemne the poore, either by pride, or for feare hee ſhoulde want himſelfe.

Pro. 22. 2.

Nowe they both proceede thus, through want that they know

not that God made them, and that as hee hath made them, ſo wil he alſo mainteine them in this life, and giueth them wit and vnderſtanding for to knowe howe to gouerne themſelues in this worlde:
Pro.22.2 as Solomon hath wel noted, ſaying, that the Lord is maker both of the poore and riche: and nowe, when he ſaith,

The Lorde lighteneth the eies of them both. For, to lighten the eies, is to quicken and to comfort: as it is ſo taken in diuers
1.Sam.14. 27.29. Eſdr.9.8. Pſa.13.4. places of the ſcripture. Behold howe God lighteneth the eies both of the poore man and of the vſurer, quickening & giuing thē knowledge: but there are fewe poore, and vſurers that doe knowe the ſame, as we may iudge, for that that there are but a few poore men contented with their eſtate, and very fewe alſo of vſurers which doe lothe and abhorre their eſtate, to forſake it, and to abſtaine from al extortions and exactions, from al fraude, deceite and ſpoyling. If it were otherwiſe, they woulde euery where obey the admonition of Saint Iames, that hee which is of a lowe and poore e-
Iam.1.9.10. 11. ſtate, woulde reioyce ween hee is exalted, contrarily, the rich would reioyce in his lowe degree and when hee is abaced, &c. As touching the reſt, let vs note that when God lighteneth aſwel the eies of the vſurer as of the poore, and that hee maketh the Sunne to riſe
Math.5.35. both vpon the good and bad, we ought not to iudge of med according to the proſperitie they inioy, nor after the aduerſitie they ſuffer. For alſo moſt commonly the righteous are in miſerie and calamities, they are afflicted, tormented, and perſecuted: and the wicked proſper and flooriſhe, they are honoured, and praiſed, as hath beene already ſometimes handeled. Some vnderſtand by lightening of rhe eyes, gouerning and moderating the heartes and mindes, ſo that God maketh the poore man to bee contented with his ſtate, and the vſurer not ſo ſore to afflict the poore man as hee woulde: the which conteineth trueth. Otherſome vnderſtande that God hath mercy on whome hee wil, and ſheweth mercy to the poore man, to the rich, to the ſinner and vſurer. And this ſenſe conteineth trueth alſo: but the firſt is the moſt fitteſt: as may be ſeene by the ſcriptures alledged.

14 *The king that iudgeth the poore in trueth, his throne ſhalbe eſtabliſhed for euer.*

The kings & ſuperiors of the earth are often ambitious, proude, arrogant, and high minded. They loue to be exalted, to be had in reuerence to be feared and doubted. And to the ende that none ſhould dare to doe any thing againſt thē, they wil bragge & magnifie themſelues, and as the ſame ſhal ſeeme to them to be neceſſary, they wil arme and fortifie themſelues againſt thoſe whom they take to be their enemies. And leaſt their owne ſubiectes ſhould rebel againſt them, and reuolt from them, they wil handle them moſt ſeuerely & ſharply, moſt vngently and cruelly. In dooing the ſame, they think to make their name perpetuall, and it ſeemeth to them that their kingdome ſhal neuer depart from their houſe, ſo long as the worlde ſhal laſt. And for to arme themſelues ſtrongly in their fantaſie, they wil hold themſelues in with the great and moſt mightie, wil honour them and ſhewe them fauour, in diſdaining and treading the poore vnder feete, which haue neither power nor mainteinance, and wil ouerthrowe their right to pleaſure therewith the ſtronger. Now becauſe that in ſo dooing they iuſtifie the wicked, and make wicked decrees, they are curſed, and ſo they cannot proſper, nor bee permanent and eſtabliſhed for euer, as they perſwade themſelues, but ſhal be ſodainly deſtroyed, according as they are threatned. And alſo we haue the examples thereof in the floode of Noe, in the ſubuerſion of Sodome, in the deſtruction of Pharao and his armie, and in the diſcomfiture of the kinges and their people, of the land of Canaan: in Saule, Achab, and Baltaſar. But where the kinges without preferring the poore in their cauſes wil take pitie of them, yeelding thē the right that belongeth vnto thē, then ſhal they cauſe their throne long to endure, as Solomon doeth pronounce ſaying.

Eſay.5. 23. & 10.1.2.

The king that iudgeth.&c. But againſt this ſentence wee may alledge that if euer there were gouernours, iudges, and kinges, which haue iudged the poore in trueth, Moſes, Ioſua, Sampſon, Gedeon, Dauid, Ioſias, Ezekias, and Ioſaphat, haue done it, and yet they haue not ſtabliſhed their throne eternally. For, as we may ſee, they haue not long continewed, and euen betweene the raigne of the one and the other there haue been horrible diſſipations, & after them al, & yet ſtil the people ouer whom they reigned, is in greate deſolation.

Now hereunto we may anſwer that the eſtabliſhmēt for euer ought not to bee referred to that which is ſeene to the eye, but vnto the ſayth and contentation that God hath giuen vnto thoſe kings, and to that, that he beareth their iuſtice in perpetual memory, the which ſhal neuer be aboliſhed. We may alſo ſay that the good kings do not reigne in their owne name, but doe confeſſe themſelues to bee the lieftenants of Ieſus Chriſt, and to bee miniſters of his kingdome, the which ſhal endure for euer, and that at the laſt they ſhall enioy this eternitie.

15 *The rod and correction giue wiſedome: but a childe ſet at libertie, maketh his mother aſhamed.*

Foraſmuch as wiſedome is of greateſt excellency, and of greateſt profit, not only vnto olde men, but alſo vnto young people, as wee haue ſeene by the admonitions and declarations that Solomõ hath made vs heeretofore oftentimes, therefore the fathers and mothers that deſire to haue their children to profit wel, muſt bee diligent to make them learne wiſedome not worldly and carnal (which is nothing elſe but vanity and fooliſhnes before GOD) but the heauenly wiſedome, that expelleth fooliſhnes which is bounde vnto the necke of of the childe.

Pro.13.24.
& 22.15.
& 23.13.14.

But foraſmuch as childrẽ wil not giue thẽſelues therto, except they be conſtrained by corrections and roddes, therefore Solomon in diuers places admoniſheth fathers and mothers for to beate their children with roddes: now he affirmeth that the rodde and correction giue wiſedome. And thus if we deſire that our children ſhoulde be wiſe, we muſt be diligent to correct and chaſten them. Not that by our rods and corrections we can atchiue to giue them wiſedome, for it is a woorke of the holy Ghoſt. True it is, that the corrections and rods are inſtrumentes ordeined of God, and doe profite ſo much as it pleaſeth him: and therefore, when we correct and chaſtice our children to make them wiſe, we muſt diligently commende our woorke vnto God: For alſo if the roddes and corrections of them ſelues giue wiſedome, then none of thoſe children that are corrected and chaſtened ſhould remaine obſtinate. And foraſmuch as they giue wiſedome vnto children, euen ſo they bring ioy vnto the fathers & mothers. Therfore let the fathers & mothers for the profit

Prou.10.1.
& 15.20.
& 23,15.16

and honour of their children,and for their ioy & conſolation,peace and reſt,keepe and holde their children ſhort,correcting and chaſtening them : for if they giue them the bridle, they ſhal proceede in folly,whereof they ſhal be greeued and aſhamed: as now Solomon ſaith.

Pro.10.1.& 15.20.& 17 21.25.

But a childe ſet at libertie,&c. And ſith that Solomon who was ſo wiſe,ſtandeth ſo long in declaring that wee muſt correct and chaſten children, therefore let vs knowe that it is a very neceſſary thing : and therefore ought not to bee deſpiſed nor neglected.

16 *When the wicked are increaſed, tranſgreſſion encreaſeth : but the righteous ſhall ſee their fall.*

Wickedneſſe hath euer raigned,as wee may ſee it in Cain and Lameth,but when the worlde was growne and multiplied , by the diſordinate and vnbrideled luſtes of the ſonnes of God towards the daughters of men,the wicked did multiply. At this time were the Giants dwelling on earth : afterwardes the ſonnes of God agreed with the ſonnes of men,&c. Then as the wicked and cruel multiplied,euen ſo did wickedneſſe encreaſe and multiplie . The like was found true by experiēce in the Canaanites,and alſo in the people of Iſrael, that where the wicked did growe amongeſt them, euen there wickednes alſo did increaſe. And in theſe yeeres paſt we haue had but too much experience thereof.

Gene.4. Gene.6.41. Gen.6.5.11. 12.13.

Nowe it is common that when the wicked ſee themſelues a great number, they waxe bolde to doe infinite euils, and chiefly againſt the poore and feeble,againſt the righteous and innocent , againſt the good and vpright,for to deſtroy them if it were poſſible: and doe boldly promiſe too them ſelues that whatſoeuer they doe they ſhall feele no hurte thereof. And this is becauſe they delight in their worldly proſperitie, euen to care nothing for God. And to diſcourage the righteous, whome they perſecute and would make to diſpaire, they ſcorne them , that beeing ſo feeble, they dare hope and truſt that God will deliuer them . But as Noe founde fauour before GOD, who reuealed vnto him the ende of al fleſhe, and ſhewed vnto him the deſtruction of the worlde:

Pſa.10.6. Eſay.28.15. Pſa.10.2. & Pſa.14.6.& 22.8. Gene.6.8.13 & 7.& 18. & 19.

and as God foretolde Abraham : and as the angels foretolde Lot of the deſtruction and ouerthrowe of Sodome, and the ſame alſo: and as God hath made many other righteous to ſee the deſtruction of the wicked, which were mightie and many in number : as to the children of Iſrael, Dauid, and other good kinges and iudges : euen ſo wil hee alſo ſhewe vs the ſame fauour, if wee walke truely in righteouſneſſe and vprightneſſe : as Solomon doeth promiſe vs, ſaying,

Iob.22.15. Pſal.37.34. & 52.7. & 58.11. Eſay.66.24.

When the wicked, &c. And this agreeth with that which is written in diuers places. Thus we ſee that the wicked, how mightie & greate a number ſoeuer they be, can they not atchieue to the end of their enterpriſes : but muſt fal & periſh. And contrarily, the iuſt that are weake, and which dayly doe periſhe euen before our eies, are preſerued, and beholde the vengeance that God taketh of their perſecutours. And thus wee are taught not to waigh, nor to iudge things, as wee ſee them at the firſt ſight, but wee muſt looke to the threatnings that God maketh againſt the vngodly, and to the promiſes that he maketh vnto the righteous, for they are certaine, & other thinges that we ſee with our eies, doe paſſe and vaniſhe away to nothing.

17 *Correct thy ſonne, & he will giue thee reſt, and will giue pleaſure to thy ſoule.*

There is neither olde nor young, but deſireth reſt and peace, & alſo therewith to haue wherewith he may be delighted and made to reioyce. And as it is a thing to be deſired, euen ſo alſo it is proper vnto the nature of man : and chiefly vnto the aged, which are not of ſuch power and might that they can labour, as can they that are in their flooriſhing age. But commonly we knowe not the meanes whereby wee may come to obteine theſe deſires, and when wee knowe them, yet wil we not holde them. For albeit that Solomon hath ſometimes exhorted the fathers and mothers to correct and to chaſten their children with roddes, and that hee hath promiſed them, in ſo doing that they ſhal driue out and expel fooliſhnes from the hearts of their children, and ſhal deliuer their ſoules from hel, yet for the moſt part the fathers and mothers doe not vnderſtande that they ought to chaſten their children, and doe much feare to anger them, and for to reioyce and to giue them recreation, they let them runne where they liſt. Wherevpon it commeth, that in ſteede of reſting vpon their children, and to haue pleaſure in them, and to delight in their good gouernment, in their modeſtie and obedience their children doe torment them, and vexe them by their diſſolutions, lewdneſſe and rebellion. And therefore, againe Solomon doth admoniſhe them, *correct thy ſonne, &c.* And hee promiſeth them that in ſo doing they ſhal haue reſt and pleaſure. For in correcting their children, fooliſhneſſe which was bounde vnto their heartes is put away, and thereby wiſdome is giuen them: whereupon followeth reſt and pleaſures. For a wiſe ſonne reioyceth his father: *Pro.10.1.& 15.20.* Heerein Solomon teacheth the fathers, what duetie they owe vnto their children: and to the children hee teacheth what they owe vnto their fathers and mothers, not onely that which is neceſſary, but alſo what is pleaſant, yea euen before God. For children muſt not be giuen to vanitie and fooliſhneſſe, to vncleanneſſe and diſhoneſtie, for to giue recreation vnto their fathers and mothers: but they ought to followe whatſoeuer God commandeth them, and to haue their fathers and mothers in abhomination and hatred, which ſhoulde demaunde the contrary, or that ſhoulde hinder them to folowe what God commandeth.

18 *Where there is no viſion, the people decay: but hee that keepeth the lawe, is bleſſed.*

It is written, before time in Iſrael when a man went to ſeeke an anſwere of God, thus hee ſpake, Come & let vs goe to the Seer: for he that is called nowe a Prophet, was in olde time called a Seer. I.*Sam.9.9* And ſith that a Seer is a Prophet, we wil take the viſion for a Propheſie: as the ſame is taken in Eſay. This kinde of viſion hath euer byn neceſſary in the worlde for the preſeruation of men, and hath greatly profited the people of Iſrael, when they had Seers that gouerned thẽ, *Eſay.1.1.* the want of thẽ bringeth great hurt: for hauing the Prophets, they were inſtructed in the wil of God, which ſhewed thẽ the way to ſaluation and life : but being deſtitute of Seers, they knowe not what they ſhould doe. They gaue them ſelues vnto ſuperſtitions & idolatries, vnto craftineſſe and rauine, to doing wrong, extortions, and violences, and other wickedneſſes : and ſo prouoked GOD vnto wrath againſt them : and for this cauſe hee raiſed vp enimies to ſpoyle and deſtroy them : as wee may ſee in the booke of the Iudges, and in other holy hiſtories. Likewiſe all other nations being deſtitute of Seers, or reiecting the worde of God, haue ſuffered horrible waſting. And ſtil nowe wee ſee that the nations which haue not the pure preaching of the Goſpel, are vexed and tormented with warres, by the which a great number of people doeth periſhe.

Now acccording to theſe experiments: Solomon ſaith, *Where there is no viſion, the people decay*. Except then that wee receiue the worde with al obedience, by the which woorde, God doeth reueale himſelſe vnto vs, and doeth declare his wil vnto vs, wee are curſed: for by ſuch contempt we goe to perdition: though for a time it ſeeme that wee doe proſper and floriſhe. Let vs therefore receiue the viſion, that is to ſay, the wholſome doctrine, wherby wee are inſtructed what the wil of God is: and in this ſort, wee ſhall not decay, but ſhalbe happy and bleſſed, as Solomon doth pronounce, ſaying,

But hee that keepeth the lawe, &c. That wee may wel and truely keepe this lawe or doctrine, wee muſt hate and abhorre our ſinnes, and with al our heartes folowe and doe the good deede that God commandeth vs, and to diſtruſt our ſelues, and to cal vnto him for our helpe : and alſo wee muſt bee aſſured that hee wil not fayle nor deceiue vs, though wee accompliſhe not perfectly that which he commandeth vs: but of his only grace and goodnes he giueth vs faith and repentance, and he doth accept and allow them for the fulfilling of his lawe, and doth pardon and forgiue vs our imperfections, ſo that they do truely diſpleaſe vs. And thus though it is ſaide, that he that keepeth the law is bleſſed, yet let vs not thinke that we can fulfil it: but forſaking our merites, let vs weepe and lament for our maliciouſneſſe, and imperfections, deſiring of God that hee would pleaſe to guide vs in his wayes. So dooing, we ſhal not walke in ouerweening and arrogancie, for boldly to giue our ſelues vnto al

kind

kinde of ſinnes : we ſhal not abide in ignorance, for to dout of the doctrine, and religion that we ſhould holde: neither ſhal we be deſtitute of conſolation, for to fal into diſpaire : nor wee ſhal not be left in the power of the Deuil, for to be troubled in our conſciences by his crueltie and tyrannie, and to fal vnder his temptations, Let vs therefore be attentiue, and giue diligent heed vnto the worde of the Prophetes, and ſuche famine as the Iewes are threatened withal, ſhal not fal vpon vs.

2.Pet.1.9.
Amos.8.11.

19 *A ſlaue wil not be chaſtized with wordes : though hee vnderſtand, yet he wil not anſwere.*

It is a common thing in the world, that men labour to do contrarie to that, that is commanded them, & is forbidden them, though they wel vnderſtande it is reaſon to obeye. And therein wee ſhewe our ſelues of a ſlauiſhe condition, though that in deſpiſing the forbiddings, and reſiſting the commandementes, wee thinke to be exempted from bondage, and to liue at libertie and in freedome. For being rebellious againſt that which is, and that we know to be reaſonable, we ſerue and obey our vnbrideled luſts and wicked deſires. Contrarily, we are in true libertie, when with a free heart & minde, without conſtraint wee ſubmit our ſelues vnto that which is reaſonable. Whereupon it rightly foloweth, that we are not at libertie of our ſelues. For neither we wil, nor can be gouerned, but after the deſire of our fleſhe, the which is enimitie againſt God. And thus, this is verified in vs, that *a ſlaue wil not be chaſtized, &c.* It were in vaine to preach vnto vs, to admoniſhe vs, to reprooue vs, and to threaten vs, except that God did ſet vs at libertie, and make vs free by his Spirite, we ſerue our luſtes, by the which with al our power, we rebel againſt God, and thinking to ſet our ſelues at libertie, wee become more the ſlaues of ſinne. Wherefore, we muſt humble our ſelues, and confeſſe with Saint Paule, that we are bondeſlaues, ſold vnder ſinne, and that there is a lawe in our members, fighting againſt the lawe of our minde, And therfore we ought to weepe with him, ſaying, O wretched men that we are! who ſhal deliuer vs from the body of this death? And wee muſt pray with Dauid, O create in mee a cleane hearte, and renewe a right ſpirite within mee, &c.

Rom.8.7.
Iohn.8.
Rom.7.14.
24.

And in the meane while to giue our hearts vnto the word of truth,
Pſal.51.12. and therin to perſeuer:and in this ſort we ſhal not be ſeruants that
13.14. wil not anſwere, but framing our liues vnto the worde of trueth,
wee ſhal be free by the grace of the Sonne of God. Beholde, howe
we muſt learne to knowe and to chaunge our ſeruile ſtate, when Solomon
Iohn.8.31. reprooueth ſeruantes, for that, that beeing admoniſhed of
their duetie, albeit that they rightly knowe, that it is reaſon they
ſhould obey, and not be deaffe, yet eſteeme nothing thereof. For if
ſeruantes that are bought for monie, are to be reprehended when
they yeeld not obedience to them that haue bought them, or poſſeſſe
them by ſucceſſion: and that for the doing of their dutie, they
Ephe.6.5. ought to be ſubiect in al things vnto their maiſters, as Saint Paul
Col.3.22. doeth admoniſh them: by a ſtronger reaſon then, we are rightly to
2.Tim.6.1. be condemned, if we be not obedient vnto our God, who hath redeemed
Tit.2.9. vs with a moſt precious raunſome. For this cauſe Saint Paul
1.Pet.2.18. doeth admoniſh vs, that we ſhould confeſſe ſuch a benefite. Let vs
1.Pet.1.18. take heede to make as though we heard not ſuch admonitions, the
19. which are ſo cleare and plaine, that we can not excuſe vs not to haue
1.Cor.6.29. heard them. Otherwiſe, after that God by wordes ſhal haue opened
30.& 7.23. vnto vs his wil, hee wil puniſh vs for our diſobedience. And albeit
Luke.12.47. that Solomon ſpeaketh here, of thoſe that were of ſeruile condition,
becauſe they were gotten & bought with monie, or taken in warre:
notwithſtanding, we may ſtretch this ſentence vnto hirelings, who
during the time that they gaine the monie of an other, are ſlaues: but
the greateſt number of them, for al the things that are ſhewed them,
and admonitions that are giuen them, yet do they not paſſe to doe
their dutie. Some of them deſire nothing but to paſſe away the time
in idleneſſe: other ſome labour to deceiue and to ſteale: and ſo, albeit
that they wel vnderſtand and heare, yet wil they not anſwere.
They know wel enough, that whatſoeuer is demanded of them, is
reaſonable: as they wel ſhew, when before their maiſters, they wil
appeare good ſeruantes, and in their abſence, doe the worſt they
can. But if they be not beaten of their maiſters, as were the poore
ſlaues, yet ſhal they not eſcape the whippe of GOD, as dailie is
ſeene.

20 *Seeſt thou a man haſtie in his matters? there is more hope of a foole, then of him.*

As we haue ſeene heretofore in diuers places, that fooles are obſtinate & paſt correction, and for this cauſe, they are rebuked and diſpiſed, threatned and condemned, as people in whom there is looked no amendment, and of whome we vtterly diſpaire. And therefore, when Solomon ſaith, *That there is more hope of a foole then of him*, that is haſtie in his matters, or in his wordes, let vs not vnderſtand that wee muſt hope for any thing of a foole: but that the haſtie man in his matters is not onely a foole, but worſe thã a foole: and if it bee a harde matter to bring a foole to goodneſſe, it is a thing much more harde to be done with him that is haſtie in his matters. And thus, albeit that Solomon ſetteth the haſtie man againſt the foole: yet let vs not thinke that Solomon goeth about to blame the diligence that a man giueth to folowe his vocation: whome hee hath prayſed and commended before, by rebuking of the ſlouthfull. For alſo there is great difference betweene the diligent and haſtie man: the diligent doeth carefully looke to what he hath to doe, and laboureth not to looſe the time, but to ſpende the ſame in woorkes that may profite him, and bring no domage vnto his neighbours: hee is not enuious towardes his neighbours, for to hinder them from their profite, but wil rather helpe them, and bee glad of their proſperitie. A haſtie man is without care: he is feruently minded, hee is earneſt about his matters, without conſidering what ſhal be the ende: hee careth not though hee troubleth his neighbours: hee proceedeth ignorantly, and ſuffers him ſelfe to be caried with a looſe bridle, after his vnbrideled luſtes: hee caſteth God at his backe, hee maketh no count of his word, and reiecteth his prouidence. This ſame, is gathered partly in this preſent ſentence, wherein Solomon more diſpaireth of the haſtie man, then of the foole, & partly in the nineteeneth Chapter, and 2. verſe: and partly, in the one and twentieth Chapter, & fifth verſe. And becauſe the haſtie man is ſuch, he ſhalbe curſed of God, & ſhal feele his vengeance, as hath bene handled. If we ſhal ſay haſtie in his words the ſenſe ſhal be fit enough: for the tongue is a dangerous and an vnruly euil. To the ende then, that wee fal not into the number of ſuche haſtie men, let vs obey the admonition of Saint Iames, Let euerie man be readie and haſtie to heare, and ſlowe to ſpeake. Thus dooing, we ſhal not be haſtie in hearing, and ſlowe of ſpeaking. So doing, we ſhal not be giuen vnto idle talke, vaine babbling, to blaſpheming, to vniuſt rebukes, to curſing, to lying, falſe witneſſe bearing, to backbiting, to flatterie and falſe tales, nor to diſhoneſt talke: but we ſhal weigh our wordes, folowing the holie admonitions of Saint Paule.

Pro.18.20.
Iam.3.5.
& 1.13.

Ephe.4.29.
& 5.3.19.
Collo.4.6.

21 *Hee that delicately bringeth vp his ſeruaunt from his youth, at length he wil be euen as his ſonne.*

There is a common prouerbe, that ſaieth, Saue the theefe from the galowes, and he ſhal kil thee: or, Fat the villain, and he ſhal prick thee. And this is according to experience. For if a man doe graciouſly intreate a villaine, hee is readie to be vnthankful, and in place to acknowledge the humanitie and the gentleneſſe that is vſed and ſhewed towards him, he wil vſe ſharpneſſe, & do extreeme wrong, without cauſe, riſing vp againſt him, to whome he ſtandeth bound, and wil labour to ſubdue him, and perſuade men to beleeue that he to whome he is detter, doeth owe vnto him: and in ſteede that he ſhould be his ſeruant, hee would reigne ouer him, yea deſtroy him. Nowe according to this experience, Solomon ſaith,

He that delicately bringeth vp his ſeruant, &c. He nameth a ſeruant, by whome hee meaneth al perſons that are bounde to giue honour, ſeruice, ſubiection and obedience to other. And thus, hee comprehendeth al thoſe that are vnder the power of Kings and Magiſtrates, of fathers and mothers, of Lordes and Maiſters. And albeit that ſuch inferiors are not of a ſeruile or ſlauiſh condition, as were the ſlaues bought for monie, or taken in warre, notwithſtanding, they are bounde to acknowledge thoſe with al humbleneſſe, vnder whoſe tuition they are, to be their ſuperiours: and to vnderſtande that they ought in no wiſe to riſe vp againſt thē, but the more gētly they are handled, ſo much the more to humble them ſelues: as

Saint Paul doeth cloſely teach them. But foraſmuch as wee ſee moſt 1.Tit.6.1.
commonly to happen, that the ſeruantes and other of vile and lowe condition before the worlde, doe waxe proude when they are gently intreated and ſuffered to haue their pleaſure, Solomon by this ſentence warneth al thoſe that are in authoritie, that they ſhoulde not ſlacke the bridle vnto thoſe that are vnder their ſubiection and yoke, for to let them liue after the deſires of their fleſhe, nor to take their pleaſures after the luſt thereof: but ſhoulde vſe grauitie and moderate ſeueritie, and ſhould accuſtome them to beſtowe the time about good workes, after as they are called, and to teach them to liue ſoberly and temperately, yea rather auſterely, then to ſuffer them to runne where they liſt, Otherwiſe the ſuperiours are in danger to feele their pride and arrogancie: as Solomon doeth ſignifie, when he ſaith, *that at the length the ſeruant will be as the ſonne:* yea euen as the ſonne that feeleth and knoweth his hearte, and becauſe he knoweth himſelfe to bee his fathers heire, and that hee thinketh the goods doe appertaine and belong vnto him, therſore hee wil doe after his pleaſure, as a Lorde and Maiſter, and wil murmure againſt his father, vnleſſe hee ſuffer him to haue the ruling of the goods of the houſe at his pleaſure: and chiefly when the fathers are waxen old, the children, which haue bin moſt delicately brought vp, do curſe them, calling them olde doaters, and giuing them other iniurious words, except they be permitted to doe with the goods as they wil. Now foraſmuch as it is ſo, that by our corrupted nature we are al of a ſeruile condition (for we ſerue our wicked luſtes, & vnbriled affections, & the law of ſin, the which holdeth vs captiues) therfore we haue need that our God (who is our Lord, that hath dearely bought vs with the blood of his only ſonne) ſhoul hold vs vnder his yoke and diſcipline, and not to nouriſhe vs vp with the eaſe of our fleſhe, making vs to enioye his riches in delicateneſſe and pleaſure, in abundance and exceſſe: but ſhoulde tame and chaſten vs, that we rebel not againſt him, nor diſobey him: as it is our manner and cuſtome, to fal away when we enioye our pleaſures: euen as wee may ſee it in the holie hiſtories, and as experience teacheth through al the world. It is then very needful for vs to craue of our God with
Ieremie, let him correct vs, not in his wrath but in iudgement, leſt *Ier.10.23.24*
hee bring vs to nothing. Conuert mee O Lorde, and I ſhal bee *& 31.18.*

conuerted, &c. Thus dooing, wee ſhal truely be the ſonnes of the great Lorde of heauen and earth, and fellowe heires of al thinges with Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde, by whome our good heauenly Father of grace & mercie hath adopted vs for his children, before the foundation of the worlde.

22 *An angrie man ſtirreth vp ſtrife: and a furious man aboundeth in tranſgreſſion.*

Pſa.131.1. As it is ſaide, Behold, how good and ioyful a thing it is, for brethren to dwel together in vnitie: euen ſo there is no man (if he haue any ſounde iudgement) but deſireth to liue in peace and concorde with his neighbours: as alſo Saint Paule doeth admoniſh vs thereof. *Rom.12.18* *Mat.5.* *Ephe.4 & 5.* *Phil.2.* *Collo.3.* But albeit that this is the iudgement, yet many can not, or wil not folowe the fit & right meanes to obtaine this peace, the which Saint Paule doeth teache vs in diuers places, folowing the doctrine of Ieſus Chriſt. But in ſteede of beeing ſo humble, modeſt, patient, ſoft and gentle, wee wil ſtriue with our neighbours in riſing vp againſt them in wrath and anger: and yet we wil perſuade men that we dare not once murmure, & whinch againſt thẽ: & therfore they wil be out of troubles, and farre from vexations. Notwithſtanding, experience ſheweth the cleane contrarie: for ſuch people doe often meete with ſhrewde heades, that knowe howe to anſwere and reſiſt them, and giue them a ſharpe repulſe: wherupon riſeth ſtrife. *Pro.15.18* According to this experience, Solomon hath ſaid, *An angrie man ſtirreth vp ſtrife or debate:* and nowe he ſaieth againe, *An angrie man ſtirreth vp ſtrife, &c.* And foraſmuche as wee deſire, or that wee ſhoulde deſire peace, let vs vnderſtande, that foraſmuche as Solomon is ſo careful to aduertiſe vs of this experience, hee doeth thereby admoniſhe vs to put away wrath and anger, and alſo to flye the company of angrie men, which are ſodeinely angred. Thus dooing, we ſhal liue peaceably with our neighbours, and alſo haue peace with our God: for hee loueth the peacemakers, calling them the children of God. *Mat.5.9.* And alſo hauing peace, and ſeeking to continue the ſame with our neighbours, wee wil abſtaine from many iniuries, outrages, cruelties, and oppreſſions, whereunto they are readily giuē, which riſe vp in anger & wrath againſt their neighbours: as Solomon doeth pronounce, ſaying,

A furious man aboundeth in tranſgreſſion. Whereupon foloweth, that as hee maketh warre againſt his neighbours, and oppreſſeth them: euen ſo wil God pay them again, and knoweth how to be reuenged on them in his wrath and anger, the which he ſhal feele eternally for euer. Therfore if we wil haue God merciful vnto vs, let vs be ſoft and gentle vnto our neighbours, folowing the admonition: Ceaſe from anger, and leaue of wrath: fret not thy ſelfe alſo to doe euil. *Pſa. 37.8.1.*

23 *The pride of a man ſhall bring him low: but the humble in ſpirite ſhall enioy glory.*

A man riſeth in pride diuers wayes. First of al, when hee is not contented with the ſtate wherein God hath placed him, being high or lowe, but laboureth to riſe vp higher: as our father Adam, as they which builded Babel, as Abſolom did in his fathers life time. Secōdly, when a man reioiceth and braggeth of his power: as did Pharao King of Egypt, and other infidel kings, which vexed and oppreſſed the people of God. Thirdly, when we are pleaſed, and reioice in our riches, and contemne and deſpiſe the poore: as did Nabal the husband of Abigail, and the riche glutton. Fourthly, when we eſteeme our ſelues for the authoritie and credite wee haue with them, which are of power and eſtimation, as did Aman. Fifthly, when wee perſwade our ſelues to bee wiſe and prudent by our trauaile and pollicie, and other of ſuch kinde. Al thoſe that be proude in any of theſe ſortes continue not long in high eſtate, but their pride doeth bring them downe: as haue al the former aledged perſons experimented, and all thoſe that ſhalbe like vnto them, ſhal fal alſo, yea very ſodenly: as amongſt other, the poore Papiſtes, which boaſt of their merites, by the which they promiſe them ſelues to flie vnto heauen: but foraſmuch as in this ſorte they renounce God for their ſauiour, and become ſauiours to them ſelues, they ſhal bee throwne downe to hel.

Gene.3.& 11.
2.Sam.15.
1.Sam.25.
Luke.16.
Heſter.3.

Wherfore

Wherefore, let vs take heed we folow neither them, nor thoſe that haue bene named before, leaſt we goe to deſtruction with them, and with the Deuil, who is the Prince of the proud: but let vs learne to acknowledge our God and father, & humble our ſelues vnder him, confeſſing with our heartes, that wee haue nothing but of his onely goodneſſe and liberalitie, and be contented with the ſtate wherin it hath pleaſed him to ſet vs: and our good God of his grace and mercie wil when the time is come, glorifie and magnifie vs. Solomon hath pronounced theſe thinges, and not contented herewith, he pronounceth yet againe the like, ſaying,

Pro.16.18. 19.& 18.12 *The pride of a man, &c.* And this is becauſe it is verie harde to beate into the minde of the proud, that he ought to humble and caſt himſelfe down: and alſo that the poore faithful which are contemned in the worlde, haue great neede of comforte: for to poſſeſſe *Luke.14.11 & 18,14.* the which, let vs beleeue this preſent ſentence, the which agreeth with that which Ieſus Chriſt our Lord ſaith,

24 *He that is partner with a theefe, hateth his owne ſoule: hee heareth curſing and declareth it not.*

Albeit that wee come all from one father and one mother, and that wee bee al of one fleſhe and blood, and that for this cauſe wee ſhoulde haue ſuch fellowſhip in goods, as wee ſhould not ſuffer our neighbours to want: neuertheleſſe wee ceaſſe not to be partakers of the riches of this worlde, and too appropriate and holde to our ſelues that which commeth to vs: ſo that we iudge them to be theeues that take any thing of that which we poſſeſſe, againſt our willes, and doe eſteeme them as abhominable, yea naturally becauſe they bring vs hurte. But that which ought to make them more deteſtable vnto vs, is that they are diſobedient vnto God, who forbiddeth to ſteale. For the honour of God ought to bee more precious vnto vs then al the gaines of the world. Nowe albeit that we count the theeues for abhominable, yet as there are theeues that perſwade them ſelues, or labour to put into their fantaſie, that it is not yl done to take goods where a man can find them: euen ſo there are ſome which iudge that it is wickedly done to robbe, and alſo if they can,

will

wil cauſe them to be taken, aud yet wil bee glad to haue part with the theeues : as it is reproched vnto them that are ſuch. When the theeues and their partakers doe thus behaue them ſelues, they wel thinke to make their profite, and to mainteine them ſelues richly in this life : and they thinke alſo that they haue verie great care for their ſoules, becauſe they labour to haue abundance of wealth to ſuſtaine them. Becauſe the more they loue them ſelues, the more they labour to gather riches : and they thinke that in this ſort they do wel make their profite : but to make a temporal gaine that is not certaine (for they may be robbed them ſelues, as they haue robbed other : neither can they long poſſeſſe them : for they them ſelues are not of long continuance, and yet during their life, that which they haue ſtolne doth vaniſhe away, either by exceſſiue expenſes, or after ſome other ſorte that they looke not for) they deſtroy their ſoules for euer, and get ſhame ſo long as they liue, the which they can not ſhake off, nor purge them thereof. Solomon ſignifieth this ſame, ſaying, *Hee that is partener with a theefe, &c.* The deſtruction of their ſoules, is noted by the hating of the ſoule. For no man preſerueth that willingly which hee hateth, but ſtriueth to looſe and to deſtroy it : albeit neuertheleſſe, that the theeues perſuade them ſelues that their intent is not ſuche, when they ſteale, and gather the bootie together, and vſe the ſame at their pleaſure : but in deed and truely, they deſtroy their ſoules : for theeues and robbers ſhal not inherite the kingdome of God. The ſhame is marked, when it is ſaide, *He heareth curſing.* When the theeues and their partakers or acceſſaries are takē, they are compelled to heare cried, out vpon the theeues, out vpon the wicked : & if they heare it not with their corporal eares, they know wel enough, that they are condemned and euil ſpoken off. Now that they can not repulſe the ſhame, nor purge them ſelues of it, Solomon doeth ſhewe it, when hee ſaieth,

Pſal.50.18
Eſai.1.23.
Rom.2.21.
1.Cor.6.10

And declareth it not. Some expounde this ſame as if hee woulde ſay, that they which are parteners with theeues, dare not complaine of the rebukes that is laid to their charge : and in deed, if the theefe thinketh that any good and ſufficient proofe may be brought againſt him, hee wil take good heed from lamenting of his caſe : but if hee thinke to be mainteined, or that he knoweth the probation is not plaine enough, not only he wil complaine, but alſo wil aske amends for ſlaundering and taking away of his good name, and wil doe the worſt he can againſt thoſe which blame him. And albeit that in this ſort, he doeth ſignifie ſomewhat the curſing that he hath heard, yet he doeth not declare it for to repulſe, and to cleare him ſelfe therof. For though he laboureth to couer his ſhame, yet it can not bee alwayes hid, but at the laſt, it wil come to light, ſo that he ſhal not be able to deny but that he is wicked: as Saint Paul ſaieth, The ſinnes *1.Tim.5.24.* of ſome men are manifeſt of them ſelues, comming before to iudgement: and other ſome come after. We may alſo ſay, that by not declaring the curſing that hee heareth, Solomon meaneth, that the theeues and their parteners are deaffe, and drinke vp the reproches and iniuries ſweetly, that are made them, and take al in good parte: prouided that they ſtoppe them not to make their hande & get what they can. They are like vnto great maſtiue curres, which whileſt they are gnawing of the bones, care nothing at al for the litle whelpes that barke after them, and thinketh ſcorne once to remooue to bite them: but becauſe that the worde which hath beene expounded, *curſing*, ſignifieth alſo ſwearing, ſome vnderſtande that Solomon woulde ſay, That though an othe bee giuen vnto the theeues partener, yet wil he not declare and reueale the trueth, but wil forſweare him ſelfe. Euen ſo it is a thing that is but too common, that men had rather blaſpheme God, then to diſcouer and open the ſinne of their neighbour, when it is required. But it might be ſaid, that Solomon is rather tyed heere vnto the partener of the theefe, and his acceſſarie, that taketh parte of the bootie, then to the theefe that hath ſtolne the goods from an other. Wee anſwere heereunto, that there is good cauſe. For if the theefe be guiltie, then hee that hideth and partaketh with the bootie, is muche more giltie: for not onely hee is a theefe, but alſo ſo muche as in him lyeth, he iuſtifieth the theefe, when hee conſenteth vnto his ſpoylings and robberies. And theſe are of the number of thoſe whereof Saint *Rom.1.32.* Paule ſpeaketh: who though they knewe the righteouſneſſe of God (that is to ſay, that they which doe ſuche thinges are woorthie of death) yet they wil not onely doe them, but alſo allowe other that doe the ſame. For if the acceſſaries and thoſe which are parteners with theeues, knewe not that the the eues were giltie, they woulde in no wiſe conceale nor hide them, neither woulde they alſo hide them ſelues,

25 . *The feare of man bringeth a ſnare: but he that truſteth in the Lord, ſhalbe exalted.*

The ſnares, in the ſcriptures, doe ſignifie trouble, vexation, ſorowe, affliction, deſtruction, and ouerthrowe. And this, by a ſimilitude borowed of beaſtes which are taken in the ſnares, in the toyle, or in purſenets, which for to deliuer them ſelues, doe take great paynes: but they can not eſcape, but muſt needes be taken, and periſhe. Nowe as feareful beaſtes, ſeeing or ſmelling the hunters and folowers, doe flye before them for feare of them: and it commeth to paſſe moſt often, that in flying and thinking to ſaue them ſelues, they runne and fal euen into the toyles and ſnares: euen ſo, men which are eaſily feared, doe ſoone fal into euil. For their aduerſaries ſeeing their fearefulneſſe and faintheartedneſſe, do take thereof greater boldneſſe, and promiſe them ſelues that they ſhal eaſily ouercome ſuche feareful men. The which the Prophet Eſai, and alſo Moyſes and Ioſua, and other ſeruantes of God haue wel knowne. For this cauſe they haue diligently admoniſhed the people of Iſrael not to ſtande in feare for the power, greatneſſe, and multitude of their enemies. Likewiſe when a man feareth, or is afraide of any thing, he eaſily forſaketh the duetie of his office, and to doe according to their wil, whome he feareth, and to turne away from God, yea, to be rebellious againſt him. And for this cauſe the Lorde often admoniſheth his ſeruantes not to feare men, nor to eſteeme their greatneſſe. Moreouer, when we are afraide, wee doe not ſo wel remember to run vnto God, nor to truſt in him: but rather, doe regard & looke vnto natural & carnal meanes, and ſo run vnto them, and moſtwhat returne void of our expectation & hope: and thus we fal and run vnto deſtruction: and in this ſort the ſnare is brought & ſet: as we may vnderſtand by the ſcripture, My bowels, my bowels, woe is mee, the tranſgreſſours haue offended: yea, the tranſgreſſours haue greeuouſly offended, *feare*, and the pit,

Num.19.9
Deut.7.17
& 20.1.
Eſai.7.4.
& 8.12.
& 10.24.
Ioſua.1.9.
Ier.1.8.17
Eze.2.6.
Mat.10.26.
28.
Eſai.24.16
17.& 42.22.

and the ſnare are vppon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. But this
people is robbed and ſpoiled, and ſhalbe al ſnared in dungeons, and
they ſhalbe hid in priſon houſes. The deſtructiō of thē that through
feare haue refuge vnto creatures, is verie well deſcribed in the
thirtie, and one and thirtie of Eſai: and againſt the Moabites,
Ier.48.43. which truſted in their idolles, Ieremie ſaieth, O inhabitaunt of
Moab, feare, the pit and the ſnare are vpon thee, ſaieth the Lord: and
he that flyeth away for feare, ſhal fal into the pit. For whatſoeuer af-
fliction or aduerſitie ſhal then happen vnto vs, let vs not be diſmaid,
but with al conſtancie, folowing our vocation, let vs looke for helpe
from aboue. For as a poore feeble beaſt cannot deliuer him ſelfe out
of the ſnare, when the ſame is taken: euen ſo, can wee not of our
ſelues ſaue vs from the calamities of this worlde, from what part ſo-
euer they come, but the onely power of the Lorde muſt deliuer vs
from them: as we may ſee by many examples of the ſcriptures, and
as it is verie plainly expreſſed in the 124. Pſalme. Wherefore, truſting
Pſal.118.6 in his goodneſſe and power, and ſaying in our heartes, The Lorde
Pſal.31.1 is on our ſide, I wil not feare what man can doe vnto me, let vs cal
& 50.15 vpon him to helpe vs with Dauid, and he wil not fayle to graunt vs
our requeſt. For hee promiſeth vs, Cal vpon mee in the day of
thy trouble, and I wil deliuer thee. And as hee hath promiſed, ſo
wil hee alſo perfourme the ſame faithfully: as diuers Saintes haue
tried it by experience. Nowe both folowing of the promiſe and
alſo experience, Solomon pronounceth, *But hee that truſteth in
the Lorde, ſhalbe exalted.* Hee compareth truſt in the Lorde vnto
a ſtrong and high Tower, or vnto ſo ſteepe and ſo high a rocke that
no man can aſcende vp to the ſame, ſo that if a man can come thi-
ther, hee ſhalbe out of the dangers of his perſecuters. And heerein,
hee doeth wel ſhewe vs, that it is in God, that wee ought to put
our truſt and confidence, if we wil be deliuered from feare, and ſet
out of daunger, and be in ſafetie. And it is not in this place one-
ly that the ſcripture vſeth this compariſon, to teache vs, where we
Pſal.18.3 ought to put our truſt, but alſo in diuers other places, it calleth God
& 31.4. a ſtrong and wel fenced Citie, a ſtrong Tower, a Rocke, an high
& 71.1. place, and ſuche like names. The name of the Lorde is a ſtrong
Pro.18.10. Tower, the righteous flyeth vnto it, and is deliuered.

And alſo without compariſon the ſcripture doth openly declare vs, that if we put our truſt in God, we ſhal not periſhe, but ſhal be deliuered from al dangers. And albeit that in truſting in the Lorde we haue cauſe to be aſſured, and to be farre from feare, becauſe we haue an Almightie Sauiour : yet diſtruſting our ſelues, let vs worke out our ſaluation in feare and trembling, Phil.2.12.

Pſal.33.& 34.& 91.

26 *Many doe ſeeke the face of the ruler : but euerie mans iudgement commeth from the Lord.*

The Kinges, Princes, Rulers and Superiours of the earth, are of a great Maieſtie : as wee ought to vnderſtande, when God placeth them in his throne, and that hee calleth them Gods, and ſonnes of the moſt higheſt. And therefore we muſt take good heede from making the reſt of men his companions: for beſides this, that we ſhuld ſport and ieſt with God (the which is in no wiſe lawful, but ought chiefly to be auoided) we ſhould be in danger to be conſumed. For as a litle whelpe thinking to playe with a Lyon, would at the laſt anger him, hee ſhould be deuoured by him : euen ſo, a King or a Ruler wil not long delight to haue a perſon of a meane and lowe ſtate to be his familiar, and as it were his companion. Yea alſo, though for a certaine time a King hath counted a man for his father, and ſhal ſo haue called him, at the laſt hee wil be grieued, and cauſe him to be taken : as we haue ſeene in our time the example therof. The Kings and great Lordes of this worlde, are like vnto wilde beaſtes, and are compared vnto Lyons, and vnto ſuch as bring the meſſage of death. But albeit they are ſuch, and that there is but too much experiences thereof, yet foraſmuche as they counterfaite the magnifical and liberal, in giuing great giftes & preſents vnto their whores, bawdes, flatterers, and tale bringers, and where there is no neede : for this cauſe many deſiring to goe forwarde and make their profite, and to waxe riche, labour to come neere vnto them, and to pleaſe them. And as wee haue ſeene, many doe bowe before the face of the Prince : and euerie man is friend to him that giueth. And according hereunto Solomon ſaieth nowe,

Pſal.82.6.

Pro.16.14. & 19.12. & 20.2.

Pro.19.6.

Many doe ſeeke the face of the Ruler, &c. Thus dooing, they thinke to be litle Kinges, and to be raiſed vp: but foraſmuch as the Kinges heart is in the handes of the Lorde, and that he turneth it as beſt pleaſeth him, wee muſt not therefore thinke to make our ſtate better, yea, though the Kinges and Rulers did beare vs the beſt face and countenance in the worlde: for the Lorde turneth the heart of the King to whatſoeuer pleaſeth him. And according thereunto hee ſaieth now, *But euerie mans iudgement commeth from the Lord.* And thus, hee can obteine nothing of the Ruler, whoſe fauour hee deſireth, but what God hath giuen him. The iudgement then in this place, is taken for that, that God hath iudged and ſent to euerie man: as it is ſo taken, Deut.18.verſe 3. What fauour ſoeuer the great mē of the world do beare vs, let vs take heed vnto the prouidence of God, and let vs depende wholly vpon this ſame: and ſo dooing, he wil iudge vs, and ſende vs ſuche & ſo proſperous ſtate, as hee ſhal knowe to be expedient for vs. *Pro.21.1.*

27 *A wicked man is abhomination to the iuſt, & hee that is vpright in his way, is abhomination to the wicked.*

Albeit that al men are of one fleſh, and of one blood, and that more is, al are created and made like to the image and likeneſſe of GOD, the which wee ought to haue in great reuerence, and to holde it deare, and for this cauſe doe wee beare honour one vnto an other, and doe not contemne no man, howe vile and lowe ſoeuer he be before the world: yet there are ſome which of ſet malice and of a ſhameful obſtinacie, do drowne them ſelues in al diſſoluteneſſe & leaudneſſe, are delighted to deſpight God, by their miſdeeds and tranſgreſſions, and to oppreſſe their neighbours by wrong dooings and cruelties, by polling and pilling, by lying, and ſlaundering, falſe ſwearing and falſe witneſſe bearing: and chiefly riſe vp againſt the weake and feeble, againſt the ſimple and innocent. And in this manner, ſo muche as in them lyeth, they corrupt and put out the image of God in them, and alſo in their neighbours whom they labour to looſe & deſtroy. And ſo, they ſhew them ſelues wicked and vngodly,and vnworthie of that image: and therefore they are abhominable before God: as hee hath wel ſhewed, when hee curſed Caine, deſtroyed the world by the flood, ouerthrew Sodome and Gomorrhe,and drowned Pharao,& al his armie in the red ſea: and that he rooted out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan,before the face of his people: and when by the infidels he tormented the children of Iſrael, and ſent them into captiuitie amongſt the idolaters: and that nowe they are ſtil in an horrible confuſion, And as we ſee this ſame by examples, euen ſo alſo may wee knowe it by the teſtimonies of the ſcriptures: & amongſt other places by the curſes that God pronounced, and by the threatnings that he maketh in diuers places by his Prophetes. We haue had diuers ſentences alſo thereof in this booke of the Prouerbes. And as ſuch wicked men are abhominable before God the Lord: euen ſo are they which giue them ſelues to walke in the right wayes of the Lorde, and delight and take pleaſure therein, not wel pleaſed with theſe wicked men: but as Solomon ſaith, *A wicked man is abhomination to the iuſt.* And this commeth chiefly, becauſe that the wicked are enemies of God, as is ſhewed vs. For ſo farre as they are our enemies, wee muſt not hate them, but loue them. Nowe albeit that vpon good cauſe the wicked are abhominable vnto the iuſt,& that the wicked ought to be conuerted and to labour to pleaſe both God & the iuſt,which are of a good and vpright conuerſation, by the which they bende vnto edification, for to ſet the wicked in the way of ſaluation, yet the wicked are hardened and become obſtinate in their malice, and doe delight therein, ſo that of vice they make vertue, and of vertue vice: and in ſteede that they ſhoulde loue the iuſt that giueth them good example, and to doe them honour, and to reuerence them, they abhorre them: as Solomon ſaieth, adding,

Leuit.26.
Deut.27.
& 28.
Pſal.5.5.
Pſal.139.19
Mat.5.44.

And he that is vpright in his way, is abhomination vnto the wicked. Hee ſpeaketh here according to experience. For Cain had not ſlaine iuſt Abel, if hee had not hated him and abhorred him. Abraham, Iſaack, and Iacob, were yl intreated of the inhabitantes of the lande of Canaan, becauſe they hated them. Lot ſuffered the like of the inhabitantes of Sodome. Moſes,Dauid,the Prophetes, Ieſus Chriſt & his Apoſtles were abhorred of the wicked: & alſo the wicked haue thought to doe good ſeruice vnto God, by killing the iuſt: as ſtil at this day, they perſuade them ſelues in perſecuting them which profeſſe the name of Ieſus Chriſt. But forſomuch as in ſo doing they iuſtifie the wicked, and condemne the innocent, & cal euil good, they are therefore curſed, Eſai. 5.20,23.

The xxx. Chapter.

The wordes of Agur the ſonne of Iaketh.

1 *The prophecie which the man ſpake vnto Ithiel, euen to Ithiel, and Vcal.*

ACcording to the Hebrews, the fourth part of this booke beginneth at this place: and after the opinion of Aben Ezra, Agur was a man that liued in the time of Solomon, which walked in righteouſneſſe, experte in knowledge, and honourable amongſt thoſe of his age: and for this cauſe King Solomon hath incloſed his woordes of wiſedome into his booke: and that Ithiel & Vcal were wiſe men, that were the companions or Diſciples of Agur. But R. Leui the ſonne of Gerſon, ſaith, that it ſeemeth, or it is thought howe Solomō was named Agur, becauſe of his words or ſentences which he hath compriſed in this booke: & that Agur, ſignifieth a gatherer together: and that he did name him ſelfe the ſonne of Iaketh. Howſoeuer it be, the wordes which are ſet downe hereafter are called, a Prophecie, or charge, for their excellencie, and conteine verie graue ſentences, and of great waight.

2 *Surely, I am more fooliſh then any man, and haue not the vnderſtanding of a man in me.*

Whoſoeuer he be that ſpeaketh, either Solomon, or an other, hee ſpeaketh of him ſelfe in great humilitie, though hee was indewed with great giftes and graces, and hath vttered excellent ſentences, to the great edification of thoſe which conſider and lay them vp as they ought. Diuers ſaints (though they knewe that God did greatly eſteeme them) did not yet boaſte of their greatneſſe and excellencie. for to tread downe others vnder them; but they haue ſhewwed great humilitie. Abraham might wel knowe, howe greatly God eſteemed him, by the promiſes that he had made him: and yet he pronounceth no excellent thing of him ſelfe, but nameth himſelfe pouder and duſt: and alſo doeth humble him before the Hethites. Moſes knewe alſo that God woulde giue deliuerance to the people of Iſrael by his hand, and yet he confeſſeth, that he is not ſufficient. Dauid knewe that God had cauſed him to be annointed king ouer the people of Iſrael, and yet he ſubmitteth himſelfe vnto Saule, who was reiected of God. Afrer that the Lorde had declared vnto Hieremie, that he had appointed him a Prophet, hee humbleth himſelfe ſaying, he was a childe. Saint Paule knewe that the Lord had counted him woorthie to be his Apoſtle, and yet he confeſſeth that hee was not woorthie to be called an Apoſtle: And notwithſtanding that theſe holy men haue thus humbled themſelues, they haue not ceaſed to ſhewe themſelues excellent in following boldely and manfully their vocation, and doing their office duely. Moreouer alſo though the perſonne that ſpeaketh heere, knowing what hee was himſelfe, doe greatly humble himſelfe, ſaying: *that he is more fooliſh then any man*. Yet for to explicate what he meaneth by *fooliſhnes* he addeth, that he hath not the *vnderſtanding of a man*: and for more ample expoſition, ſaith conſequently.

Gen.12.& 13.& 15.& 17.& 18.
Gen.18.27. & 23.7
Act.7.25
Exo.4.10

3 *For I haue not learned wiſedome, nor attayned to the knowledge of the Saintes.*

And yet for all this, he hath a ſpirite gorgiouſly decked with knowledge, both humaine and diuine, and ſheweth himſelfe very wittie and of a ſettled, and diſcreete minde, by the ſentences and woordes that ſhal followe heereafter. And therein he teacheth vs, that our owne mouthes ſhoulde not prayſe vs, as Solomon hath admoniſhed vs. Hee teacheth vs alſo, that what giftes, graces, and vertues ſoeuer wee haue, wee ſhoulde not extol our ſelues aboue

Pro.27.2.

our neighbours, by contention and vaineglory : but that through humbleneſſe of hearte we ſhoulde eſteeme an other man more excellent then our ſelues : as wee are admoniſhed thereof. Phillip.2.3. For albeit that wee muſt eſteeme the giftes of God that are in vs, and to make them ſhine by good doctrine and holy conuerſation, yet muſt wee thinke, they are not giuen vs for to boaſt of them, nor to extol our ſelues aboue our neighbours, but to labor to ſet foorth the glory of God, and the ſaluation of our neighbours. Wee ſhoulde not then preſume to haue of our ſelues any humane wiſedome, or knowledge of the ſaintes, that is to ſay, of the worde of God, and knowledge thereof, the which may bee called *knowledge of the ſaintes* for diuers cauſes.

Frſt of al, becauſe that God giueth the knowledge of his word vnto his elect, whom he ſanctifieth and ſeparateth frō the filthines and pollutions, wherevnto the wicked and reprobate are giuen. And by this worde are they ſanctified and made ſaints: Ieſus Chriſt *Iohn.17.17.* doeth wel ſhewe it, ſaying, Sanctifie them by thy trueth, &c. Secondly, it may bee called the knowledge of the ſaints: that is to ſay, of holy things: for there is nothing that maketh vs to be giuen vnto an holy life, & pure and cleane conuerſation, but only this word, by the which God declareth vnto vs his wil, which is the rule of al hones. Thirdly, it may be called, the knowledge of ſaints, that is to ſay, of heauēly things, becauſe it bringeth vs to haue our cōuerſation in heauen, by faith and hope, and at the ende to haue perfect poſſeſſion thereof. Wee ſhal not neede, I ſay, to preſume of our ſelues, in this ſort though wee bee but fooles before the worlde, which woulde haue vs to praiſe and boaſt our ſelues, for God ſhal accept and alowe vs for wiſe men. For the wiſedome of this worlde is fooliſhneſſe before God, & therfore he admoniſheth vs ſaying, Let no man de- *1.Cor.3.18 19.* ceiue himſelfe: if any man amongſt you ſeeme wiſe, let him become a foole in this worlde, that hee may bee made wiſe. It is not enough to ſay that wee are fooles, brutiſhe and ignorant, but wee muſt confeſſe it, and feele in deede : for if wee haue nothing but the bare worde, and doe not thinke lowly of our ſelues, there is nothing but feining and hypocriſie, the which is greatly deteſtable before God, who demandeth a ſincere and vpright heart, and wherevnto the mouth agreeth. Let vs take heede then to be like thoſe who for to counterſeite the lowly, & repentant, wil with mouth blaſpheme, but cãnot ſuffer to heare their faults reproued, but to be reuenged, wil ſay, they are honeſt men, and are alſo good Chriſtians or better then any other: and alſo wil labour to reuenge them ſelues vppon them, that take paines to make them knowe their faultes.

4 *Who hath aſcended vp to heauen, and deſcended? Who hath gathered the winde in his fiſt? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath eſtabliſhed all the endes of the earth? What is his name, and what is his ſonnes name, if thou canſt tell?*

Agur hath ſaide himſelſe to bee fooliſhe, and for to expound howe he was ſuche, he hath declared that hee had neither humane wiſdome, nor diuine knowledge.

Now for to ſhewe that none is capable of that whereof he confeſſeth himſelſe to bee deſtitute, hee maketh many queſtions, the which are ſo much as negatiues. And this is for to ſhew that there is none but God onely, that hath wiſedome and vnderſtanding, that is mightie and politike, that is wonderful and worthie of great renowme and praiſe.

The firſt queſtion, (*Who hath aſcended vp to heauen, and deſcended?*) ought to be vnderſtood negatiuely, if we vnderſtãd it to bee ſpoken of men. For albeit that ſome by ſpecial priuiledge haue beene tranſlated or rauiſhed vp into heauen, as Enoc, Elias, and Paule: yet it is true that no man euer went vp into heauen or deſcended of himſelf. For if we take the heauens for this great heauenly firmament, wee knowe that they are vnacceſſible and cannot bee reached: as alſo Moſes doth giue the ſame ſomething to bee vnderſtoode, ſaying: For this commandement that I commande thee, this day, is not hid from thee, neither is it farre from thee, nor in heauen, &c. And if wee take the aſcending vp into heauen, for the pure knowledge of the myſteries and ſecretes of God, and for the light of ſpiritual vnderſtanding, which is the true wiſedome and knowledge of the ſaintes: as it is ſo taken in the 3. Chapter and the 13. verſe, of Saint Iohn: No man aſcendeth vp to heauen of his owne and naturall vnderſtanding, which is brutiſhe and ſenſeleſſe.

Gen.5.24.
2.Kin.2.11.
2.Cor.12.2.
Gen.1.1
Deut.30.11.
12.

For the natural doeth not comprehende the thinges that are of the
1.Cor.2.14. ſpirite : there is none but the holy Ghoſt, who is the ſpirite of
Chriſte, which aſcendeth vp to heauen, & deſcendeth from thence.
It is hee that is the ſpirite of wiſedome and vnderſtanding. And by
Eſay.11.2. him the ſonne of man Ieſus Chriſt did aſcend vp to heauen. No man
Mat.11.27. knoweth the father, but the ſonne, who is the Lorde. And wee
may ſay that the holy Ghoſte deſcendeth from heauen, when by
the worde of God hee teacheth vs al trueth, and guideth vs in the
ſame. The which hee did when Ieſus Chriſte being deſcended from
heauen, tooke our nature, and in the ſame hath taught vs the wil of
God his father, and doeth teache it vs dayly by the Apoſtles and miniſters
that he hath ordeined in his Churche, which are onely the
inſtrumentes of his ſpirite, who reuealeth vnto vs what wee ought
to knowe of God. And when the ſpirite doeth thus giue vs to
1.Cor.2.10. knowe the thinges which are of God, it is not to the ende that we
11.12. ſhoulde haue our affections fixed heere. and that wee ſhoulde bee as
it were buried in earth, but as Chriſte is riſen by the glory of God,
ſo ſhoulde wee walke in neweneſſe of life, bending and ſetting all
our deſires aboue in the heauens : as S. Paul doth admoniſhe vs
Rom.5.4. *Collo.3.12* thereof. And being ſo aſcended, let vs deſcende vnto our neighbours
without forſaking heauen. The which wee ſhal doe, if leading
an honeſt, holy, and heauenly life, wee occupie our ſelues in hearing
of holeſome doctrines, admonitions, exhortations, and declarations.

Thus doing, wee may ſay with Saint Paule, that our conuerſation
is heauen. And ſo albeit that our bodies, yea our whole perſons
bee on earth, yet are we aſcended vp to heauen, & there haue
our dwelling by faith and hope. And finally as Ieſus Chriſte is aſcended
aboue al heauens, for to prepare the place for vs, ſo ſhal wee
riſe againe by his power, by the which alſo wee ſhal aſcende vp to
heauen, though none bee aſcended : as it is giuen vs to vnderſtande
by this firſt interrogation. The ſeconde, *Who hath gathered
the winde in his fiſt* ? Cannot bee anſwered affirmatiuely of any
man whatſoeuer : for hee hath no power to ſtay the winde : there
Amos.4.13. is none but God that can vſe it at his pleaſure : as hee hath created
the winde, ſo doeth hee holde and locke it vp, as in a treaſure houſe,
that it ſhoulde not blowe, and afterwardes doeth ſende it foorth
when

when hee ſhal thinke good. There is none then but God that *gathereth the winde in his fiſt?* that is to ſay, which hideth it, and holdeth it by his power, and then vnlooſeth it ſo ſoftly and ſmally, ſo great and vehement as hee pleaſeth: and there is no man that hath in any wiſe the winde at his wil. The Apoſtles, which were very familiar and friendes of Chriſte, coulde not make the winde to ceaſſe that toſſed them on the Sea: but Ieſus rebuked the windes and the Sea, and a great ſtilneſſe and calmeneſſe followed. And therein hee declared that hee was not onely man, but the ſonne of God alſo, yea euerlaſting and eternal God.

Pſal. 104.4
& 125.7
Iere. 10.13
& 51.15
Mat. 8.26

Nowe if a man haue not the winde in his power, which is a creature made for his vſe, much leſſe hath hee power ouer the ſpirite of God, who is the ſpirite that onely inſpireth into man wiſedome and prudence, and indueth him with graces according to the meaſure of the giftes of Chriſte, who hath the fulneſſe of this ſpirite, for to holde the ſame as it pleaſeth him, and alſo to diſtribute the ſame to whom he ſhal ſee good: & chiefly to the elect of God his father, which confeſſe him. And we al haue receiued of his fulneſſe, grace for grace. Grace is giuen vnto vs according vnto the meaſure of the the gift of Chriſt. Nowe there are diuerſitie of giftes: but there is but one ſpirite. The thirde, *Who hath bounde the waters in a garment?* The waters of their nature that God gaue them in their creation, couered al the earth: and for the commoditie and vſe of man hee hath diſcouered the earth, making the waters to withdrawe themſelues which he hath incloſed in their limites, that they ſhould not paſſe their bounds without his leaue or commandement: as the Scripture witneſſeth. And thus, there is no man that can binde ſo great an heape of waters with his garment: but God doeth incloſe and holde them in at his pleaſure: as beſides theſe witneſſes of the Scripture, we may ſee it in the myracles that he wrought in the red Sea, & in the flood of Iordan. And if a man hath not the power to binde in the material & corporal waters, ſo much the leſſe are we capable of the clene waters of the holy Ghoſt, the which ſatisfie thē that drinke thereof, and doth fil them with al prudence, wiſedome, knowledge and vnderſtanding. But as God hath promiſed them vnto vnto vs, ſo doeth hee exhort and cal vs to drinke them. And as he doth exhort and cal vs, euen ſo doth he giue them vnto vs by Ieſus

Iohn. 1.16
Ephe. 4.7
1.*Cor.* 12.4
Gen. 1.9
Pſal. 33.7
Iere. 6.22
Iob. 38.8.9
10.11.
Pſal. 104.6
7.8.9
Exo. 14.21
Ioſ. 3.15.16
Eze. 36.25
Eſay. 55.1
Iohn. 4. & 7

Chriſte, when by faith wee receiue his worde, the which quickneth vnto eternal life: as he doeth aſſure vs thereof.

Mat.6.27 & 5.36. The fourth, *Who hath eſtabliſhed all the endes of the earth?* It may be anſwered, that it is neither one man, nor al men together. They haue no power to adde one cubite vnto their height, neither to make one haire white or blacke: howe then can they eſtabliſh the earth at their pleaſure or wil? And alſo the earth is an vncomprehenſible heauineſſe and greatneſſe: as the Scripture doeth witnes. *Iob.38.4.5.6* But God only creating the earth hath ſtabliſhed the endes thereof, and there is none that can augment or diminiſhe it, it is hee who by his Prophet Eſay ſaith, Who is hee that hath meaſured the waters with his fiſt, &c. *Eſay.40.12.* Thou haſt ſet al the borders of the earth, thou haſt made Sommer and Winter. *Pſal.74.18.* And if wee can neither giue ordinance to the earth, nor eſtabliſhe her boundes in our handes, ſo much the leſſe can wee handle the wiſedome of God which filleth heauen and earth at our pleaſure: but wee muſt acknowledge that wee are bruitiſhe, and to demande of God the wiſedome that is meete for vs. For if hee bee owner of the earth, and the contents thereof, and who hath giuen the ſame to men, by a more ſtrong reaſon he giueth wiſedome, whereby we are drawne from the earth, and raiſed vp to heauen.

The fifth, *What is his name?* It is vnpoſſible to bee named, ſeeing that (as hath beene ſaide) the foreſaide thinges are not in no mans power whatſoeuer. And thus, man can haue no fame nor praiſe for the thinges aforeſaide. But the mightie God is he alone, that hath al thoſe thinges in his hande: whoſe name wee knowe not, except hee reueale it vnto vs. For albeit there is no people ſo barbarous, but knoweth that there is a god, yet whē he is not glorified as God, nor thanks giuen vnto him, but that the moſt part of the worlde and almoſt euery where, they are become vaine in their *Rom.1.21.* thoughtes, as ſaith Saint Paul: by this is ſhewed that wee know not his name. To the ende then that hee may bee glorified of vs, let vs worſhip him alone, in calling vpon him, giuing him thankes, ſinging foorth his praiſes, and confeſsing him to bee authour of al goodnes, and obeiyng him according to his worde in al feare and reuerence. Hee hath declared his name, vnto vs , which is not onely wonderful,and worthie that wee ſhoulde tremble at it,knowing our infirmitie,but alſo therewith that wee ſhoulde bee aſſured becauſe of his goodneſſe,and loue that hee beareth vnto vs. For as his name is the Almightie,the euerlaſting,ſtrong, feareful, taking vengeance, and puniſhing the wicked and vngodly,that hee is a burning fire, & cõſuming his enimies, and that it is a very feareful matter to fal into the handes of the liuing God: euen ſo his name, is the God, onely Sauiour,father of mercy,pitiful,patient,ſlowe to wrath, ſhewing mercy vnto a thouſande generations, protectour and defendour of the afflicted,and al them that truſt in him. Beholde a very wonderful name as it is hee is heere expreſſed: but it is far of from being ſet foorth and deſcribed according to the dignitie and excellencie thereof. For there is no vnderſtanding that can attaine vnto the perfection of this name: and conſequently there are neither mouthes nor tongues that can declare and ſhew foorth this name, according to the worthineſſe thereof.

The ſixth, *And what is his ſonnes name, if thou canſt tell?* If wee knowe not the name of the father, we cannot know the name of the ſonne: for the ſonnes do oftentimes beare the name of their fathers,euen frõ ſonne,to ſonne that they may boaſt of the Nobilitie and long continuance of their ſtocke and linage. Likewiſe,if the fathers were neuer men of renowme,the children are little regarded to bee knowne. Wherefore, if wee ſpeake heere of men,we may rightly anſwere, that no man knoweth the name of his ſonne, that is aſcended vp into heauen: for wee cannot knowe the name of that which cannot bee. And therefore, if wee wil knowe the name of his ſonne that is aſcended vp into heauen, wee muſt pul away our regarde from men,and come to God, and hee wyll teache vs the name of his ſonne: For none knoweth the ſonne but the *Mat.11.27.* father. None can come vnto mee except my father drawe him. *Iohn.6.44.* And againe,praying vnto the father that hee woulde glorifie him, hee *& 17.1.5.* ſheweth wel that it is the father that giueth the name of his ſonne to bee knowne. And alſo the ſonne, who is the euerlaſting worde of the father,is one ſelfe God with the father. And howe ſhal wee come vnto the father,ſeeing hee dwelleth in a light that is vnac- *Iohn.1.1.* ceſsible? *1.Tim.6.1* For this cauſe hath hee ſent vs his ſacred woorde

by his Prophets,Apoſtles and Miniſters, yea by his own ſonne, by
whom he hath declared his name vnto vs, ſuch as wee haue heard:
& alſo therein he declareth vnto vs the name of his ſonne. And firſt
of al,he ſheweth him vnto vs,to bee almightie and eternal, when
Moſes doeth teache vs that God made al thinges in ſpeaking the
Gen.1 worde. The heauens were made by the worde of the Lord, &c. Al
Pſal.33.6 thinges were made by it, and without it was made nothing that
Iohn.1.3 was made,&c. By whome alſo hee made the worldes.

Collo.1.15 Secondly,he doth ſhewe him vnto vs,mercifull, and a redee-
16.17. mer. And al nations ſhalbe bleſſed in thy ſeede,who is Chriſt. The
Heb.a.1. Scepter ſhal not bee taken away from Iuda,nor a lawgiuer from be-
Gene.22.18. twene his feete vntil that Silo come: which ſignifieth the ſonne, or
Gala.3.8.16. Meſſias. And in Leuiticus,by the Sacrifices, which were figures of
the onely ſacrifice,by the which hee hath founde eternal redempti-
on,in offering vp himſelfe.

Thirdly hee ſheweth him a Sauiour vnto vs,when hee ſaueth
Gene.49.10. & deliuereth his people frō Egypt. For this is the angel that guided
Heb.9.12. them, who is called the Lorde : and is called the angel of God. This
Exo.13.21. name of Sauiour is wel expreſſed, when hee is called Emanuel. And
& 14.15. a childe is borne vnto vs, and a ſonne is giuen vnto vs, &c. It is alſo
Eſay.7.14. wel expreſſed in Saint Matthewe the firſt Chapter, and in Luke the
& 9.6. ſecond Chapter. Beholde an excellent and wonderful name, and
the which cannot bee comprehended, nor expreſſed as is wor-
Phil.2.9. thie. For this cauſe Saint Paule exalteth him aboue al thinges that
Iohn.5.23. may bee named. Wherefore,let vs confeſſe our ſelues brutiſhe that
wee may glorifie God our father : the which wee cannot doe, if
we contemne the ſonne. For albeit that hee hath ſo much humbled
and abaſed himſelfe, yet God hath not ceaſſed to giue him al autho-
ritie, al power, al gouernment, and to commit vnto him the ſaluati-
on of our ſoules, to the ende that whoſoeuer beleeueth in him,
Iohn.3.16. ſhould not periſh, but be ſaued by his name. And as we may vnder-
Actes.4.12. ſtād in theſe dictions, and words, God, and Ieſus, we muſt not com-
prehende the name of the father and the ſonne, but in the diuine
and euerlaſting power, in the goodneſſe, righteouſneſſe, trueth
and mercy.

5 *Euery worde of God is pure: he is a ſhielde to thoſe, that truſt in him.*

We neither wil nor can vnderſtande what God is towards vs: &
for this cauſe, when he ſpeaketh vnto vs, wee beleeue him not, nor
make account of his word, no more or leſſe then of tales and fables.
And when he offereth himſelf vnto vs to helpe vs, to defende & to
deliuer vs, we do no more truſt him then the moſt miſerable man in
the world. And albeit that he might iuſtly reiect vs, caſt vs of, con-
demne and deſtroy vs for our malice & vngratitude, yet taking pitie
vpon vs, he yeldeth himſelf vnto vs & beareth with our rudenes, &
diſſembleth & wil not know our malice and ingratitude. And for to
do this he ſpeaketh vnto vs, not in his almightie and high maieſtie,
but by ſimilitudes that are familiar: and amongſt other, for to teach
vs that when he ſpeaketh to vs, we ought greatly to praiſe his word,
and to hold it true and infallible, without any douting, & alſo that
it ſhould be our chiefeſt delight, he compareth his word vnto ſiluer
that is throughly purified & clenſed frõ al his droſſe, & whoſe good- *Pſal.12.7.*
nes & purenes may eaſily be knowne. And now the wiſe man doth *& 18.31.*
the like, ſaying, *Euery word, &c.* Not that we can find any thing, in *& 119.14.*
this worlde howe precious ſoeuer it is, that is worthy to haue the
word of God to be compared vnto him: for it ſurmounteth infinitly
& beyond reaſon, al things which are and that may be ymagined to
be excellent and precious. Alſo there is nothing in this worlde how
precious ſoeuer it is, but doth participate with the earth, & needeth *Pſal.119.21*
to be purged and clenſed frõ his droſſe and ſuperfluities: before hee *127.162.*
can be pure and cleane: but the word of God is pure and cleane of *Pro.3.13.*
it ſelfe, and neither hath nor can haue any droſſe: for it proceedeth
not from a fornace and fyning pot, but from the mouth of GOD,
which neither can, nor wil bring forth any worke, but ſhalbe ſo per-
fect as it ought to be, & wherein nothing may be amended. Wher-
fore when it is ſaid, *is pure purged*, or tryed as it were in the fire, e-
uen as we purifie and try golde or ſiluer, it is not to ſay that at any
time it hath beene intangled or mixed with any filthines or ſuper-
fluities, but only that it is vnfallible, true and faithful, and ſhoulde in
no wiſe feare to beleeue our God, when he ſpeaketh vnto vs by his
ſcripture, by his ſeruants, Prophetes, Apoſtles, Paſtours, & Doctors,

but that his worde ſhoulde be very precious and deere vnto vs, as
the worldlings make great account of gold and ſiluer, of Iewels &
precious ſtones when al thoſe thinges are throughly purged from
their ſuperfluities and filthineſſe: and ſo at the leaſt let vs giue ſo
much honour vnto our God, when it pleaſeth him to ſpeake vnto
vs, and to offer vs his gifts and ſpiritual graces, his fauour and mercy
by his worde, as do the worldlings giue vnto goldſmiths whome
they eſteeme, to bee no deceiuer: and that we may ſay with an vnfained
Pſal. 19. 8. heart with Dauid. The lawe of the Lorde is perfect, reſtoring
the ſoule, &c. If wee giue not thus much honour vnto the worde of
GOD, albeit that of it ſelfe it is purified ſiluer, wee turne the
ſame, ſo much as in vs lyeth, into braſſe, yron, and lead, yea into
droſſe, and ſo to our deſtruction. And as the worldlings reioyce, &
Pſal. 119. 14 take great delight, when they are wel furniſhed with golde and ſiluer
throughly fined, and with very precious iewels: euen ſo ought
our delight to bee in the worde of God, for to cleaue theretoo by
faith and conuerſation, ſo that wee may ſay, I haue delighted in the
way of thy ſtatutes, more then in al riches. In this ſorte, as the
riche which enioy their pleaſures, are eſteemed before the world to
Pſal. 1. 2. be happie, euen ſo ſhal wee bee happie and bleſſed before our God
when our ioy ſhal be in his word. Furthermore, when men are furniſhed
with riches, they ſo glorifie and reioice, that they perſwade
themſelues to be out of danger of their enimies, and do promiſe to
themſelues that none euil ſhal come to them. For they thinke they
haue wherewith to withſtand them and to defende themſelues, and
Pro. 10. 15. are ſtrongly fortified: as Solomon hath pronounced, the riche mans
goods are his ſtrong citie. And if they haue ſuch truſt in their riches
which are vaine and tranſitorie, by a more ſtrong reaſon, when the
euerlaſting, & the liuing God doth giue himſelf vnto vs, both himſelfe
& al his riches by his worde which indureth for euer, we muſt
wel vnderſtand & marke what he ſaith vnto vs, & to be fully aſſured
therof, without any doute: for as it is written, He is a ſhielde to thē
Pſal. 18. 31. that truſt in him. Whereunto the wiſe man agreeth in this preſent
ſentence. Wherin we are taught to feare nothing that may hurt vs:
for we haue a good ſhield for to withſtand al aduerſarie and contrary
power, & to ouerthrow & confound thē. And foraſmuch as God
is our buckler & ſhield, we are admoniſhed to ſhew our ſelues ſtrōg

and valiant. For as a buckler is not profitable in the hand of a feeble and weake child, of a ſlouthful, cowardly and fainthatted ſouldiour: euen ſo except we be ſtrong, diligent, & ſtoute, it is but in vaine that we ſhal cal God our ſhield. And therfore S. Paule doth admoniſh vs Ephe.6.10. vs, Finally, my brethren be ſtrong, in the Lord, & in the power of his might, &c. Moreouer, when it is expreſly ſaid, *to thoſe that truſt in him*, let vs vnderſtand that as the vnbeleeuing do deſpiſe God, euen ſo doth he deſpiſe & caſt them of, and giueth them vnto Sathan. For this cauſe S. Peter doth admoniſh vs to withſtand him, being ſtrõg 1. Pet.5.9. in the faith: and in this ſorte we ſhal obtaine victorie.

6 *Put nothing vnto his wordes, leaſt he reproue thee, and thou be founde a lyer.*

Moſes hauing admoniſhed the people of Iſrael to heare & to kepe the ordinances and ſtatutes that he taught them to do: for to ſhew the people what obedience, ſubmiſſion and ſtraight obſeruatiõ they ought vnto thoſe ordinances: he ſaith, Ye ſhal put nothing vnto the Deut.4.2. word, that I command you, &c. This is that which he ſheweth thẽ, that God for to try our obedience, wil not haue vs to runne by vnknowne & crooked wayes, for to runne croſſe the fieldes, to deuiſe what we ſhal thinke good: but that he wil hold vs as it were boũde and tyed wholy vnto his word, and ſhould know that the ſame is al our wiſedome, and that we muſt not bee learned for to mingle any thing with the word of God: but ſhould make this concluſion, foraſmuch as God hath ſpoken vnto vs, it is not lawful therefore for mortal men to enterlace any thing therein, whatſoeuer: but ſhould be cõtented to haue heard ſuch a maiſter. But there is nothing worſe kept then is this: for men thinke alwaies to haue in them ſome reaſon, and to be able ynough to gouerne themſelues. Nowe this is a great pride, when men wil diſcerne betwene good and euil, yea after their owne fantaſie: & contrarily God wil be eſteemed alone wiſe for vs, and that we ſhoulde be as poore ſheepe, hearing the voice of their ſhepheards, and that we ſhoulde forget this ableneſſe that the vnbeleuing ymagine to haue: that we ſhould know, Oh, there is nothing in vs but error & fooliſhnes, there is nothing but vanitie & lying in vs, vntil that God haue taught vs. And as when it is ſaid: Ye ſhal put nothing thereto, this is for to ſhewe vs that God only is

Iam.2.10.

wiſe, and hath authoritie to rule vs, and ſhould learne to holde this ſimplicitie: to wit, that we ſhould be only wiſe for to obey what he commandeth vs, that he may haue al preheminence: euen ſo whē he forbiddeth, to take any thing frō this word, it is not without cauſe. For if we wil partly and in ſomethings obey God, and notwithſtanding would exempt our ſelues from what we thought good, behold ſuch a partaking ſhould neuer bee receiued, as there are many which wil bee content to obey that which ſhal not bee too grieuous and ſore for them: but if there be once a thing that troubleth them, they ſtraightwayes deſire to be diſcharged, & do contemne the ſame. But whoſoeuer keepeth al the law, if he breake but one point, yet is hee giltie of al. Heereunto agreeth the wiſe man: for hauing commēded the word of God vnto vs, in attributing theretoo purenes & faythfulnes, dignitie and excellencie, ſaying that it is purified as golde or ſiluer is purified: hauing alſo attributed vnto God, that hee is our force, defender and protector, ſaying, that he is their ſhielde that put their truſt in him: for to ſhew vs, that this only purenes & excellenlēcie, ought to ſuffice vs, & that we ſhould ymagine no other truth, nor to labor to faine any other excellent thing beſides this worde: and alſo for to ſhew vnto vs, that this worde is ſo excellent and precious, that it wil not ſuffer any mixture: and that thereby God certifieth vs ſufficiently of the helpe, defence and protection that hee giueth vnto them which receiue this worde with aſſurance, he admoniſheth vs ſaying, *Put nothing vnto his wordes*. Hee ſaieth not, and take nothing from them: albeit that we muſt vnderſtande, that as we ought to put nothing theretoo, ſo muſt wee not alſo take any thing from it: but the wiſe man woulde defende, and chiefly forbid that wherein wiſe, holy and deuout men in their owne ſight doe moſt reioyce, and challenge merite: as Monkes and Nunnes, which bragge of their workes of ſupererogation, by the which they perſwade themſelues that they merite and deſerue both for themſelues and for other, for that, that they doe more (as they thinke) then is commanded them. But this their bragging and boaſting is againſt their owne conſcience. For if they haue ſeruantes or maydes which doe more then they are commaunded, they wil ſay, that they are ſeruantes for the Deuill, becauſe they doe more then they are commanded. Whereuppon followeth, that ſo farre it is of that by their workes of ſupererogation (as they cal them) they deſerue any thing of God, that rather, they forſake and renounce him for their Lord and maiſter, and doe auouche the Deuil for their maiſter, whome they ſerue as may be iudged by their own mouths. Therefore if the wiſe man forbiddeth that which is praiſe worthy before men, which forget their duetie, by a more ſtrong reaſon let vs vnderſtande that hee cloſely forbiddeth that which is euil without contradiction and gaineſaying. For albeit that al men by their natural corruption doe take from the words of God, in not giuing vnto him perfect obedience, in not truſting onely in him altogither, yet there is no man whoſe conſcience doeth not condemne, that it is ill done to diminiſhe and take from the wordes of God. The wiſeman therfore laboureth to make vs forſake our own wiſedom, the which is both a foule folly, and alſo deteſtable & abhominable before God, and would not haue vs to mingle it with the worde of God, which is ſo pure and cleane, ſo faythful and true. By this foule wiſedom and fooliſh rebellions and ouerweening, we iudge that the word of God is but a ſmal matter, that it is too ſimple & plaine, and that it is of no great ſhew or apparance. And therſore by this wiſedome, eyther we deſpiſe & refuſe the word of God, or for to helpe him, or for to giue it more goodly ſhew, we bring in our deuotions and fantaſies, our traditions and cuſtomes, thinking in this ſort to haue a more ſtrong ſtaye, then if we did ſtand to the ſimple and plaine worde of God, and to be better armed and fenced, then if we were contented that God only ſhould be our buckler and ſhielde. In which doing we do outragiouſly miſuſe our God, who only is moſt good & moſt mighty, and treade vnder feete holy things and precious pearles, to wit, his word ſo excellently purified. And in this manner wee make our ſelues exceeding giltie and reproueable, not before the wiſe worldlings, who in this matter doe wel allowe vs, but before God, who knoweth the heartes, and ſearcheth the raines. And alſo hee wil not faile nor miſſe to reprooue thoſe which are ſo arrogant to put to his worde: for euen when they put and adde too, they doe then take from it, not yelding him the honour, that belongeth vnto him, neither rendering the obediéce they owe vnto him. For there are none of thoſe braggers but wil omitte many things, and ſinne fowly alſo in diuers things. And thoſe that we ſhal eſteeme the moſt holy and moſt deuout, are commonly the fouleſt and moſt ſtincking, ſo that we may place them in the number of them which are reprooued & rebuked, in the Pſal. 50. ver. 16. And alſo the wiſe man placeth thē in the like order, ſaying, *leaſt hee reproue thee:* adding theretoo the cauſe, & *thou be found a lyer*. For it is aſmuch as if he ſaid, God only is truth, and his word is only true: wherfore thou muſt truſt vnto it, and not preſume to adde vnto his word. For albeit that for a certaine time he diſſemble & wincke at it, yet at the laſt he wil reproue thee, and conuince thee of lying and falſhoode. For hee that preſumeth to adde vnto this pure and vnfallible truth, is a lyer: not only becauſe he putteth forth trifles for to obſcure and darken the truth, but alſo that he reproueth God of lying, and ſo much as in him lyeth doth make the trueth nothing worthe, when hee hath mingled therwith, the fantaſies and inuentions of his owne head. And thus, he rightly deſerueth to be reproued and rebuked, yea with ſore and grieuous puniſhment: wherewith the lyers are threatened.

Pſal. 5. 7.

7 *Two things haue I requyred of thee: deny me them not, before I dye.*

Albeit that he which ſpeaketh heere, hath called himſelf brutiſh, confeſſing what he was of himſelf, yet we ſee here that he was very wiſe and wel learned, when he knew that it was to God, to whome he ought to direct his prayers, in confeſſing him to be the authour, and alſo giuer of al good things, and that no where elſe we can finde nothing that is any thing worth or obtaine it. And knowing this, he ſheweth himſelfe very diſcreete, when hee directeth himſelfe vnto God, who hath promiſed to helpe and to ſuccour thoſe which ſhall require him in truth that he wil heare them, giuing them according vnto their requeſtes when time requireth it, and as ſhalbe expedient. The which promiſe is encloſed in the couenant that the Lorde made with Abraham And in performing of this promiſe, hee hath prouided for the generation of Abraham, for to deliuer them from their bondage and afflictions: he ſent Ioſeph before thē into Egypt, for to feede them in the time of famine. When they groned and lamented vnder the tyrannie of Pharao, God remembred this couenant, and prouided for them a deliuerer: And not only then, but alſo in al their neceſſities: when they cryed vnto God in ſure truſt, he ſuc-

Gen. 12. 33.
& 13. 14. 15
& 17. 7. 8.
Gen. 45. 7. 8.
Exo. 2. 23.
24. & 3. 4.

coured thẽ at their neede, as we may ſee in the holy hiſtories, & by the care that he had to ſend thẽ his ſeruãts the Prophets. The which Dauid doeth wel acknowledge. The wiſe man then looking & truſting in this couenant, doth direct his requeſt vnto God, ſaying vnto him, *Two things haue I required of thee.* When he ſaith, I haue required, and that againe he requireth the ſame: he ſheweth that he was neither cold nor madde, neither light nor vnpatient to looke for the helpe and aſſiſtance of God, but that his hearte was feruent and through great and inuincible conſtancie he perſeuered in prayer & patience, looking for his good pleaſure, nothing diſtruſting but that he ſhould obtaine his requeſt: as he doth wel ſhew, when he is not grieued nor wearied to cõtinew his prayer: the which he could not do, if he diſtruſted God. And therewith by this continuation hee ſheweth that he beleueth and knoweth how God only is the author of al goodnes, and howe we muſt not ſeeke for that which is profitable or neceſſary for vs elſewhere, or of any other: and alſo this word *thee*, doeth ſhew it. For it is aſmuch as if hee ſaide, for to obtaine whatſoeuer I ſhal need, I ſhould not runne vnto the creatures, how holy and worthy ſoeuer they be: but as I beleue that thou art Creatour of al things, euen ſo I beleeue that of thy power, goodneſſe, and prouidence, thou onely gouerneſt thy creatures, giuing vnto them, whatſoeuer thou knoweſt to bee expedient vnto them: and therefore, it is thou only, who haſt the power and the wil to helpe, and to graunt my requeſt, that I haue alreadie required. And as hee doeth expreſſe, his requeſt tendeth to obtaine twoo thinges: alſo twoo things chiefly are very neceſſarie for vs, for this preſent life: to wit, an holy and pure conuerſation, and riches for to ſuſtaine the outwarde man, that wee may be ſtrong for to do our office. It may ſeeme after a ſorte, that Iacob making his vowe vnto God demandeth of him theſe twoo thinges, that is to ſay holy conuerſation, when he ſaith, If the Lord God wil be with me, & keepe me in the way that I ſhal walk: & wil giue me bread to eate, & clothes to put on, &c. True it is, he deſireth the helpe, defence and protection of God, but vnder the ſame wee may comprehend holy conuerſation, for it followeth the helpe of God. Nowe the wiſe man knewe very well that theſe two things are neceſſatie for vs in this temporal and tranſitory life: and therefore he requireth, ſaying,

Pſal. 22. 5. 6. & 34. 5. 6. 7. 8.

Gene. 28. 20.

Deny me not them, before I dye. When after hauing ſayde, I haue required, he addeth, Deny me them not. He continueth ſtil his requeſt, not by diſtruſt or doubte that he hath, howe God will not heare him, but rather for to ſignifie and confeſſe that al riches both temporal and ſpiritual come from God alone, and that if he ſhoulde deny them vnto vs, there is none that can doe vs any good, neither can obtaine any thing healthful for vs. The holy fathers did wel vnderſtande this: as they doe declare, when they doe, as it were importunatly complaine of the abſence of God, & that they demande, hee woulde ariſe, and woulde ſhewe his face, and that hee woulde not hide himſelfe, nor be farre from them. He ſheweth alſo, that hee prayeth with an earneſt affection, without fayning, and that he feeleth trulie and indeede howe he had greate neede that God ſhoulde aſſiſt and helpe him. For alſo euery man of himſelfe, wanteth whatſoeuer is neceſſarie for him: but there are none but the faithful which feele it truly: and therefore they pray with a true affection of hearte. Foraſmuch as it is neceſſarie for vs in this life, to walke holily, and to haue victualls and foode: and that after our deceaſe and departure we cannot giue remedie, and amende that which we haue done amiſſe, and that the dead do nothing participate with the liuing: *Eccle.9.6.* Therfore the wiſe man requireth that God would graunt vnto him that which he requireth, *before he die*. Wherein wee ought to learne, that wee muſt not eate our bread with ydleneſſe, but to ſpende our time in good workes, the which wee ſhoulde labour to obtaine by praiers and requeſtes: for of our ſelues wee can doe nothing: *Phil.2.13.* It is God that worketh both the wil & the deede, euen of his good pleaſure. And becanſe that the dayes of man are ſhort & that he vaniſheth away as doeth the graſſe, and that there is none that knoweth certainly either the day or the houre of his departing out of this life, we are taught that if we wil do wel before we dye, wee muſt not deferre nor put of from day to day, but with al care and diligence to giue our ſelues vnto goodnes, what age ſoeuer we haue: and that in working, wee ſhoulde not chalenge any thing vnto our free wil, or free choice, as if we had power of our ſelues to gouerne vs: but we muſt confeſſe that it is the grace and mercie of God that guideth vs: as the wiſe man doeth ſhewe vs in this requeſt, by the which he aſketh twoo things, the which he now declareth, ſaying, 8 *Remoue farre from me vanitie and lyes: giue mee not pouertie, nor riches: feede mee with foode, meete for mine eſtate.*

When he ſaith that God hath created man vnto his likeneſſe & ymage, we ought to vnderſtande that man at the beginning of his creation was pure and cleane, was wiſe, vpright, and true: as S. Paul alſo doeth giue vs the ſame to vnderſtande, hauing admoniſhed vs, to mortifie our earthly members, &c. He woulde haue vs to put on the newe man, which is renewed by the knowledge of God after the ymage of him that hath created him, &c. And for to ſhewe vs howe we ſhould conſerue this ymage in the knowledge of God, he doth admoniſh vs: Nowe therfore as the elect of God, holy and beloued, put on tender mercy, kindneſſe, humbleneſſe of minde, meekeneſſe, long ſuffring, &c. And according heereunto, hee exhorteth vs, to caſt of, concerning the conuerſation in time paſt, the olde man, which is corrupt through the deceiuable luſtes, &c. But men by their pride & ingratitude are turned away from this knowledge, and haue contemned it, as a vaine thing: and in ſteade that they were made excellent of God, they are concerning themſelues as beaſtes: and in place that God had made them vpright, they haue ſought many inuentions, by the which they haue caſt of the vprightneſſe and excellencie, that conſiſted in righteouſnes, wiſedom, holineſſe and trueth. And beeing thus ſpoiled, in ſteede that they ſhoulde haue humbled themſelues, and bee confounded and aſhamed, they haue thought themſelues to be wiſe: they haue cōmended themſelues as if they were ſaintes, righteous and true: but they are become vaine, fooliſh, yea madde and lyers: ſo that it is not without cauſe why the ſcripture maketh diuers complaints of it. And in this ſort they haue throwne themſelues into death, from the which they in no wiſe of themſelues riſe againe, neither alſo wil bee raiſed: for it is to the ſame that their corrupt nature doeth wholy tende, and take his delight. Nowe becauſe we deſire not death, but do feare it, and woulde gladly ſhunne it, and cannot of our ſelues, therefore it is neceſſarie for vs to aſke of God, that he woulde purifie and clenſe vs from that which bringeth vs death: that is to ſay, frō our ſinnes

Gene. 1. 27.

Col. 3. 5. 10. 12

Ephe. 4. 22.

Eccle. 3. 18. & 7. 30.

Pſal. 4. 3. & 39. 6. & 62. 10. & 116. 11.

and miſdeedes: (the which the wiſe man comprehendeth vnder vanity and lying) and for the which we pray with him: *Remoue farre from me,&c.* Wherin firſt of al he ſheweth vs, that if we wil truely pray vnto God, we muſt confeſſe our ſinnes vnto him: as doeth the wiſe man, requiring that it might pleaſe God to remoue farre from him vanitie and lying. And in this maner he confeſſeth that hee is brutiſh, and that if God did not take mercy vpon him, he ſhould be *Rom.1.23.* nothing but vaine, fooliſh, and to change the glorie of the incorruptible God, into the ſimilitude of the ymage of a corruptible mã. The which conteineth lying: for being ydolaters, we do falſly vſurpe the name of God, giuing the ſame vnto ydols. And for this cauſe alſo, the wiſe man hath ioined vanitie and lying together, & maketh but one thing of them both, the which is the firſt of the twoo thinges that hee putteth into his requeſt. And alſo it is good reaſon that we ſhould be careful firſt of al to ſerue God, and to yeld vnto him only, the honor and the glory which belongeth vnto him. And the ſame wel to beginne, we muſt abhorre ydolatrie: the which is heere ſig-
Eſay.41.44. nified by *vanitie & lying*. And alſo the Prophets do cal ydols, vani-
29.& 44. 20 tie and lying: though they vſe not the like wordes: yet thoſe which
Iere.2.5.11. they vſe, are of like ſignification. Nowe it is not without cauſe that
& 10.3. 14. vnder vanitie, (which with vs, is ydolatrie) we ſhould comprehend
15.& 14.22. al ſinnes: for it doth beget them and bring them forth. In al ages, &
& 51.17.18 amongſt al nations we haue ſeene, and may yet ſtil ſee, that the ydo-
Rom.1.24. laters (euen thoſe which are the deuouteſt) do giue themſelues vnto diſhoneſtie, filthineſſe & vncleanneſſe, vnto oppreſſion and crueltie, euen with an vnbrideled luſt and deſire. And the Prophets alſo doe make great complaintes therof, and doe reproche the ydolaters that they haue forſaken God, and that they haue their handes full of blood. If then wee wil beginne earneſtly to ſerue God, wee muſt beginne firſt to hate ydolatrie, folowing the doctrine that Iacob
Gene.35.2. gaue to his houſhold, and God in the beginning of his lawe. Not-
Exo.20.3.4. withſtanding we might ſay that vanitie is the corruption and wickedneſſe wherein we are borne, and that it is rooted in vs from our conception: the which vanitie, if wee yelde vnto, and obey, bringeth foorth his fruite: to wit, lying, eyther in wordes or deedes, or falſehoode. The which fruite man bringeth foorth to the diſhonour of God, and hurte of his neighbours: to wit, when hee is become an

hypocrite and ydolater: afterwardes vaine ſwearing, blaſpheming,
periurie, manifeſt contemning and ſcorning of the trueth, and holy
Religion: when he is become a falſe witneſſe, ſlandering, flattering,
and a taleteller, and to counterfait & to ſhadow things to deceiue:
and alſo when he doth not vnto his neighbor as he would be done
vnto. And thus, the wiſe man deſireth to be purified from al the inward
and outward tranſgreſſions that hee ſhall commit againſt the
lawe of God. And becauſe that euil wordes corrupt good maners, 1.Cor.15.33
we haue neede not onely that vanitie which is in vs, and falſhoode
that wee commit, ſhould be remoued far from vs, but alſo that wee
ſhould flye and auoide al euil and naughtie tongues, and all wicked
men in their trades, and that we ſhould aſke of God to giue vs fellowſhip
of wholeſome words and holy conuerſation. The ſeconde
thing, he requireth, is, *giue mee not pouertie, &c.* After that the
wiſe man hath required what is neceſſarie for the life of the ſoule,
he aſketh ſuch things as are neceſſarie for the body, the which wee
may lawfully demande. For albeit that Ieſus Chriſt doeth ſhewe vs
by diuers argumentes and reaſons that wee ought not to care for Mat.6.25.
foode nor other corporal neceſſities of this life, and that hee doeth
admoniſhe vs to ſeeke firſt of al the kingdome of God & the righteouſneſſe
thereof: yet neuertheleſſe hee doeth not thereby forbid
that we ſhoulde not aſke and ſeeke for our corporal neceſſaries: otherwiſe
he would not teach vs to pray vnto God our father for to
giue vs our dayly bread: neither alſo ſhould any man haue neede to
til & plowe the earth, to plant, to ſowe, to gather & lay vp in ſellers
& garners, the fruites that the earth hath brought forth. It is then
lawful for vs to aſke things at Gods hãds, that are neceſſarie for our
bodies: as we haue ſeene heeretofore howe Iacob hath demanded
them: but yet it muſt bee done without care, and without diſtruſt:
and that we ſhould know that as the earth is the Lords, ſo doth the
ſame obey him, bringing forth his fruites according as he commandeth
it: and thus, we can haue no foode, but ſo much as it pleaſeth
God to giue vs therof, yea though we labour. For he which laboureth,
or he that watereth, is nothing: but God that giueth the increaſe.
Wherfore we muſt knowe that it is not onely laweful for vs 1.Cor.3.7.
to aſke and ſeeke for our bodily neceſſities, but alſo it is neceſſarie,
(in humbling our ſelues and confeſſing that all riches come vnto

vs from the bountifulneſſe and liberalitie of out heauenly father)
we ſhoulde not be vnthankful,but that without diſſimulation wee
ſhould giue him thankes therfore. Nowe that wee may rightly aſke
and ſeeke for ſuch thinges of him,as are neceſſarie for vs,wee muſt
not folow the deſires of our fleſh,the which is vnſatiable,but to cōtent
our ſelues with mediocrite,as the wiſe man doeth ſhewe vs,in
this preſent text,the which conteineth three members. The firſt is,
he requireth that God woulde not giue him pouertie. Wherein
there ſeemeth to be an abſurditie. For albeit that he confeſſeth (as
it may ſeeme)that pouertie is giuen of God, yet is it there refuſed,
where it ought to be precious,if it be a gift of God: and alſo to conſider
howe God hath alwaies had the poore in great eſtimation, &
Mat.5.3. hath exalted many of them; and alſo Ieſus Chriſt ſaith that to them
& 25.40. belongeth the kingdome of heauen: likewiſe hee calleth them his
brethren. Heereunto we anſwere, that as a childe ſaith to his father
Gen.3.17.18 giue me no rods: euen ſo the wiſe man calleth pouertie,the gift of
Leui.26.14. God,and requireth that God woulde not giue him pouertie. And
Deut.28.15 this is becauſe he knoweth that pouertie is a rodde,yea a curſe that
Prou.6.9. God ſendeth in the world for the ſinnes thereof. And albeit that we
muſt patiently beare pouertie,when God giueth it, and neuer the
more to thinke that God hateth vs, no more then a good and wiſe
father hateth his childe, when he giueth him roddes: as we are well
taught it,when God by his woorde ſo diligently commendeth the
poore,as hath beene alledged ſometimes. And although that Saint
Paule ſaith,Rom.8.35. That neither hunger nor nakedneſſe ſhal ſeparate
vs from the loue of Chriſt: and that in pouertie we muſt neither
be diſcouraged nor deſpaire: yet is it lawful to auoide the ſame,
by the meanes that God teacheth vs by his woorde, the which are
Gene.2.15 labour,and prayer. For albeit that labour is ordeined of God, yet
& 3.17. ſhal it not profite any thing,except God himſelfe doe bleſſe it, the
Ephe.4.28. which we muſt obtaine by prayer: as he doth teache vs, when hee
2.Theſ.3.6. ſayth,Call vpon me in the day of thy trouble,and I wil deliuer thee.
Pſal.50.15. Whereunto the wiſe man nowe agreeth,when he runneth to God,
beſeeching him,that he woulde *not giue him pouertie*. Thus praying,
he requireth priuily that God woulde graunt him grace that he
might be able to labour,and that he woulde bleſſe his trauaile, the
which otherwiſe,ſhoulde be vaine and of no profite. Wee ſee then

there is no abſurditie in the requeſt of the wiſe: but that it is laweful for vs to make the like requeſt: as alſo Ieſus Chriſt doeth teache *Mat.6.11.* vs, when he woulde haue vs to aſke our dayly bread. The ſeconde is, hee aſketh that God woulde not giue him *riches*. Wherein it might ſeeme at the firſt ſight, that hee woulde rebuke riches, and reiect them, as if they were euil and hurtful: but if his intent were ſuch, it ſhoulde be euil: ſeing that God hath created riches, and giueth them to whome he thinketh good for to make them to proſper: as he did to Abraham and other Patriarkes, to Dauid and other kings, to Iob and to diuers other: and alſo the ſcripture calleth riches a bleſſing: as hath beene already alledged diuers times. Therefore it is not the minde of the wiſe man to refuſe riches, as euill things: for in ſo doing, hee ſhoulde do iniurie to God: but the wiſe man did diſtruſt himſef, and knewe that he was of the ſame nature, that were many more which had abuſed, and did abuſe the riches of the world in diuers ſortes, to the diſhonour of God, to their owne hurte, and alſo the contempt and hurt of their neighbours. For the riche men of the world do often abuſe their riches vnto ydolatrie: for the which to maintaine they wil ſpare nothing: as may be ſeene in the making of the molten Calfe, and when it is ſaide that the ymages of the heathen are but ſiluer and golde (albeeit it is *Exo.32.3.* ſaide for to ſhewe the vnprofitableneſſe and the vanitie of ydolls, *Pſal.115.4.* and the fooliſhneſſe of ydolaters) and Solomon built an high place *1.King.11.7.* for Camos the abhominable ydol of the Moabites, &c. *& 12.28.* And Ieroboam made twoo golden calues. And nowe alſo and at all times wee may ſee amongeſt the Papiſtes, howe the riche doe ſpare nothing for to mainteine their ſeruice, which they cal diuine. They abuſe riches alſo vnto their owne hurte, when they diſtruſt GOD, and put their truſt in their riches. For ſo doing, they depriue themſelues of the kingdome of God, as the riche haue done. *Mat.19.23.* Finally, they abuſe them, to the contempt and hurte of their neighbour. *Luke.12,19.* For they care not to helpe them, as the twoo foreſaide: but rather *& 16.19.* do oppreſſe them. S. Paule hath comprehended theſe three abuſes, *Iames.2.6.* from the which he woulde haue the riche (without forſaking their *& 5.4.* riches) to turne away. Therefore when the wiſe man ſaith, *1.Tit.6.9.10 17.18.19.*

Giue mee not riches, &c. Hee doeth not condemne them, but hee proteſteth that hee hath not ſet his hearte vppon them: and

pray-

Pſal.119.36. prayeth vnto God, as Dauid did, Encline my heart vnto thy teſtimonies, and not to couetouſneſſe. For except that God himſelfe giue Ierem.6.13. helpe, it is an ordinarie thing to be giuen vnto couetouſneſſe, euen from the leaſt vnto the moſt.

The thirde is, that hee requireth that God woulde *feede him* Mat.6.11. *with the bread meete for his eſtate.* Wherein hee deſireth according to that which Ieſus Chriſt doeth teache vs to ſay, Giue vs this day our daily bread. And therewith wee muſt bee contented, as Saint Paule doeth teache vs. Wherein wee are taught, that euery man ſhoulde carefully and faithfully imploy himſelfe and labour in his vocation: otherwiſe he ſhal not bee maintained with *the bread meete for his eſtate:* that is to ſay, of the foode that God hath prepared and appointed for him: but of the bread of other men: and ſo, he ſhal exceede. For heere, the *ſtate* is not taken after the maner of worldlinges, who commit greate abuſes for to maintaine their ſtate. The worde that is heere tranſlated, *ſtate*, commeth of a verbe which ſignifieth, to ordeine and appoint. And ſo, when it is ſaide,

Maintaine mee with the bread meete for my ſtate: it is not to ſay, according as I thinke to belong vnto mee, becauſe of my highneſſe and power, or of worthineſſe and excellencie: but as the bread that wee eate iuſtly, wee cal ours, becauſe God doeth giue it vs, and maketh it ours by his grace: euen ſo doe wee cal the bread that God ordeineth for vs, the bread of our ſtate, and of the which we may iuſtly and lawfully eate without doing hurte to other. Now by the diſcourſe of the former wordes, wee may ſee, howe the wiſe man hath aſked of God holy and cleane conuerſation, and wealth wherewithal to liue, which are twoo thinges very neceſſarie for this preſent life: as hath beene handled, in the 7. verſe. For if our heartes bee purified from vanitie, and our mouthes clenſed from lying tales, as the wiſe man deſireth, the reſt of the actions and workes of man wil bee pure and cleane. And alſo that the wiſe man hath deſired holy conuerſation, he ſheweth, by the reaſons following, when he ſaith:

9 *Leaſt I be ful, and denye thee, and ſay, who is the Lord? or leaſt I be poore, and ſteale, and take the name of my God in vaine.*

According as the wiſe man was the ſonne of Adam, hee was of the ſame vicious and corrupted nature, aſwel as other, the which he knewe wel ynough: and therefore diſtruſting himſelfe, he feared leaſt he ſhoulde fal into the enormities which are dayly committed by the word, whereby the wrath and anger of God is prouoked, and ſo come to deſtruction. Nowe hee ſawe that the riche men were alwaies ful, and filled themſelues: that is to ſay, that they enioyed, ſo much as they coulde, their worldly and carnal delightes and pleaſures, and wallowed in filthineſſe, pollutions, and abhominations, with an vnbrideled luſt, in taking their delightes and pleaſures, in ſleeping and reſting, in gluttonie and drunkennes, in whoredome & committing other ſhameful actes. For the which things God made his wrath to fal vpon them, ſending a flood of waters vppon all the earth: making fire and brimſtone to raine from heauen vppon Sodome: ſodainely killing of the riche glutton (Luke the 12.) who boaſted of his abundance: and condemning the riche into hell, of whome Luke ſpeaketh in his 16. Chapter. When theſe men were at their eaſe, becauſe of the abundance of wealth and riches they had, therefore they made no account of any admonitions, declarations, and threatenings: as may be knowne in that that they amended not their liues, when Noe, the Ambaſſador of righteouſnes, condemned them by building of the Arke: and when the Zodomites dayly afflicted, the ſoule of righteous Lot: alſo when poore Lazarus ful of ſores, lay at the rich mans gate. In this manner they denyed God by deede: & though they had not at al opened their mouthes, yet had they in great contẽpt & ſcorning ſaid at the leaſt in their harts, *who is the Lord?* Whereunto Iob agreeth, where hee accuſeth the riche which ſay vnto god, depart frõ vs, for we wil none of the knowledge of thy wayes: and Eſay, Woe to thoſe dreamers, which hide their counſel from the Lord: & ſay, who ſeeth vs? &c. Who ſaith, let him haſten his worke. For this interrogation, *Who is the Lorde?*

*Iob.*21.14.15
*Eſa.*29.15.16.
& 5.19.

is aſmuch as negation: to wit, that there is no Lorde. The which Ephe.5.5. negation agreeth wel with the riche of this worlde, that are coue- Col.3.5. tous: for they are ydolaters. And foraſmuch as they are ydolaters, they denye that there is a Lorde, if it bee not by wordes, yet it is with heart and deede, when they place their wealth and felicitie in riches which are of no continuance. And therefore we may vnderſtande that it is not without cauſe that Ieſus Chriſt doeth pro- Luke.6.24. nounce woe, and that Saint Paule doth depriue them of the king- 1.Cor.6.10. dome of heauen. Therfore when man, which is left vnto himſelf, is ſo vnreaſonable, that for tranſitorie and vaine riches he wil deny the euerlaſting and almightie God, and looſe his kingdome, it is not without cauſe why the wiſe man requireth of God, giue mee not riches. Hee ſawe alſo that the poore did ſuffer much in this worlde. For they haue nothing wherwith to ſuſtaine themſelues, neither do they finde any that wil helpe their need, as they would gladly finde ſome. And becauſe they ſet more ſtore by their panches and bellies, then by the lawe of God, which ſaith, thou ſhalt not ſteale, they forget this lawe, and giue themſelues vnto ſtealing, labouring to perſwade themſelues it is laweful to take ſomething where they can finde it. I ſay expreſly, labouring, and not beleeuing. For if they beleeued that it were lawful to robbe, they woulde not hide themſelues: and alſo when they ſhoulde be demanded, they would freely confeſſe the theeuerie and robberie: but to couer themſelues they are faine to bee forſworne, taking the name of God in vaine. The which the wiſe man feared, ſhould happen vnto him, as he doth declare. And albeit hee addeth not, that it is in vaine, yet it neither ought nor can be vnderſtoode otherwiſe, then to ſay the truth. For commonly theeues are more ready to ſweare falſly, then to ſpeake trueth. And alſo, foraſmuch as God willeth and commandeth that we ſhould ſweare by his name, when we haue neede, therefore the wiſe man woulde not feare to take the name of his God, if it were not in vaine. Beſides this, let vs learne twoo things. The firſt is, That when the wiſe man feareth to bee poore, leaſt hee ſhoulde ſteale, and to be periured: he teacheth poore men to require of God patience and a contented minde, that they may forbeare to ſteale: & that this is the principall, that they may beware from taking the name of God in vaine. For as God wil not holde him innocent, that taketh his name in vaine, euen ſo theeues ſhal not inherite the kingdome of heauen. And thus the robbers haue not onely men againſt them, but alſo they fal into the handes of the liuing God, the which is an horrible and ſeareful thing. The ſecond, that the rich are admoniſhed to open their handes and their bowels vnto their poore brethren: as we haue diuers inſtructions thereof in the ſcripture, as wel in the olde as newe Teſtament, which haue beene ſometimes alledged before: let them be careful to helpe their neceſsities, to the ende that they giue none occaſion that the name of God bee blaſphemed, neither that their neighbours ſhould be ſpoyled & robbed: but ſo much as they can, let them exerciſe mercy to the ende that ſo muche as in them lyeth they may ſaue both the bodies and ſoules of the poore. And as the riche ought to behaue themſelues after this ſorte towardes the poore, euen ſo ought the wiſe in like caſe to doe vnto the ignorant.

1. Cor. 6. 11

Heb. 10. 31.

10 *Accuſe not a ſeruant vnto his maiſter, leaſt he curſe thee, when thou haſt offended.*

Wee ſay commonly, that wee muſt not adde to, or encreaſe his affliction that is already afflicted. And although wee ſhoulde or ought to vnderſtande this ſame naturally, yet are we ſo euil, that we reſiſt that which wee knowe to be our natural duetie. Becauſe of this malice, God for to bring vs vnto amendmēt, or if we will not be corrected, for to make vs the more giltie and vnexcuſable, doeth giue vs commandements, whereby he doth ſhew vs that we ſhould not afflict the afflicted, but doth forbid it vs with threatnings. But there are no commandements nor threatninges that can hinder or let many to delight to trouble the miſerable: as the flatterers, ſlaunderers, and tale carriers who becauſe they may bee the better welcome, wil labour by their falſe tongues, to ſting and to make poore ſeruants and ſlaues to bee hated of their maiſters, who are ſharpe enough otherwiſe, yea but too cruel: and wil tel ſuch tales without knowledge of any faulte: ſauing that by a ſiniſter iudgement they

Exo. 22. 21
22. 23, 24.

wil count ſome ſmal and light thing for a fault, which is not worth the ſpeaking of: or els of ſet malice they interprete ſome thing euil which is not ſo of it ſelfe, or at the leaſt wiſe is tollerable: or els, if a man make a fault, it may be ignorantly. The wiſe man woulde not haue vs like vnto theſe people, as hee very plainely ſheweth vs, ſaying,

Accuſe not a ſeruant vnto his maiſter. And this that he ſaith of the ſeruant (who was ſometimes in a miſerable ſtate in reſpect of the worlde) we muſt obſerue towards al perſons which are in the power or in the ſubiection of an other. For albeit that we haue no ſuch ſeruants, yet the doctrine ceaſſeth not, but to appertaine vnto vs: and in obſeruing of it, we muſt adde nothing vnto the worde of God. For it is conteined vnder the cõmandement, Thou ſhal beare no falſe witneſſe againſt thy neighbour: and it teacheth vs to walke in loue, the which couereth a multitude of ſinnes, as we haue ſeen. *Pro.10.12* It is patient, it beareth the infirmities of our neighbors: ſo far is it of *2.Cor.13.4.* that it giueth affliction vpon affliction, or hath an euil tongue, for to torment him that ſeemeth to be at peace. Such charitie is cõmanded vs, not onely in the new Teſtament, but alſo in the olde: euen alſo towards our enimies: *Exo.23.4.5.* by a more ſtrong reaſon thẽ, towards thoſe which nothing labour to hurt vs, we muſt be pitiful and merciful: or at the leaſt wiſe, that we procure thẽ not any trouble, by our accuſations, tales, ſlanders, or flatterings. For if we behaue our ſelues otherwiſe, we ſhal be greatly giltie for the wrong that wee ſhal doe them, and ſhal giue them occaſion to curſe vs, for the fault wee ſhal commit againſt them: as the wiſe man doeth expreſſe it ſaying,

Leſt he curſe thee when thou haſt offended, The which is done when the afflicted complaine of them which oppreſſe them: for in *Deut.15.9* crying out vpon, and complaining of the oppreſſours, is as much as if they curſed thẽ. Now God heareth the crie of ſuch afflicted, whereof it followeth, that hee counteth that which is doone and committed againſt the miſerable poore, for ſinne: of the which number were chiefly the ſeruants and ſlaues, the which were handeled worſe then beaſtes. For this cauſe the wiſe man ſetteth them foorth, & would haue them to be borne with al, & their imperfections and weakeneſſes to be diſſembled, rather then to cauſe them to be euil intreated through tales and flatteries. Yet notwithſtanding if the miſerable (as it is their cuſtome for the greateſt number) doe commit wickedneſſe and vngodlineſſe to the diſhonour of God, to the ſlaunder and detriment of their neighbours, we ſhould not then holde our peace, nor feare their curſings, but to accuſe them according to the order that Ieſus Chriſte hath appointed. Moreouer *Mat.18.15* let vs note, that albeit the wiſe man doth threaten the accuſers of the miſerable for their curſing, yet doth he not allowe that we ſhoulde curſe, though alſo a man were accuſed wrongfully. Hee knewe wel enough that Ioſeph a ſlaue in Egypt, had not curſed his maiſters *Gen.39* wife, though ſhe had accuſed him falſely. Dauid being a poore fugitiue, did not curſe thoſe which accuſed him vnto Saul, but ſaued *Pſa.109.3.4* himſelfe as hee might: and alſo prayed for them. Hee therfore doth not allowe curſinges, but he reproueth the vnpatiencie of the miſerable, which knowe not that it is God which raiſeth vp accuſers againſt them, for to trie their pacience, and to bring them vnto the knowledge of their faults, that they might come vnto amendment: and knowing that they haue wel deſerued to be accuſed, not onely before men, but alſo before God, they require pardō of their faults. Therefore if wee bee miſerable, and that it pleaſeth God, to raiſe vp againſt vs ſuch people as doe deſire nothing but to ſtaine vs, for to make vs yet more miſerable, euen to deſtroy vs, yet let vs not for al that vſe curſings, but let vs followe that which Ieſus Chriſt teacheth vs, *Mat.5.44* concerning loue towards our enimies, and alſo his example therein. For when he was accuſed, he curſed not, but ſtoode like a ſheepee not opening his mouth before his ſhearer. Finally, let vs note, that as the ſeruants are miſerable, that haue euil willers, euen ſo for the greateſt number the maiſters are too ſharpe & hard, too ſeuere and rigorous, too wicked and cruel: and therefore it is not without cauſe that the wiſe man woulde not haue ſeruants to bee accuſed to their maiſters. And cloſely heerein hee admoniſheth aſwel the maiſters, as the ſeruantes to do their dueitie one towards another. The which Saint Paule doeth largely and clearely handle in the Epheſians 6. and Colloſ. 3.4. and Titus 2. and Saint Peter 1. Chapter. 2.

11 *There is a generation that curſeth their father, and doth not bleſſe their mother.*

Collo.3.10

God at the beginning created man like vnto his image and likeneſſe, that hee ſhoulde walke in al holineſſe : as the Apoſtle Saint Paule declareth. And ſince that, for to correct his corruption and his wickedneſſe, hee hath giuen him commandements : and the better to drawe him, to frame his life after them, hee made him promiſes: and woulde that wee ſhoulde order our ſelues with al our affection and in true humilitie, with al ſoftneſſe and gentleneſſe vnder the obedience of his commandementes, and ſhoulde truſt altogether vpon his promiſes. And to the ende that wee ſhoulde feare to forſake them, hee addeth threatninges againſt the diſobedient and vnbeleeuing, and condemneth them vnto death. But there are but fewe people that make any great account to maintein this image in them, which obey the commandements, which truſt in the promiſes, and which feare the threatninges and condemnation of death : as wee feele the ſame but too much in our time : and as hath beene ſeene in olde time, euen as the holy hiſtories doe declare. And with theſe proofes we haue alſo now the wiſeman which maketh great complaint therof in this preſent ſentence, and in other following : in the which he accuſeth not one man alone, or ſome familie, but a great number. For he ſaith not, there are ſome men : but he ſaith, *There is a generation*. By the which word he ſignifieth a very great number, and a continual ſtocke : and is as much as if he ſaide, that from father to ſonne, and from ſonne to ſonne, the euil continueth, & that the ſucceſſours doe follow the corruption and the wickednes of their predeceſſours, in a great number, and in a long time together. And as touching this preſent ſentence, we muſt note, it is not without cauſe why the wiſe man maketh ſuch complaint. For nature teacheth vs that we ſhould greatly eſteeme our fathers & mothers, and ſhould honour them in obeying them, in helping their neceſſities, and in being altogether at their commandement without vexing or troubling them : ſeeing we condemne thoſe which do the contrary. Although that young children doe not thinke nor take ſuche heede vnto this natural lawe, as they ought to doe :

yet is it not to ſay, but that it ſhoulde bee grauen in their heartes: as wee may ſee it, when they are come to age, and haue children: For without the Scripture they coulde wel enough aske their children the duetie they owe them. And the Heathen likewiſe, which neuer knewe any thing of the holy ſcripture, coulde very wel ſay, That wee cannot yeelde any recompence vnto our fathers and mothers. But in the time of the wiſe man, and long time before, God, for to helpe nature, and to waken him vp, had giuen his commandements by writing: amongeſt the which hee commandeth, Honour thy father and thy mother, and to mooue the children to obey them, he addeth a promiſe, ſaying, that thy dayes may be long on the lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee. And albeit that the promiſe doeth cloſely import and carry with it a threatning and condemnation againſt the diſobedient: neuertheleſſe, to the end that wee ſhoulde feare and bee more giltie and vnexcuſable, if wee failed in the duetie towards our parentes, God expreſſeth the threatening. Hee woulde haue the parentes to procure the puniſhmente of their rebellious children, and to bring them before the iudges. Foraſmuch as there is ſuch natural light, ſuche commaundements, ſuch promiſes and threatenings, and ſuch condemnation, it is not therefore without cauſe that the wiſe man complaineth or wondereth at this, that in al ages there are ſo many diſobedient children vnto their fathers and mothers, not onely ignorantly or careleſly, contemning their cõmandements, but alſo of ſet malice reſiſting thẽ with wronges and iniuries: as the wiſe man doeth ſignifie by the curſe that hee repeateth, when he is not ſatisfied in ſaying, *Curſeth his father*, but addeth, *and doeth not bleſſe his mother*, as it is the manner of the Scripture, to rehearſe one very thing vnder diuers wordes. Or els wee may ſay that the wiſe man maketh heere an argument of conſequence, from the greater to the leſſer: as if he ſaide foraſmuche as there is a generation of children, ſo corrupted, that they forbeare not to curſe their fathers and mothers, which are the heads and lordes of the houſe, it followeth wel that they make no account to doe any good vnto their mothers, who are inferiours to their fathers. For it is alſo the cuſtome of wicked children, that though verily they ſeeme to feare and honour their fathers, leaſt they ſhold be beaten or driuen out of the doores, or diſhinherited:

Exo.20.12.

Exo.21.17.
Deut.21.12

yet wil they boldly ſhewe, that they greatly deſpiſe their mother, & labour to perſwade themſelues, that they need not to make any account of them, becauſe they are women, and haue no power nor authoritie to depriue them of their portion of the goods. Wherein there is great pride and great vnthankefulneſſe: for ſeeing God hath giuen thẽ this honour to be mothers, the children ought to be ſub- Iob.4.4. iect vnto them in al humbleneſſe and obedience. And ſith they haue Eccle.7.24 ſuffered ſo much paines in bearing them in their wombes, and haue ſuffered ſo great ſorowes in bringing them foorth, & haue ſo much care to nurſe them and to bring them vp, they ſhoulde be ready and diligent to doe them good againe. The which the wiſe man doeth teach them to doe, when he complaineth, *they bleſſe not their mothers*. And foraſmuch as it happeneth moſt often that thoſe childrẽ which haue beene wantonly brought vp, are the ſooneſt ready to curſe their fathers, and to greeue and trouble their mothers, the fathers and mothers ought to learne that they are heere taught too nurſe and bring vp their children in inſtruction and doctrine of the Lorde. And when alſo it is ſaide, Thou ſhalt not ſpeake euil of the Exo. 22,28. iudges of thy people, &c. princes are taught to be careful too keepe their ſubiectes vnder.

12 *There is a generation that are pure in their owne conceite, and yet are not waſhed from their filthyneſſe.*

He complaineth of a vice that hath reigned of long time, and wrought much euil: that is, that in place that we ſhold be diſpleaſed with our filthineſſes, wee haue praiſed & eſteemed them, as if we were very pure and cleane, and that there were in vs nothing to be blamed. Cain had the like eſtimation of himſelfe, when he ſayde, My puniſhmẽt is greater then I can beare. The people in the time of Gen.4.13 Noe, the meſſenger of righteouſnes, which had no repentance, haue wel ſhewed they were cleane in their owne eies: euen ſo haue thoſe of Sodome done likewiſe in the time of righteous Lot, which wold Gen.19.7 not receiue any exhortations: and the Iewes, which woulde not heare the preaching of the Prophets, who rebuked thẽ in the name of the Lord: as they are often reproched for it: and the Scribes and

Phariſees in the time of our Sauiour Ieſus Chriſte, who bragged of
their righteouſneſſe, and mocked our Lorde, and blaſphemed both
him and his doctrine.

Now that theſe people haue fallen into this abhominable vice,
& were greatly giltie before God, the ſcripture doth declare vn-
to vs: Firſt of al, when God regarded not the offering of Cain. Se- *Gen.4.5.&*
condly, when it is ſaide, Nowe the people of Sodome were wicked *13.13.*
and greeuous ſinners againſt the Lord. Thirdly, what haue I to doe
with the multitude of your ſacrifices? Crie out with open throate, *Eſay.1.11.*
ſpare not: tel my people of their tranſgreſſion, &c. Fourthly yee are *58.1.*
they, which iuſtifie your ſelues before men; but God knoweth your *Luke.16.15*
hearts, &c. Becauſe of ſuch hypocriſie, which was vncorrigible, great *Mat.23.25.*
plagues folowed. The worlde was deſtroyed by the flood: Sodome
and her neighbors were ouerthrowne with fire & brimſtone: The
Iewes were deſtroyed by warres, and the remnant caried away cap-
tiue to Babilon. And after the reſurrection of our Lorde they were *Mat.23.35.*
brought into great deſolation, as he had foretolde, as wee alſo ſee it. *& 24.15.*
And thus it is not without cauſe that the wiſe man complaineth *Luk.18.11*
thereof. In this he admoniſheth vs that we ſhould not brag of our *13.*
purenes, as did the Phariſes: but that we ſhould humble our ſelues, *Iob.14.4.&*
with the Publican: and that with Iob wee ſhoulde confeſſe there is *15.14.15.16*
none that is borne of an vncleane ſeede, that can bee made cleane. *& 25.4.5.9.*
What is man that he ſhould be cleane? and who is he that is borne
of woman, that can bee declared righteous? And howe may a man
be iuſtified with God? or howe can hee be cleane, that is borne of a
woman. Foraſmuch then as wee can not waſhe our ſelues from our *1.Iohn.1.8.9*
filthines, let vs not therfore be ſo glorious, as that we ſhould thinke
our ſelues to be pure and cleane: for if we ſay we haue no ſinne, we
deceiue our ſelues and the truth is not in vs. But if we confeſſe our
ſinnes, he is faythful and iuſt for to pardon our ſinnes, and to clenſe
vs from al iniquitie. Let vs then bee aſhamed of our ſinnes, but not
to confeſſe them, ſaying with Eſay, Wee are all as filthineſſe, and all
our righteouſneſſe is as a polluted clothe, &c: and with Saint Paule, *Eſay.64.6.*
wee are carnal, ſolde vnder ſinne. And in confeſſing them, let vs *Rom.7.14.*
praye with Dauid, Haue mercy vppon mee O GOD after thy *Pſal.51.3.*
great goodneſſe, and according vnto the multitude of thy mercies, *Pſalm.51. 1.*
do a way mine offences, &c. When we ſhal do thus in good cōſciēce,

God wil accõpliſh his promiſe vnto vs, that he hath made vs, to wit,
Eze.36.25. that hee wil powre cleane water vpon vs, and we ſhalbe cleane, &c.
And albeit that of our ſelues we are not cleane, (for ſinne dwelleth
continually in vs, & haue neede dayly to aske pardon for our ſinnes
and offences) yet if we truely humble our ſelues, as hath byn ſaide,
God wil accept vs for iuſt and cleane, hauing ſprinkeled our
conſciences with the precious blood of his Sonne. And in this ſort
we ſhal not be cleane in our owne eies, and yet wee ſhalbe waſhed
from our filthineſſes, by the grace and mercy of our heauenly father,
1.Cor.1.30. who wil impute vnto vs the righteouſneſſe of his ſonne: whom
hee hath appointed to bee our righteouſneſſe, ſanctification and redemptiõ.
We muſt therfore with al humilitie confeſſe Ieſus Chriſt
to be ſuche, leaſt we be preſumptuous, and puffed vp with our own
righteouſneſſe & holineſſe, as Simon: but let vs proſtrate our ſelues
at his feete, as did Marie Magdalen. Thus doing, we ſhal condemne
Luk.7.37.39 our ſelues, and ſhal not be condemned, but ſhal obtaine remiſſion of
our ſinnes, though they be neuer ſo many. Contrarily, if we thinke
Luk.17.10. there be any cleanneſſe in our ſelues, God wil blinde vs, and giue vs
vp vnto a reprobate ſenſe: as hee hath alreadie done the Iewes and
the Papiſtes. In place then of iuſtifying our ſelues, yea, though wee
had done whatſoeuer God commaundeth vs: yet let vs ſay (as Ieſus
Chriſt hath taught vs) We are but vnprofitable ſeruantes, &c.

13 *There is a generation, whoſe eyes are hautie, and their eyeliddes are lifted vp.*

In the former ſentence he hath reproued the hypocrites, making
a great complaint againſt them: & now he dealeth with the proude.
And albeit that pride ruleth in the deepeneſſe of the heart, yet ſpareth
he not to iudge therof, marking it by the external and outward
ſignes, which come from the diſpoſition & inclination of the heart.
Neither muſt wee maruell though hee deale with the proude, framing
a complaint and accuſation againſt them: ſeeing that man of
himſelſe is nothing: for God made him, and not hee himſelſe. And
although he be created according to the ymage and lykeneſſe of his
Gen.2.7. Creatour, neuertheleſſe he is made of the duſt of the earth: and it is
& 3.19. ſaide, that hee is duſt, and ſhal returne to duſt againe.

And as he is nothing of him ſelfe, euen ſo alſo hath hee nothing of him ſelfe: ſo that we may wel ſay vnto the proude, Wherof commeth it that earth and duſt is proud: and What haſt thou, that thou haſt not receiued? and if thou haſt receiued it, why doeſt thou boaſt as though thou haddeſt not receiued it? For the proud haue alwayes delighted in them ſelues, and boaſted of their wiſedome, power, counſel, credite, authoritie, antiquitie, nobilitie, experience, and riches, as if they had al theſe thinges in them ſelues: and haue not confeſſed that God holdeth al in his hand, and giueth being, to whō ſoeuer he pleaſeth. He teacheth, ſtrengtheneth, exalteth, maketh noble, raiſeth vp, and inricheth whom he wil. And as hath beene ſaide, the proude neither can nor wil in any wiſe confeſſe this ſame: and therefore it is no wonder though the wiſe man complaineth of thē. And as we haue ſaide, he noteth their pride by the outward ſignes, as we may ſee in other places, as the ſcripture ſheweth, in threatning the proude. And becauſe there is none of ſound iudgement, but feareth to be hated of God, and to be beaten downe with his mightie hand, we muſt humble our eyes, euen by the guiding of the heart: ſo that we may proteſt with Dauid, Lorde, I am not high minded: I haue no proude lookes, &c.

Eccle.10.15
1.Cor.4.7.
Pſal.18.28.
Pro.6.17
Eſai.2.11
& 5.15
Pſal.131.1.

14 *There is a generation, whoſe teethe are as ſwoordes, and their iawes as kniues, to eate vp the afflicted out of the earth, and the poore from among men.*

He reprooueth now the crueltie of the great men of the earth, which hath continually raigned: as we may ſee it in Caine, and in Lamech, and in the mightie Giantes, which filled the earth with cruelties: in Pharao, and in his people: In Saule, who perſecuted Dauid: as we may ſee by the complaintes that are conteined in the holie ſcriptures. Now I haue expreſly ſaide, that the wiſe man toucheth the crueltie of the great men of the earth, which are in diuers ſortes: for ſome are great in riches, ſome are great in credite and authoritie, ſome in power, and other in multitude of friendes. The which alſo the wiſe man ſheweth, when he ſaieth, *That their teeth and their iawes* do ſerue them *as kniues and ſwordes, to eate vp the afflicted out of the earth, and the poore from among men:* and

Gen. 4.8.23
& 6.4.
Exo.1.8
1.Sam.18
Pſal.14.4
& 57.5.
Miche.3.1.

and herein he ſheweth that the Prouerbe is true, which ſaieth, the great eate the ſmal. And alſo cōmonly we ſee that the great wil not quarrel with their equals, but with them that are feeble and weake, and which haue no blood (as it is ſaid) in their nayles, to be reuenged, (that is to ſay) which can not ſcratch and haue none to ſupport them, but rather are vexed on al ſides, and knowe not to whome among men they may goe to haue refuge. Wherein there is great crueltie, as the wiſe man hath noted, when he compareth them vnto wilde and cruel beaſtes, which haue teeth and iawes meete to deuour the praye: and when hee compareth them vnto theeues, and murtherers, which vſe knyues and ſwords to kil the paſſengers, and ſuche as they beare malice to. And albeit that in exerciſing their crueltie, they ſhew them ſelues bolde and valiant, yet are they villaines and cowardes: as the wiſe man marketh, when he ſaieth not, that it is to fight againſt them which are mightie, wel armed, and of a ſtout ſtomake, but for to eate vp them which are of no reſiſtaunce, and are altogether naked and deſtitute of al force & power, ſo that they can not defende them ſelues, from the violences of the vnmerciful and cruel. And thus, it is not without cauſe that the wiſe man complaineth thereof. And herein, he exhorteth that if we haue any greatneſſe and power, that we ſhould haue pitie and compaſſion of the afflicted, and ſuch as are poore.

15 *The Horſeleach hath two daughters, which crye, giue, giue. There be three thinges that wil not be ſatisfied: yea foure, that ſay not, it is enough:*

16 *The graue, and the barren wombe, the earth that cannot be ſatisfied with water, and the fire that ſaieth not, it is enough.*

If in theſe two ſentences wee vnderſtande nothing but that which is offered at the firſt ſight by the letter, they ſhal ſerue vs to no inſtruction. And if the wiſe man woulde teache vs none other thing by them, then as the wordes doe ſounde, he hath ſet downe no excellent thing in them, nor that is worthie of admiration. The which we neither ought to thinke nor to ſay.

And therefore, it is neceſſarie for vs to vnderſtande that the wiſe man ſpeaketh heere in parables and by compariſon: and doth greatly touche theeues and robbers, the couetous and vſurers, the ſpoylers and extortioners, the whoremongers and adulterers, the gluttons and drunkards: and al ſuch as ſuffer themſelues to be caried away of their vnbrideled concupiſcences. He calleth them firſt of all *horſeleaches:* the which hath her tongue forked, as it is ſaide, and with theſe twoo forkes, which the wiſe man calleth two daughters, ſhe ſucketh mans blood, and wil not leaue the ſkinne, til ſhe be ful, euē ready to burſt. Euen ſo alſo theſe people are not eaſie to be pleaſed, but hauing twoo daughters, that is to ſay, diuers wayes and meanes to hurte, and to oppreſſe their neighbours, and to vexe themſelues, they ceaſe not to deſire more and more to folowe their luſtes. The which the wiſe man ſignifieth, when hee is not contented to haue ſaide once, giue, but doeth repeate it, ſaying,

Giue, giue, Wherein hee ſheweth an vnſatiable couetouſneſſe in ſuch people: and therewith alſo hee calleth, the pollings, extortions, exactions, ſpoylings, whoredomes, delightes, voluptuouſneſſe and exceſſe giftes: not ſo that whatſoeuer they obtaine is giuen them with a free and liberall minde: but foraſmuch as although that they exact and conſtraine, or vſe craft and ſubtiltie to get what they deſire, yet doe they not ſpare to vſe this language, giue, giue: and alſo that which they take, and that which they vſe doeth coſt them nothing but the taking. Secondly, hee compareth them vnto foure things. And for to doe this, hee vſeth repetition: for not to be ful, or not ſatiſfied, and not to ſay, it is ynough: is al one thing. Hee vſeth alſo Correctiō: for hauing affirmed but of three things, afterwardes hee affirmeth of foure. And this is for to pricke ſo much the more the vnſatiable deſires of thoſe which haue no care but to ſerue their fleſh.

The firſt is, *the graue,* which for the ſinne of man, the more bodies either great, meane, or ſmal that are giuen too it, yet doeth it refuſe none, but doeth conſume them al, and bring them al to duſt, as an executioner of the ſentence of God, In the ſweate of thy face ſhalt thou eate thy bread, till thou returneſt to the earth againe, &c. *Gene.3.19.*

The ſeconde is, *The baren wombe:* the which though it be ſo reſtrained, and as it were cloſed vp, that it can conceiue no children, yet doeth it not ceaſe continually to deſire ſeede: as wee may ſee by Rachel, the wife of Iacob. The thirde is, *The earth that cannot bee ſatiſfied with water*, and yet is not watered with the raine from aboue, neither with fountaines or riuers for to be moiſtened: or wee ſhal take the earth that is not ſatiſfied with water, for the ſame that is ſo cleft and ſo dry, that albeeit, it is throughly wette with water, yet it ceaſeth not ſtil to want, and to receiue thereof ſomuch as commeth and falleth: as wee may ſee in ſandy grounde. The fourth is, *the fire*, that conſumeth whatſoeuer is caſt into it, howe ſtrong and hard ſoeuer it be. When the wiſe man compareth the carnal & ſenſual, the diſſolute and thriftles, the vnmerciful and cruel, vnto theſe foreſaide things, he blameth not the ſaide things: for they followe nothing but the nature giuen to them of God. But as hath beene ſaide, he pricketh men which are corrupted and not contented to folowe the good nature wherein God hath created them at the beginning, but doe vſurpe the nature of thoſe thinges which haue no reaſon, and doe ſo abuſe them, that that which ought in no wiſe to be blamed in thoſe creatures, yet is it very deteſtable & abhominable when men folowe it: as there is none of vs, but doth ſo iudge of it. To make an Allegorie otherwiſe, it ſhoulde bee vnprofitable: as al men of good ſenſe may iudge it. But let vs learne to be modeſt, temperate and ſober, being contented with that which God giueth vs, without abuſing the natural kinde of the foreſaide creatures: otherwiſe they ſhal bee our iudges.

Gen.30.1.

17 *The eye that mocketh his father, and deſpiſeth the inſtruction of his mother, let the rauens of the riuer picke it out, and the young Egles eate it.*

It is a thing contrarie vnto nature (as hath beene handled heeretofore in the 11. ver.) that children ſhould be rebellious and iniurious to their fathers and mothers: as alſo it is againſt the commandement and threatening of God. And ſo it cannot bee, but that the children being of ful age, and yeeres of diſcretion, muſt needs ſinne againſt their conſciences, and of ſet malice, when they doe iniurie & wrong vnto their fathers and mothers: or alſo when with an enuious

ous and malicious arrogancie, they mocke at them, and deſpiſe to heare their admonitiōs: it is a thing verie wicked, deteſtable, ſhameful, and highly monſtrous. For this cauſe the wiſe man feareth not to praye or deſire that ſuche children might bee forſaken and giuen to be ſpoyled, as they doe wel deſerue. The which deſire he expreſſeth, ſaying,

Let the Rauens of the riuer, &c. Wherein wee haue to note, that the Rauens and Eagles doe flye and folow after carion and dead bodies: and becauſe they are often times caſt into the riuers, the which doeth often caſt them vp againe vpon the ſhoare, the Rauens and Eagles reſort thither for their foode, and chiefly pecke out the eyes, as we may ſee it by experience: and then as they haue neede, they eate the reſt of the dead bodie. And thus the wiſe man compareth the mocking and contemning children vnto carions, which are caſt out vnto the deuouring birdes, and deſire to haue them eaten. And herein he deſireth nothing of his owne minde, but according to the threatning that God maketh againſt the rebels, which care not to obey his worde. And becauſe we ſee in the geſture and moouing of the eyes, the mocking and deſpiſing that lyeth hid within the heart, for this cauſe the wiſe man doeth not ſpeake but of the eye: and thereby he ſignifieth al the malice of man, yea, wholly a malicious man, who is nothing but a carrion, woorthie to bee caſt out, not onely vnto the byrdes of the ayre and beaſtes of the earth, but to the Deuil alſo, that is the birde that eateth that, which is ſowne by the high wayes ſide, who is alſo, the roaring Lyon. Wee might alſo ſay, that this is a threatning againſt wicked children, vnthankful and contemners of ſo great paynes that their fathers and mothers haue taken for them: by the which hee denounceth vnto them, that not onely they ſhalbe preuented with ſodeine death, but alſo that they ſhal be cruelly and ſhamefully ſlaine, and caſt to bee deuoured by the beaſtes, which they haue exceeded in crueltie: and ſhalbe left vnburied. And becauſe he maketh mentiō of the *inſtruction of the mother*, therefore children are exhorted in feare and reuerence to receiue and obey the commandements of their mothers: though they be women, and that after the ſenſe of the mockers and ſcoffers, they ought not to regarde their wordes. Moreouer, when *inſtruction* is attributed vnto the mothers, women ſhal not be ex-

Deut.28.26
Ier.16.4.
& 34.20.
Mat.13.4.
19.
1.Pet.5.8.

cuſed for the weakeneſſe of their kinde, for hauing learned nothing to teach their children.

18 *There be three thinges hid from mee, yea foure, that I knowe not.*

19 *The way of an Eagle in the ayre, the waye of a Serpent vpon a ſtone, the way of a ſhip in the midſt of the ſea, and the way of a man with a mayde.*

20 *Such is the way alſo of an adulterous woman: ſhe eateth and wipeth her mouth, and ſaieth, I haue not committed iniquitie.*

Gene.2.24. Albeit that adulterie is a verie horrible and deteſtable ſin before
Gene.6.& 7. God: as he ſhewed at the firſt, when he ordeined mariage, and that
Exo.20.14. he hath not ſaide, that three or foure, or more, ſhalbe one fleſh, but,
Leui.20.10. man ſhal forſake father and mother, and ſhal cleaue vnto his wiſe,
Deut.22.22. and they two ſhalbe one fleſhe. Secondly, when hee ſent the flood vpon thoſe which had taken the daughters of men for their wiues. Thirdly, when he ſaieth, Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie. Fourthly, when he commandeth adulterers to be deſtroyed: yet neuertheleſſe, when there haue ſo many adulteries beene committed of long time, and that are ſtil daily committed, it is ſhewed, there is no great account made of ſuche filthineſſe: and that as it were in deſpight of God, they are delighted in that which hee greatly abhorreth. Wherein the men and women that are ſuche, doe ſhew them ſelues impudent and ſhameleſſe. And as they haue not God before their eyes, and perſuade them ſelues he ſeeth them not, euen ſo wil they not acknowledge their iniquitie: and thinke that they cannot be reprooued. For as they perſuade them ſelues that they doe none iniquitie, euen ſo they make them ſelues beleeue that their trade & wayes can not be ſeene: and therefore dare they preſent themſelues before the worlde without ſhame, as if they were honeſt men, readie, boldly to prooue them lyers, which would blame them, as they are woorthie thereof. The wiſe man in this preſent parable, doeth declare vnto vs this impudencie. And is as much as if he ſaide, Euen as men can not knowe the way of an Eagle in the ayre, &c: neither the ſignes and tokens of the pollutions of a man with a mayd: and

the ſecrete inticementes that the man vſeth to make the virgin conſent vnto him, with whome he burneth in concupiſcence, by the which allurements man is defiled, though he hath not once touched the virgin: euen the adulterers eate, that is to ſay, delight in their whoredomes. And then, as gluttons and drunken ſeruauntes, when in the abſence of their maiſters, haue ſpent the time in eating and drinking, if they feele & perceiue their maiſters to draw neere, doe wipe their mouthes, to ſeeme that they haue neither drunke nor eate: euen ſo the adulterers, after hauing committed whooredome, doe wipe their mouthes: they counterfait and diſſemble to be honeſt men, & they think they are not known, and that they can not be conuinced and ouercome, & their wayes to be as ſealed letters. And therefore as if they were pure and cleane, holie and righteous, they boldly ſay, they haue done none euil: yea, and though they be taken in the deede doing, yet would they haue men to think that ſuche abhomination were natural thinges, and not to be regarded: the which is as much as if they ſaide, that they are not giltie. But at the laſt they ſhal feele, that, that which they eate is bitter. For God wil condemne whoremongers and adulterers.

Heb.13.4.

21 *For three thinges the earth is mooued: yea, for foure it can not ſuſtaine it ſelfe.*

22 *For a ſeruant when he reigneth, and a foole when hee is filled with meate,*

23 *For the hateful woman, when ſhee is maried, and for a handmayde that is heyre to her maiſtreſſe.*

It is a moſt certaine thing that the earth remoueth neither higher nor lower, neither on the right ſide, nor on the left ſide, but remaineth ſtedfaſt in his place, that God hath ordeined for it, except he him ſelfe doe remooue and ſhake it. Now that it remaineth ſure, the ſcripture doth witneſſe it, And therefore, when it is ſaide, *The earth is mooued*, we wil not take it for this earthly Element, but for th[illegible]habitants therof, as it is ſo taken in diuers places of the ſcripture. And alſo the worde that is tranſlated, moued, in the wiſe mans tongue,

Iob.9.5.6.
Pſa.18.8.
1.Chro.16.30.
Pſa.93.1.

Eccle.1.4. *1.Sam.27.0.* *Eſai.11.4.9.* tongue, doeth not ſignifie the remoouing of one place vnto an other, but to tremble, to be angrie, and to be ſtirred vp, and troubled for feare or for wrath. And ſo as touching the 21. verſe, the wiſe man meaneth, that by the worlde the inhabitantes of the earth are troubled, grieued, ſorowful, feareful, and angrie, for the comming of foure thinges: and that alſo they can not holde, but be in feare, or to be angrie, it is not for vs to teache theſe thinges: for the troubles and vexations that happen, are but too much knowne, when the vile and abiectes are exalted, when the fooliſh & wicked are made riche, when riotous women are maiſtreſſes in the houſe, and when maydes become dames. Nowe foraſmuche as we deſire not to bee troubled with ſuche thinges, let vs knowe, that the wiſe man doeth admoniſhe vs heere, that wee ſhould be careful to looke narrowly and ſtraighly what perſons wee ought to preferre and exalt. And as we deſire not to be troubled, euen ſo, when wee are exalted to an higher degree, let vs not trouble any man by our pride, malice, rigour and chorliſhneſſe: as doe they commonly which are exalted from a lowe and miſerable ſtate. In the which number the wiſe man doeth firſt of al ſet *the ſeruant and ſlaue*, ſaying, that when ſuche a perſon commeth to be raiſed vp to honour, and power, hee is ſo proude and high minded, ſo churliſhe and ſharpe, ſo vnmerciful and cruel, that none can continue with him. And whatſoeuer is ſaid of the ſeruant, we muſt alſo vnderſtande it of euerie vile man, and abiect perſon, who hath not the feare of God, and is not contented with his ſtate, wherin God hath placed him. In the which order we *1.Sam.9.21. & 15.17.* may ſet Saul, who was of the loweſt trybes and of the leaſt familie of Beniamin. I ſay expreſly of the ſeruant, who hath not the feare of God: for Ioſeph in deede was a ſeruant in Egypt, but the people were mooued neither with feare, nor with anger, when he was exalted, and ruled the countrie. Dauid was a ſhepheard in the houſe of his Father, and when he had obtained the kingdome, he wrought no trouble nor ſorowe to the people.

Secondly he placeth *A foole when he is filled with meate*, that is to ſay, the wicked foole, that feeleth him ſelfe riche and at his eaſe, of ſet purpoſe doeth deſpiſe his neighbours, and deſireth more to hurt them, then to helpe them: as did Pharao King of Egypt: Nabal, the Carmelite and others. *1.Sam,25.*

Thirdly, *the hateful woman,* who is of ſo ſtraunge and troubleſome manners, and of ſo vnmerciful and cruel conuerſation, that ſhe is feared, or rather that men are compelled to hate her, as ſhe deſerueth. In the which number, wee might alſo ſet the wife of Ioſephs maiſter: Iezabel, Achabs wife, through whome the lande of Iſrael was mooued, and prouoked: Then Herodias. Fourthly, hee ſetteth, *A handmayde,* who of her ſelfe is miſerable, when ſhee commeth to ſucceede her maiſtreſſe, when from a vile and low degree ſhee is raiſed vp to honour, from riches to pouertie, from labour and payne, to reſt and pleaſures. Moſt commonly ſuch handmaydes keepe no modeſtie nor humilitie, but are ſo arrogant and proude, ſo churliſhe and ſharpe, that no man can abide them. To the ende therefore that we ſtirre not, nor mooue the earth, let vs be careful to behaue our ſelues lowlie and gently, though we be exalted and lifted vp.

Gen.39.
1.*King.16.31.& 18.*
Mat.14.

24 *There be foure ſmal things in the earth, yet they are wiſe, and ful of wiſedome:*

25 *The Piſmyres, a people not ſtrong, yet prepare they their meate in ſommer:*

26 *The Conies, a people not mightie, yet make they their houſes in the Rocke:*

27 *The Graſhopper hath no King, yet goe they foorth al by bandes:*

28 *The Spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in Kings Palaces.*

The wiſe man continueth ſtil to teach vs by parables, ſetting foorth vnto vs, foure of the leaſt and ſmalleſt beaſtes of the earth, to be our teachers and guides, that wee ſhould learne inſtruction of them. And to the ende, that although it ought to ſhame vs, that we muſt be taught by ſuch litle beaſtes, yet that we ſhould not refuſe their inſtruction, hee doeth attribute wiſedome vnto them: and leaſt we ſhould deſpiſe this wiſedome, he ſheweth that it is not fayned by them, when he ſaieth, *Yet are they wiſe, and ful of wiſedome.* Whereupon foloweth that it is God, who hath created them in a wiſe nature, the which they haue not loſt, nor yet forſaken, as man hath done, aboliſhing by his tranſgreſſion and rebellion, the image and likeneſſe of God, wherein he was created. And is ſo ſpoyled of wiſedome, and become ſo ignorant, dul, and blockiſh, that the leaſt beaſtes, muſt teach him his leſſon, and ſhewe him, howe hee muſt gouerne him ſelfe. Nowe albeit we ſhoulde be aſhamed thereof, yet ſhould we thanke God, who by ſuch Doctours, helpeth our rudeneſſe and weakneſſe, and maketh that profitable vnto vs, which at the firſt ſight, offereth it ſelfe before our eyes, and in our fantaſie, to be vile and contemptible, and as a thing of no price nor eſtimation. And alſo the wiſe man doeth cal them, *The ſmal thinges of the earth.* Wherein againe we ſhould haue ſhame: for we ſhould be wholly occupied to conſider ſpiritual and heauenly thinges, for to be preſerued in wiſedome, to knowe to gouerne our ſelues, and to ſpende the time as we ought, in woorking diligently and couragiouſly, without doute or feare, and ſhould not ſuffer our weakeneſſe to make vs ſlouthful & negligent, or our highneſſe to turne vs away from our office and duetie: and we muſt looke downe to the earth, and towardes lowe, ſmal, weake, & contemptible things for to be taught of thē. Wherein we may know that we haue nothing to bragge our ſelues of, nor to challenge any excellencie.

Notwithſtanding, we are ſo pleaſed with our ſelues, that eyther we can not, or we wil not, take heed from eſteeming our ſelues, if wee feele and perceiue in our ſelues any ſtrength and power, any cunning or aptneſſe. On the other ſide, we loue ſo much the eaſe, delightes and reſt of our fleſhe, that we make our ſelues beleeue wee are weake, and ſhould marre our ſelues if wee ſhould labour: or by diſtruſt and feare, giue our ſelues ouer to the gouernment of thoſe whom we eſteeme mightie: no man dare come neere vnto the great Lords, leaſt they ſhould diſpleaſe them, though with them he might employ him ſelfe to doe what God commaundeth him. It is the cuſtome of thoſe which wil doe nothing, to alledge they are feeble and weake, to be excuſed and borne with, and that they might eate their bread in idleneſſe and without dooing any thing. But the wiſe man wil receiue no ſuche excuſes, as hee doeth plainly ſhewe, when he bringeth foorth the Piſmyre, and declareth that it is a people, that hath no ſtrength, & that yet they labour in ſommer, which *Pro.6.6.* is the appointed ſeaſon to gather and to lay vp victuals in ſtore. And this is that which Solomon ſheweth vnto the ſlouthful. And therein he ſheweth that we muſt in the appointed time and ſeaſon, applye our ſelues after the power and wiſedome that God hath giuen vs: and that in ſo doing there ſhal be no ſeaſon ſo ſharpe, wherein we ſhal not obteine, whatſoeuer ſhalbe neceſſarie for vs. For to prouoke vs the more to take paine, and not to flye backe for our weakneſſe, & that we ſhould labour to folowe our vocation, and to perſeuer therein, hee ſetteth before vs the Conies, which are without ſtrength, & haue no reſiſtance, but flye and ſodeinly run away at the barking of the leaſt whelpe that is: and yet notwithſtanding are ſo continually in ſcraping, that they wil atchiue to pearce euen the very harde rocke, for to make themſelues lodging and to hide themſelues therein. The rockes (ſaith Dauid) are a refuge for the conies. *Pſa.104.18* Therefore let not our feebleneſſe make vs cowardes: Let euery one *Mat.16.18* of vs occupie himſelfe after his capacitie and abilitie, taking the *1.Cor.10.4.* rock, which is Ieſus Chriſte for his refuge. And in this ſort we ſhal bee in great ſafetie. And to the ende, that wee ſhoulde not looke for the protection and ſauegarde of the great lordes and mightie of the earth: or if wee be deſtitute of their guiding and gouernement *1.Sam.8.5* Let vs not be diſcouraged, as were the Iewes. In the thirde place he ſetteth before vs, *the Graſhoppers*, ſaying, *they haue no king*, yet are they ſtrong, and are guided valiantly, as people expert in the warres: as he expreſſeth, ſaying, *they go foorth al by bandes:* that is to ſay, they aſſemble and gather together a great multitude and by heapes: as thoſe which God ſent into Egypt. And alſo the holy ſcripture, for to ſignifie a great power, ſpeaketh ſo of graſhoppers.

Though wee bee deſtitute of temporal protection, yet let vs not *Exo.10.12.* leaue of to beare our ſelues valiantly, knitting our ſelues together *Iud.6.5.* by faith, beeing aſſured, that wee haue the king of kings for our *& 7.12.* protectour and gouernour, who wil not forſake vs, but will giue vs weapons to reſiſt the infernall and helliſhe powers. And therefore, what euill ſoeuer the worlde or the Deuill doe intent againſt vs, let vs not bee diſcouraged, but let vs folowe

Ephe.6.11. Saint Paules admonition, Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtande againſt the aſſaultes of the Deuil. And becauſe the greatneſſe and authoritie of men, is often cauſe that the ſmal and weake dare not doe that which belongeth to their office, the wiſe man, fourthly ſetteth before vs, *the Spider*, that is verie weake, yet doeth ſhee not feare to haunt the Pallaces of Kinges, and there to ſpinne her webbe, croſſing and trauerſing, & one while taking one ſide, and an other while an other, for to ſpread her web, and to make it ſo long as euer ſhe can. Euen ſo, let no highneſſe of Princes, turne vs away from dooing our duetie, and that we ſhoulde not largely doe whatſoeuer belongeth vnto our office. According to ſome mens iudgement, by the Piſmire that laboureth willingly, and without conſtrainte, men are rebuked for that they wil not labour but by compulſion: By the conies, they are reproued for their ouermuch boldneſſe: By the Graſhoppers, which flie keeping their orders, they are rebuked that though they haue kings, princes, and magiſtrates, yet do they not obey them, but would rule ouer other. By the Spider in kings pallaces, we haue an example of labour: and ſignifieth that they that rule the common wealth, ought aboue al thinges to be vigilant and careful.

29 *There be three things that order wel their going: yea, foure are comely in going.*

30 *A Lyon which is ſtrong among beaſts, and turneth not at the ſight of any,*

31 *A luſtie grayhounde, and a goate, and a king, againſt whome there is no riſing vp.*

When a man walketh blameleſſe in his maners and conuerſation, & applyeth diligently himſelf to do his office, we ſay he goeth right: and if hee doe the contrary, we ſay he goeth aſtray, and that hee walketh not in the right pathe: and ſo wee cal the life of man, a pathe, a *Gene.5.22. & 6.9.12.* ſtep, or a way. After the which manner of ſpeaking the ſcripture agreeth, for to be the more familiar vnto vs: as it is ſaide, that Enock

walked with God: and Noe was perfect in his time, walking with God: and al fleſhe had corrupted his way vpon earth. And becauſe that albeit that God often doeth admoniſhe vs by his woorde to walke honeſtly, yet doe wee make no account thereof, and wil not acknowledge what our duetie is. For this cauſe to rebuke our negligence, or rather our malice, God ſetteth beaſtes before vs, declaring vnto vs that they are of a better nature then wee be, and that they know wel how to doe their duetie: as we ſee in Eſai the firſt Chapter, and ſecond verſe, and in diuers places of theſe Prouerbes: and nowe the wiſe man ſetteth before vs three. And when ſuch rebukes are giuen vs, they are not to confounde vs, but to make vs better aduiſed and more diſcreete, and alſo to be aſhamed of that, that we muſt goe to the ſchoole with the beaſtes. The firſt of the three is, *The Lyon, which is ſtrong among beaſtes,* not onely in his members, but alſo of courage, and by the ſame his courage hee walketh fiercely in his way: and there is no beaſt howe ſtrong or great ſoeuer hee be, that may turne him or make him goe out of his way: and ſo he ordereth verie wel his ſteppes, and walketh comely. The wiſe man doeth not ſet before vs the crueltie of the Lyon: for if we *1.Pet.5.8.*
did folowe him therein, we ſhoulde be like vnto the Deuil: but he would haue vs to folow the courage, the boldneſſe and nimbleneſſe of the Lyon, to the intent that whatſoeuer the Deuil or men can doe againſt vs, yet ſhoulde wee alwayes goe boldly forwardes, as God doeth teache vs by his word, and ſhould in no wiſe be afraid. Herein it is, that we ſhould be like the Lyon, as Solomon doth ſhew vs. By the ſeconde, that is, the *Greyhounde* that is luſtie to runne, he doeth admoniſh vs, that we ſhould not be like vnto the Snaile, *Pro.28.1.*
that creepeth verie ſoftly, but ſhould be readie & diligent to runne our courſe: as wee are exhorted in other places of the ſcriptures, *Pſal.119.32*
that we may truely ſay, I haue fought a good fight, I haue finiſhed *1.Cor 9.24*
my courſe, I haue kept the ſayth. And for to doe this wel, we muſt *Heb.12.1.*
take heede from folowing of hungrie Dogs. For if we be gorbellies, *2.Tim.4.7.*
gluttons and drunkardes, we can not be ſwift to runne our courſe, but deſire to be at reſt: as the Prophet Eſai, in the 56. Chapter 10.11. blameth the rulers of Iſrael. And therfore Ieſus Chriſt doeth exhort vs ſaying, Take heede to your ſelues, that your heartes bee

Luk.21.34 not ouercome with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſſe, &c. Euen ſo muſt we take heede from folowing their enuie, but that rather we ſhould be ioyful for the proſperitie of our neighbours, and ſorie for their *2.Sam.16.5.6.7.8.9.* miſerie: let vs not be like vnto Semei: nor like vnto the multitude of people which mocked at the affliction of our Lord: who are cal- *Mat.27.29.40.* led Dogges. By the third, that is the Goate, which by a natural care and boldneſſe that he hath, feeling himſelf armed with ſtrong horns, *Pſal.22.17* doeth walke before the flocke, when they are ledde to paſture, wee are admoniſhed, that for to walke rightly, we muſt bee an example vnto our neighbours, and to labour to goe before them by honeſt and holie conuerſation, that they may folow vs. This belongeth vnto al Chriſtians, and chiefly vnto thoſe which haue any gouernment either ſpiritual or temporal: but wee muſt beware that we ſtincke *Mat.25.33.* not as Goates doe, leaſt we be placed at the left hande. The fourth thing, whereby we are here admoniſhed to order our manners and conuerſation right, is not a beaſt, but a man, not vile nor abiect, but one that is in authoritie, and hath power ouer other, and is ruled with ſuch wiſedome, grauitie and ſeueritie, that hee is obeyed, without any reſiſtance or rebellion. For although before the world we are not al Kinges, and that it is not lawful for vs to vſurpe to our ſelues the Kingly authoritie, yet, foraſmuche as we haue al naturally royal heartes (for wee woulde be content that al men were ſubiect vnto vs, and wee ſubiect to no man) it is therefore good reaſon that wee ſhoulde order our ſteppes as wiſe, ſeuere and graue Kinges, that we might ſo rule and raigne ouer our luſtes, and our ſinnes, that they ſhoulde haue no reigne nor rule in vs, as Saint Paule doth admoniſh vs in diuers places.

And alſo, if wee be Chriſtians, wee are Kinges. And in this, *Rom.6.12.* that wee are Kinges, it is not to reigne worldly. For our king- *Exo.19.6.* dome is not of this worlde, but is ſpiritual: the which if we wil *Apo.1.6.* quietly poſſeſſe, we muſt tame and ſubdue our luſtes. After ſome *Iam.4.1.2.* we may ſay, that this parable ſheweth, what the Prince ought to bee, to wit, lyke vntoo the Lyon, to the Greyhound and to the Goate: that hee may bee feared of the wicked, and loued and honoured of the good.

For the Lyon vſeth no crueltie, except he be prouoked: & holdeth in his nayles ſo faſt as doeth the catte, and neuer diſplayeth and vnclaſpeth thē but only in the fight. Euen ſo ſhould princes neuer exerciſe their wrath and diſpleaſure, nor take weapon in hand but vppon neceſſitie. The Greyhound doeth not perſecute his gueſtes, but onely the wilde beaſtes: the Goate goeth before the flocke as a keeper: Euen ſo the Prince ought by good lawes to rule his flocke and to preſerue it. If the princes doe thus gouerne them ſelues, no man wil riſe vp or rebel agaynſt them. For they haue GOD for their keeper, and defender againſt rebels and ſeditious ſubiects.

32 *If thou haſt beene fooliſh in lifting thy ſelfe vp, and if thou haſt thought wickedly, lay thy hand vppon thy mouth.*

Of our vicious and corrupted nature, we are all ſenſeles, and doe delight in our malicious fooliſhnes, and doe thinke wee are ſomething and are readie through pride & arrogancie to exalte our ſelues aboue or againſt our neighbours, and which worſe is, againſt God. And being thus ſenſeles, we can not ſo much as think a good thought, but all euil. Therefore when the wiſe man ſpeaketh conditionally, *Gen.6.5. & 8.21.*

If thou haſt. &c. We may reſolue his woordes caſually, in ſaying, foraſmuch as thou haſt been foliſh. &c. Whē he ſo ſpeaketh, he teacheth vs, that although we of our ſelues are nothing woorth within, yet ought we to take heede to be defiled in our conuerſation. And therefore let vs vnderſtand, that he doeth exhort cloſely to labour to refourme our thoughtes, deſires, purpoſes, counſels, affections and luſtes. For otherwiſe we cannot haue a quiet & modeſt conuerſation: the which he ſignifieth, *By laying the hande on the mouth*. Mow he maketh mention of the hand, and the mouth, becauſe by thoſe members we ſhewe and exerciſe fooliſhnes, arrogancie and malice which is within: with the hand we make ſignes of iniquitie, we ſteale, we vſe ſhameles touching & feeling, & doe violence, in fighting, killing, & ſleying. And for this cauſe the ſcripture reprocheth that they haue ſtretched out their hands vnto theuery & that their hands are ful of blood, & alſo it doeth exhort vs to keepe thē innocent frō euil. From our mouthes come vain woordes, othes, *Eſai.1.*

Iam.1.19.& 3.2. *Pſa.39.2.* *Pſa.51.17. & 141.3.*

falſe othes, blaſphemies, falſe witneſſinges, tales, backbitinges and flatteringes : whereuppon doe folowe great inconueniences, and great offences : and are readie chiefly to miſuſe our mouthes, and it is verie harde for vs to tame the ſame, and to cauſe it to keepe ſilence, as it ought : as we prooue the ſame but too often, as alſo the ſcripture declareth it. Wherefore we muſt ſtande vpon our watch, folowing that which Dauid ſaieth, I wil take heede to my wayes, that I offende not with my tongue, &c. But foraſmuche, as of our ſelues it is an vnpoſſible thing, therſore we muſt pray vnto God that it woulde pleaſe him to haue care to open and ſhut our mouthes, as he ſhal ſee to be expedient : as the ſcripture teacheth vs to doe.

33 *When one churneth milke, hee bringeth foorth butter : and he that wringeth his noſe, cauſeth blood to come out : ſo he that forceth wrath, bringeth foorth ſtrife.*

Ephe.4.26. *Pro.15.18.& 26,21.& 29. 22.*

Albeit that Saint Paule ſaieth, Be angrie, but ſinne not : yet is it not wel done at any time nor a man to be giuen and accuſtomed vnto wrath, nor to be ſodeinly angrie, as Saint Paule doeth ſhew it, when he ſaieth, Let not the Sunne goe downe on your wrath. For alſo from thence doe proceede debates and ſtrifes. *He that forceth wrath :* that is to ſay, which often and ſodeinly is angrie, bringeth foorth ſtrife. The wiſe man compareth ſuch a man and his fruite, vnto two thinges, whereof the one is good, and the other euil: that is to wit, after the nature & kinde of butter, and ſheading of blood. But the ſame maketh not the ſimilitude fautie. For in a compariſon it is not required that al the partes ſhould agree and be like in euerie pointe : it ſufficeth that there bee ſome one pointe agreeable to the matter that is handled : otherwiſe there ſhould bee in the Prophets and Euangeliſts certaine compariſons verie abſurd : the which we muſt neither thinke nor ſay. Therefore, albeit that it is profitable to beate and churne the mylke, to bring foorth butter, yet ſhoulde it be verie wickedly doone of a man, often or ſodeinely to be angrie. For as of the beating and churning of the mylke, wee bring foorth butter, euen ſo, an angrie man ſtirreth vp and prouoketh ſtriſe. And as by too muche wringing of the noſe, wee wipe it not, but wring and make blood to come out, which is euil: euen ſo alſo of wrath and ſtrieſes doe oftentimes riſe murders,

The xxxi. Chapter.

1 *THE wordes of king Lemuell: the propheſie which his mother taught him.*

AFter the Hebrwe and Latine expoſitours, Solomon is called Lemuel, that is to ſay, of God. For albeit that Dauid had elder ſonnes then Solomon, yet was none of them ordeined king but Solomon, according as God had foretolde Dauid by the Prophet Nathan. The which was perfourmed in Solomon. Nowe hee calleth the ſentences following, *his wordes:* Becauſe that hee hauing hearde them of his mother, had gathered them into writing. Wherein hee ſheweth that albeit hee had beene the ſcholler of the Prophet Nathan, yet did hee not deſpiſe the inſtruction of his mother, but had the ſame in great eſtimation: as hee ſheweth when hee calleth it a *Propheſie*, that is to ſay, doctrine, whereby his mother hath expounded vnto him the wil of God, as hee hath declared by his worde: as it is ſo taken in the 1. Cor, 14. verſe. 1. And thus, this mother doeth wel ſhewe vnto the the great Dames and Ladies, and vnto al mothers, that they ought not to ſpende the time with the children, in talking of vaine things: but that they ſhould haue the worde of God in their heartes, for to bee able to teache their children both by mouth and by example: as the Apoſtle Saint Paule doeth ſhewe them. I ſay expreſly too bee able to teache their children. For though women bee neuer ſo wel learned, yet ought they not to take in hand to teach publikely as Miniſters of the Churche. And albeit that wee finde it not written in any other place, that the mother of Solomō hath taught him, yet ought it to bee enough for vs, that hee himſelfe doth heere con-

2.Sam.7.12. 13.
1.Kin.8.20.
2.Sa.12.25.
1.Tit.5.4.14
Tit.2.3
1.Cor.14.34
1.Tim.2.11

feſſe it. And alſo it is to bee beleeued howe Dauid, who was a great Prophete, for to correct and amende the faulte that they had committed together during the life of Vrias her firſt husband, was careful diligently to inſtruct Bethſabe the mother of Solomon. Wee might alſo ſay that Solomon calleth his mother, the Church, in the which hee had beene taught by Nathan the Prophete, and by the Prieſtes. Howſoeuer it bee, when Solomon gathereth by writing that which had beene taught him, hee ſheweth vs howe greatly careful and diligent wee ſhoulde bee to hold and lay vp that which is taught vs, for to frame thereby our manners and conuerſation, that wee may teache our neighbours by good doctrine and holy conuerſation.

2 *What, my ſonne? and what, the ſonne of my wombe? and what, O ſonne of my vowe?*

The mother of Solomon doeth wel declare how much ſhe loued him, when ſhe is not ſatisfied with ſaying once, *My ſonne*, but doth repeate it. And in the ſame repetition ſhee declareth how he is her ſonne: that is to ſay, that ſhe hath conceiued him in her wombe, that ſhe did beare him with trauel and paine, that ſhe brought him foorth with ſorow, and nurſed him vp. And albeit that diuers mothers doe perſwade themſelues that their children ought to be contented therewith, yet wil not ſhe ſtay there, but euen as ſhee had nurſed him corporally, euen ſo woulde ſhee alſo bee a ſpiritual mother. And alſo therewith in remembring *her wombe*, ſhee ſheweth him that he ought in no wiſe to deſpiſe her, nor to refuſe her holy admonitions, & that ſhe would teach him nothing, but that ſhould bee for his profite, and that ſhee woulde not abuſe him, to worke his deſtruction, ſeeing he is the fruite of her wombe. But moreouer for to declare vnto him her motherly affection, and howe ſhe neuer forgetteth him, ſhe calleth him the ſonne of her vowe.

Nowe wee often make vowes for to obteine that which wee
Gen.28.20. 21 greatly deſire, and eſteeme to be profitable, or neceſſary: as Iacob doth. And thus, when ſhe ſaith, *What, ſonne of my vowe?* She declareth that ſhee neuer ceaſſeth to pray for him, and to deſire his health and proſperitie. And it is as much as if ſhee called him her

welbeloued ſonne, on whom ſhe ſetteth al her heart: as ſhe did ſhewe the ſame in deede, 1. King.17. When ſhee deſireth Dauid for to erect and place Solomon in the kingdome, againſt Adonias.

Moreouer, let vs note that theſe wordes are no flattering ſpeaches, but ſweete declaratiõs, for to draw her ſonne vnto obedience, and to teache him, what is his duetie, that hee ſhoulde not bee vnthankeful nor rebellious.

3 *Giue not thy ſtrength vnto women, nor thy waies, which is to deſtroy kings.*

God by Moſes taught kinges their leſſon and what they ſhould doe. Nowe Dauid had ſworne vnto Bethſabe the mother of Solomon, that her ſonne ſhoulde reigne in his ſteede after him: for this cauſe ſhe teacheth her ſonne the ſame leſſon: In the which GOD ſaith that the king ſhal not take vnto him many wiues. According to the which leſſon ſhe ſaith vnto her ſonne, *Giue not thy ſtrength &c.* That is to ſay, Giue not thy minde to followe and delight in many women, for to weaken thy ſelfe, both body and minde with them, and to conſume thy ſubſtance in mainteining them, and to entertaine them in pleaſures, pompouſly, & voluptuouſly: as whoores doe dayly deſire, and are as vnſatiable as graues: the which is the ouerthrowe and deſtruction of the rich and mightie: as the Giants, and Sampſon, haue prooued by expreience: and now Bethſabe doth declare vnto her ſonne, when ſhe addeth, *Nor thy wayes, which is to deſtroy kings.* For this is as much as if ſhe ſaid: howe great and mightie ſoeuer men be, yet if they be giuen vnto women, they ſeeke their ouerthrowe & deſtruction: the which alſo faileth not though it be long before it come; as Dauid hath tried it for a certaine time in the perſecution of his ſonne Abſolom: as God had threatened him. And with the ſame deſtruction is Solomon threatened. And the executiõ therof was doone vpon his ſonne Roboam. We might alſo ſay, that ſhe ſaying, *Giue not thy wayes, &c.* doeth admoniſh him that by his manners and conuerſation he ſhould not giue any euil example, the which woulde ſende ſuch kinges vnto deſtruction as ſhoulde followe it, or that woulde more ouerpaſſe him: as wee may ſee in Roboam: After ſome mens iudgement, this mother doeth exhort her ſonne to be well contented

Deut.17.16 17.

Gen.6.& 7

Iudg.16.

2.Sam.12.10

1.Kin.11.11 & 12.16

with the kingdome, that God hath giuen him, and that he ſhoulde
not ſtriue to ſubdue the other kinges, for to get their countries, and
further to enlarge his dominion. Al ſuch exhortations are very fit
and neceſſary to frame the manners of kings, & they do agree very
Deut.17. wel vnto the leſſon that is giuen them, neuertheleſſe the moſt apte
ſenſe in my iudgement is, that this mother doeth exhorte her
ſonne, not to apply himſelf, to any thing that might worke his ouerthrow,
when hee ſhould be king: for the cuſtome of the Hebrewes
is to vſe the ſingular for the plural, and plural for the ſingular. And
ſo it ſhoulde bee as if ſhee ſaide, giue not thy wayes, while thou art
a king to deſtroy thee.

4 *It is not for kinges, O Lemuel, it is not for kinges to drinke wine, nor for princes ſtrong drinke.*

Pſa.104.15 Wine is created indifferently for al men. Al creatures of God are
1.Tim.4.4 good, and no thing is to be refuſed when it is receiued with thanks
Rom.14.21. giuing. Wherevpon wee may knowe that although it is good neither
to eate fleſhe, nor to drinke wine, yet neither the vſe of wine,
nor of other ſweete and pleaſant drinkes, ought to bee forbidden
kinges and princes of the earth: ſeeing alſo that kinges are commonly
better able to furniſhe themſelues with delicates then other.
And therefore, let vs vnderſtande that the vſe of wine is not heere
forbidden to kinges, but onely the ouermuch pleaſure that is taken
therein, and the exceſſe that is committed in it, though nothing els
Gen.19.31. is ſpoken of but drinking: for the ſcripture in diuers places to ex-
Pſal.69.13. preſſe intemperancie and drunkenneſſe, doth ſpeake but of drinking.
Mat.24.8. And wee alſo in our language, when wee woulde expreſſe the intemperancie
of ſome men, doe ſay plainely and ſimply they drinke,
or that they are drinkers. The which is much to be blamed in al perſons:
for the ſcripture forbiddeth exceſſe to all men, and depriueth
al drunkardes of the kingdome of God. But mention is made
heere of kinges and princes for diuers cauſes. The firſt is, that this
exhortation is directed vnto Solomon the ſonne of king Dauid, &
who was ordeined king after his father: whoſe mother did onely
priuily exhort him: for being a woman, ſhee had not the publike
admi-

adminiſtration. The ſeconde is, that the kings and gouernours, aboue
al other ſhoulde bee temperate and ſober : for ſeeing it belongeth
to them to puniſhe exceſſe, diſſoluteneſſe, riotouſneſſe and offences,
therefore they ſhoulde ſerue for an example vnto the common
people : ſo that they may not be checked : Awake ye drunkardes *Eſay.1.5.*
and weepe, &c. And foraſmch as they are iudges, they ought *Eſa.56.12*
ſo to guide them ſelues : as that in iudging other, they condemne *& 5.11.12.*
not them ſelues : and that it ſhould not be reproched them & caſt in
their teeth, Why ſeeſt thou a mote in thy brothers eye, and conſidereſt *Mat.7.3*
not a beame in thine owne eye? The thirde is, that the kinges
and great Lordes becauſe of their great riches doe liue for the moſt *Rom.2.1.*
part careleſly and idlely, and for to paſſe away their time ioyfully and
merily, keepe good cheere, making feaſtes, drinkinges, bankettes,
ſuppers, and reare ſuppers, ſuperfluous & exceſſiue, and drinke and *Eſay.28.7.8*
eate almoſt til they bee ready to burſt and to ſpue, as they are blamed
for it.

5 *Leaſt hee drink, and forget the decree, and change the iudgement of all the children of affliction.*

The mother of Solomon doeth not ſet downe the former reaſons
: but to auoide prolixitie and tediouſneſſe, ſhee toucheth the
chiefeſt and principal: that is, that if kinges be giuen to wine, there
is danger that they making no account of the lawe of God, ſhoulde
ouerthrowe the right of the poore. Wherevpon we muſt firſt note,
that which is written : When the king is placed in the throne of *Deu.17.18.19*
his kingdome, then ſhal he write out for himſelfe a booke of this
lawe, wherein there is ſhewed vnto him, that hee ought not in any
wiſe to turne away from the lawe of God, neither by contempt, nor
by forgetfulneſſe : much leſſe by ſcorning or mocking. And for to auoide
theſe thinges, he ought to take heede and beware of wine : *Pro.20.1*
For wine is a mocker, &c. Whooredome, wine, and new wine, take *Oſea.4.11.*
away the heart. But they alſo haue failed by wine, and haue gone *Eſay.28.7*
aſtray by drunkenneſſe. *Eſay.1.23.*

Secondly, let vs note that the great men of the earth deſpiſing *Pſa.82.5.6.7*
the decree, and ſcorning thereof, doe giue themſelues vnto corruption,
as they are blamed therewith. Wherevpon God complaineth

of them, with threatening them. And this is that which the mother exhorteth her ſonne to do, fearing leaſt by wine hee ſhoulde change the right. And ſhe ſaith expreſly, *of al the children of affliction:* that is to ſay, of the miſerable: for they are they whome God commendeth vnto vs. But it ſeemeth that they woulde deſpite God, foraſmuch as it is a common thing through the world that the great doe eate the ſmal: as experience teacheth: and the ſcripture alſo complaineth thereof. And the ſame is wel noted heere, when it is not ſimplie ſaide, The ſonne of affliction, *but al the ſonnes of afflictions:* as if it were ſaid that a drunken king wil not be touched nor moued with compaſſion towards any poore, but wil be wicked, vnmerciful and cruel towardes al the miſerable, for to ſhewe fauour vnto thoſe that doe wrong.

Thirdly, let vs note that ſhe ſpeaketh not but of the changing of the right and iudgement of the afflicted. For albeit, it is ſaide, thou ſhalt not reſpect a poore man in his cauſe, yet doeth God chiefly commende them vnto vs, becauſe they are neuer maintained, but rather troden downe, and the riche and mightie fauoured: euen ſo to the ende that iudges ſhoulde bee aduertiſed of their office, and that hauing omitted and forgotten it, they might be more giltie and worthy of greater condemnation: and in ſteede that they haue deſpiſed to deliuer the ſonnes of affliction, they ſhal bee holden vnder affliction, from the which they may neuer be deliuered. Fourthly, let vs note, that although the kings haue diuers magiſtrates and iudges vnder them, yet ought they themſelues to watche, for to yelde and to make other to giue right vnto whome ſoeuer it belongeth, and not to liue in pleaſures.

6 *Giue ye ſtrong drinke vnto him, that is readie to periſhe, and wine vnto them that haue griefe of heart.*

Pſa.104.15 Wyne was not onely created for neceſſitie, but alſo for to reioyce a mans heart. According heeretoo the mother doeth admoniſh her ſonne and all thoſe which haue the abilitie, to comforte the miſerable and ſorroweful, in giuing them eyther ale or wine to drinke, or other pleaſant drinke, according to the commoditie and vſe of the countrie. Now ſhe calleth ſuch miſerable and ſorrowfull, *readie to periſh*, or periſhing: not to teach vs that which ſome vnmercifull and cruel men doe teach in poperie, that a man is not bound to help his neighbour, but in extreme neceſſity. For ſhe calleth them not periſhing or readie to periſh, which are paſt helpe, as are they which are in extreme neceſſitie but thoſe which haue ſorowful heartes: as ſhe her ſelfe doth expound it, when ſhe commaundeth *wine to be geuen to them which haue greefe of hearte*.

For except we care to helpe them, they tend vnto perdition. A ſorrowfull ſpirite drieth the bones. Wherein wee may ſee ſhee hath not forbidden kinges and princes the vſe of wine, but the exceſſe and curiouſnes of drinking the fineſt and moſt excellent: for it may happen to kinges, to be readie to periſh, and to haue greefe and ſorow of heart.

Pro.17.22.

7 *That he may drink & forget his pouertie, and remember his miſerie no more.*

She declareth to what end we ought to tende in giuing ſtrong drink or wine vnto the miſerable and greeued: to wit, to make them merrie, ſo that they may feele their miſerie no more, to be tormented ſtill. Wherein ſhe ſheweth that we muſt neither giue ſuch ſorrowful perſons drinke too pinchingly, nor too abundantly, but meanely and indifferently. For as in drinking too litle, their ſorow ſhould not be driuen away: euen ſo by drinking too much, they might forget the Law of God, the which might be cauſe afterwards of greatr and more greeuous ſorow, that is to ſay, that forgetting the Law, they coulde hope for no ſaluation, but onely looke for an horrible condemnation and perpetuall torments. For in diſpiſing the Law, wee deſpiſe Ieſus Chriſt, who is not come to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfil it. Whereuppon it followeth they deſerue to haue greater ſorowe and greefe: as the threatning pronounceth. But wee muſt ſtoutly withſtande ſuch greefe, in drinking, not materiall wine, but ſpiritual drinke, whereto we are exhorted. And to bee partakers therof, we muſt come vnto Ieſus Chriſt, who is the rock of whom our fathers haue drunke. Ieſus

Mat.5.17.
Heb.10.26.
Eſay.55.1.
1.Cor.10.4.
Exo.17.6.
Mat.11.28.
Iohn 4.10.
14.& 6.50.
51.53.
& 7.37.

Chriſt himſelfe calleth vs, by declaring to vs what hee is. And dayly he couereth the table for vs, and offereth vs drinke and meate, by the preaching of his Goſpel, and by the adminiſtration of his Sacramentes. And thus, it chiefly belongeth vnto the miniſters of the worde, to giue ſtrong drinke vnto them, that are readie to periſh, & wine to thoſe which haue griefe of hearte. And alſo the ſcripture, which the miniſters muſt handle, ſerueth fit for the ſame. And Saint Paule in diuers places exhorteth vs to reioice in the Lord: & would alſo haue vs one to comforte an other. The which ought to be done in diuers ſortes.

Eſay.40.1.
1.Cor.14.3.

8 *Open thy mouth for the dombe, in the cauſe of al the children of deſtruction.*

It ſeemeth vnto kings and gouernours of the earth, that they do their duetie wel, when hauing hearde the pleading of both parties, they iudge according as the matters haue beene alledged: and yet they ſee ſome ſimple & ignorant man that cannot alledge his right, nor declare his cauſe and matter, the which of it ſelfe is good, thus they wil perſwade themſelues, that they haue done their duetie very wel, when they ſhal ſuffer their ſenſes to be blinded by ſome babler and prater, that knoweth cunningly how to colour his pleading, to make his matter ſeeme good, the which is nothing worth. Such iudges and magiſtrates, for to iuſtifie themſelues, and to waſh their handes, wil ſay, The caſe and right is open and plaine to euery man, wee cannot iudge but according as the matters haue beene alledged and prooued. But if in this ſorte the ſimple and ignorant bee depriued of his right, the iudges are not abſolued before God, who will examine, ſearche out and conſider al pointes of the matter throughly. And foraſmuch as they are his lieftenants, they ought therefore to folowe him: as alſo they are taught by his woorde. And alſo it is nowe ſhewed them, when it is ſaid, *Open thy mouth, &c.* For they cannot open their mouthes for the ſimple and ignorant, as they ought, without good inquiſition. For although it is ſaide, *Open thy mouth, &c.* yet is it not to ſay that we ſhould, whether the malice bee right or wrong, fauour the ſimple and weake: ſeeing it is ſaid, Thou ſhalt not regarde a poore man in his cauſe. And it is not without cauſe, that they are thus admoniſhed, ſeeing the worlde is

Pſa.10.13.14
Deu.1.13.16 17.& 25.1.
Eſay.1.17.
Exo.23.3.

ſul of people, who by their ſhadowes and coloures doe labour to darken the right of thoſe that are not able to reuenge themſelues, and therfore are called *dumbe*. This ſame is but too too much proued true: & againe it is ſignified vnto vs, when it is not ſaid, In the cauſe or matter of ſome one ſonne of variation and coulouring, but *of all the ſonnes of deſtruction*: noting the great multitude of clokers and painters, & ſignifiyng that the ſimple are ſore oppreſſed of al ſides, except the ſuperiours bee very diligent too make enquirie, for to be able to open their mouthes to pronounce righteous ſentences, & to giue right vnto the ſimple & weake. After this ſenſe we ſet the dumbe againſt the children of variance, or painting. Pſal.82.3. But there are ſome which in place of variance, do ſay, of the tráſitorie worlde: and otherſome of deſtruction and death, and other, of thoſe which are forſaken. And in this ſort there ſhoulde be no Antitheſis, but it woulde behoue vs to reſolue this preſent ſentence, as if it were ſaide, defend him that is not able to defende himſelfe, ſuſteining their cauſe that goe to deſtruction, becauſe no man maketh account of them, but rather euery man ſeeketh their deſtruction: as it is none other but the cuſtome of the worlde.

9 *Open thy mouth: iudge righteouſneſſe, and iudge the afflicted, and the poore.*

The ſcripture in ſteede of ſaying, iudge iuſtly, doeth ſay, iudge righteouſneſſe, or alſo iudge after righteouſneſſe. Such wordes are chiefly and moſt often directed vnto the rulers of the earth, becauſe it is their office to miniſter righteouſneſſe and iuſtice: and moſt often they care nothing for it, but to liue deliciouſly and voluptuouſly they commit the ſame vnto ſuch perſons which for the moſt part are corrupted, and doe ouerthrowe the right. And thus in ſteede of opening their mouth to iudge righteouſnes, they open their hands to take giftes and rewardes. They open their eares to heare flattering tongues and praiſes of their freendes: they open their eyes to beholde their parentes, to looke vpon the riche and mightie, that they may fauour them againſt al right, and to the hurt and hinderance of thoſe which haue no maintenance, nor can reuenge themſelues. The which is a great wrong doone vnto God, who ſo carefully commendeth the poore vnto vs: as it hath beene diuers times ſhewed vs heeretofore. And therefore, the mother admoniſhing her ſonne to open his mouth to iudge righteouſneſſe, or to iudge iuſtly, doth declare howe hee ſhall doe the ſame, when hee ſaith, That he ſhould *open his mouth to iudge the afflicted and the poore:* that is to ſay, that hee ſhoulde defende and mainteine the cauſe of him that is oppreſſed and lacketh helpe, wanteth power and wealth: as alſo all iudges are exhorted therevnto. If this doctrine were wel printed in the heartes of kinges and rulers, the poore faithful ones, ſhoulde not bee ſo cruelly handeled and intreated, as they bee. *Pſal. 82.3.*

10 *Who ſhall finde a vertuous woman? for their price is different from pearles.*

Women of their nature are very light and vnconſtant, and doe marre al, if a man ſuffer them to doe what they wil: as wee haue proued by experience in our firſt mother: whoſe daughters the women haue at al times ſhewed themſelues to bee, in following her, yea in doing worſe: as amongſt other wee may place Dalila, Iezabel and Herodias. And therefore it is not without cauſe that the wiſe man, as wondering and amaſed at the vnprofitableneſſe of the malice of women, doth aske, *Who ſhall finde a vertuous woman?* a woman that hath good courage, and that doth diligently apply her ſelfe to doe her duetie in the feare of the Lorde, ſubmitting herſelfe and pleaſing her husbande, and ruling her houſholde, in the way of holyneſſe and righteouſneſſe, in ſoberneſſe and temperancie, with diligence and care. An husbande that findeth ſuch a wife, ought not to hate, reiect or deſpiſe her, except hee bee out of his wit or madde: but if the worlings do greatly delight in them ſelues when they haue thinges and iewels of great price, as ſiluer, golde, and precious ſtones, and if they eſteeme theſe thinges greatly, how much more ought the husband to eſteeme a vertuous, and a valiant wife. For as the wiſe ſaith heere, *For her price is different from pearles*: that is to ſay, farre more excellent. And it is good reaſon that the husbande (whoſe wife is valiant) ſhoulde not make account of all the riches in the world, ſomuch as of his wiſe. And that for diuers cauſes. Firſt of al, ſhee is created after the image and likeneſſe of God. Secondly, without the woman, man was not perfect. Thirdly, ſhee is fleſhe of his fleſhe, and bones of his bones. And the fourth reaſon, which is the chiefeſt, is that the woman is bought for as great a price as is the man: to wit, with the precious blood of the Lambe without ſpot. Whetevpon followeth the fifth, that ſhe is heire of the heauenly kingdome: ſeeing that it is neither to male nor female: for yee are al one in Ieſus Chriſte.

Gen. 1. 27. & 2. 18. 23.

Gala. 3. 28.

Nowe as touching the the ſtate betweene man and wife it is this, they ought to bee careful to walke in al modeſtie and gentleneſſe one with an other; let the wife behaue her ſelfe vertuouſly in al ſubiection and obedience, that ſhee may compel her husbande greatly to loue her: and let the husbande for his part, be ſo gentle, and ſhewe her ſuche loue that hee may giue her occaſion to be vertuous: and let them in this ſort edifie their families, by good examples, and cauſe them to liue holyly.

11 *The hearte of her husbande truſteth in her, and he ſhall haue no neede of ſpoile.*

It is very meete that the worde to *finde*, which the wiſe man doth vſe in the former ſentence ſhoulde conteine in it ſelfe experience: for a man cannot bee contented with the wiſedome of a woman, neither can hee bring that he hath founde a vertuous woman, except hee hath tryed her. And alſo when it is ſaide, *The hearte of her husbande, &c.* The wiſe ſheweth plaine that hee ſpeaketh of experience, and not of a ſingle meeting. For a diſcrete husbande, woulde not referre al to his wife, nor reſt vpon her, nor commit the gouernment of his houſe vnto her, nor truſt in her, vnleſſe hee hath had good witneſſe and experience of her. Hee ſheweth alſo that hee ſpeaketh of a good and wiſe husband, and that is modeſt and of a ſetteled minde. For a wicked, fooliſh, haſtie, or blockiſh man wil make no account of his wife, howe vertuous ſoeuer ſhe be: and ſo cannot truſt in her: but the good husbande and wiſe, hauing good teſtimonie of his wife, or hauing wel tried her, wil loue her, and ſo wel eſteeme of her, that hee wil not enquire of her

gouernement, & wil not feare that he ſhould ſpoile any thing, but
will truſt in her for all his domeſticall and houſholde affaires, and
wil commit them al vnto her gouernement. And that for the loue
he beareth vnto his wife, knowing her to be vertuous according to
1.Cor, 13.7. that which S. Paule ſayth, Loue beleeueth al, hopeth al. &c, not that
he putteth his ſtedfaſt aſſurance of his ſaluation in his wife, or that
he hath a certaine teſtimonie, that nothing ſhal periſhe vnder her
Iere.17.5. hand, when alſo he cannot promiſe that hee will ſaue him ſelfe: for
ſuch a truſt is curſed. And when the wiſe addeth, *and hee ſhal haue
no neede of ſpoyle*, hee ſheweth moreouer that he ſpeaketh of a good
huſband. For an euil man wil not bee ſatiſfied with the vſe of that
which hee may lawefully haue, but wil by al meanes hee can, ſpoyle
and get the goods of his neighbour, and wil neuer haue ynough in
his fantaſie. But the manners of the wiſe are without couetouſnes,
and is contented with preſent things: that is to ſay, with that which
hee and his wife poſſeſſe, winne and get iuſtly, without dooing
wrong, or oppreſſing of any other: and beeing thus content he ſhall
haue no neede to ſpoyle his neighbours: for hee hath ynough, and
wanteth no riches: the which are ſignified by the *ſpoyles*, becauſe
that the riches of a familie are made a ſpoyle and a pray to the enemies
in the tyme of warre. Beſides this ſame, let vs note that
men which take younge maydes in mariage (foraſmuch as the marriage
according to the ordinance of God is a bande not to bee broken)
are heere cloſely admoniſhed to loue them, not for their corporal
beautie, nor for their riches, but to loue them in God: in ſuch
wiſe that knowing that younge maydens are not commonly wiſe,
they ſhoulde bee careful and diligent to teache them, and to take
paines to make them vertuous wyues, otherwiſe their hearts coulde
not truſt in them. On the other ſide the wiues are taught to become
1.Cor.14.34 and yelde themſelues to learne and to bee gentle, humble and obedient,
1.Tim.2.1. that they may winne the heartes of their huſbandes, and
1.Pet.3.1. that they giue them not occaſion to iudge euil of them, nor to diſtruſt
Ephe.5.22. them. This doctrine may alſo bee gathered out of the writings
1.Cor.11.8. of S. Paule and S. Peter.

12 *She will doe him good, and not euill al the dayes of her life.*

Hee ſheweth that the good husbande ſhal not bee deceiued in truſting in his vertuous wiſe, and ſhal not bee fruſtrate of his hope, that is, that his wiſe wil not waſte the goods of the houſe, but wil duely and orderly ſpend thē, & wil rather labour to augment & increaſe them, then to diminiſh them. For as he ſaith, *She wil doe him good*: that is to ſay, ſhee taketh paines to encreaſe the riches of her husbande, and of her labour commeth profite to the houſe. And *ſhee doeth no euill*, that is to ſay, ſhee doeth him no hurt, nor worketh him no trouble. And when ſhe hath thus begunne, ſhe ceaſſeth not, but continueth al the daies of her life. Wherein al wiues are admoniſhed neuer to ceaſſe from wel doing vnto their husbandes: otherwiſe they are rebelles, not onely againſt men, but alſo againſt God, who hath giuen the woman to man for his benefite, and to be an helper vnto him, not for a day or a yeere, but for euer: for God ſaith, It is not good that man ſhoulde liue alone: I wil make him an helper. And alſo hath ioyned them vnſeparably together. The wiues ought therefore to continue in wel dooing vnto their husbandes, and to worke them no trouble. And for to doe this wel, they muſt be humble and patient, modeſt and prudent for to winne their husbands, if they be chourliſh and ſharpe: and for to nourſe and cheriſhe them, if they be gentle and gracious. And thus by wel doing they ſhal ouercome the euil with goodnes, and ſhal maintein goodneſſe.

Gen.2.18.24
Mat.19.5.6.

13 *She ſeeketh wooll and flaxe, and laboureth cheerefully with her hande.*

He beginneth to declare howe the wife for to ſhewe herſelfe vertuous, yeeldeth and doth good vnto her husbande. Shee is not idle, nor negligent, ſhee is not curious in running from houſe too houſe, for to learne newes, nor to babble & to ſpeake things which are not meete, and ſo to paſſe away the time vnfruitfully and vainely: but ſhe is careful to handle & to deale with that which is meete

for

for the degree and eſtate of women, as is heere ſignified, when it is ſaide, *ſhee ſeeketh wooll and flaxe*: and ſhe is not greeued to apply and occupie herſelfe aboute theſe vile and contemptible things: but knowing that they agree with her eſtate, ſhee delghteth to woorke on them. She thinketh not her ſelfe diſhonoured, nor alſo wearied though with her handes ſhee ſpinneth wool and flaxe, but her delectation is to doe that which is profitable for her houſholde. And alſo it is the duetie of wiues to take the care of the houſe: and the Apoſtle Saint Paule woulde haue them to gouerne the houſholde, and to keepe the houſe. The which is not doone, if ſo bee that the *1.Tim.5.14.* wiues are delicate, and thinke highly of themſelues, and that they *Tit.2.5.* diſdaine ſmall workes, the which notwithſtanding are profitable & neceſſary for their family, for to clothe and array them. Women ought naturally to vnderſtande this ſame: but yet to helpe nature and to ſtir it vp, the holy Ghoſt diſdaineth not to humble himſelfe euen ſo farre as to declare vnto them howe they ought to behaue themſelues in their houſholde: and that when they worke ſuche workes without couetouſneſſe, they doe that which is pleaſing vnto God. And therfore, let them apply themſelues diligently without contempt, howe noble or riche ſoeuer they bee. They that dedeſire matter of high ſpeculation, wil mocke this, which we oughe to praiſe and honour, ſeeing it is the doctrine of the holy Ghoſt, for we muſt not count that vile which it pleaſeth him to teach. And therefore let not the husbandes deſpiſe their wiues, which apply themſelues in working thoſe thinges which ſeeme of ſmal importance, when they doe that, that God teacheth them by his woorde, and by his ſpirite.

14 *Shee is like the ſhippes of merchantes: ſhee bringeth her foode, from a farre.*

It is a very profitable thing to haue merchantes, that may ſende ſhips to the Sea and to the riuers, to fetch prouiſion from far countries, to helpe the countrie that hath neede. And for this cauſe God hath made the Sea and the riuers nauigable: as it is after a ſort *Gen.1.28.* giuen vnto vs to vnderſtande, when God gaue man Lordſhip o- *Pſa.107.23* uer the fiſhes in the Sea. But merchants doe greatly abuſe them, committing themſelues to the dangers of the Sea & riuers by ambition, curiouſneſſe and auarice, deſiring to become great, to ſee diuers countries for to feed their eies, and to learne to talk of far countries & at pleaſure: and chiefly deſiring to waxe rich, without care of helping the needie either of their owne countrie or of another. It is enough for them to gaine much: as they are rebuked by Iames in his fourth Chapter, verſe 13. And becauſe they are ſo euil affectioned, God doeth oftentimes ouerthrowe their enterpriſes, & deſtroieth their riches, and beateth downe their pride: as he threatneth them by his worde: and as we haue ſeene the execution therof alſo. And albeit that the trades which they vſe, bee profitable, yet their intent is wicked. And alſo the wiſe woman doth not compare the vertuous woman vnto merchants which ſend ſhips to the waters, but onely to the ſhips, that are loaden, and may bee ruled. Euen ſo the vertuous woman receiueth the charge and office which it pleaſeth God to lay vpon her, and ſuffereth her ſelfe to bee gouerned of God by his holy ſpirite: and by this gouernment, and not of herſelfe, *Shee bringeth her foode from farre:* that is to ſay, ſhe tarieth not to worke, til her family bee in extreeme neceſſitie, but ſhee prouideth from a farre, and laboureth to preuent pouertie, without diſtruſt in God. For hee woulde haue vs to labour, to ſow, to reape, and to lay vp: & alſo he giueth fit & conuenient ſeaſons therfore: and thoſe which deſpiſe them, are ſo farre from truſting in God, that rather they tempt him, becauſe they would liue without the meanes that hee hath ordeined. And if the wiues, which are the moſt weakeſt veſſels, muſt be ſuch purueiours, by a more ſtrong reaſon then ought the men to bee very vigilant, without caring for to morrow: as they are admoniſhed.

Eſay.23.10.

Mat.6,25.

15 *And ſhee riſeth, whiles it is yet night: and giueth the portion to her houſholde, and the ordinary to her maides.*

For too ſhewe that it is not by auarice, nor of deſire to bee finely kept, that the vertuous wiſe doeth bring her foode from farre, the wiſe woman doeth well declare, howe vigilant and careful ſhe is, when ſhe lyeth not in bedde til the day is come, but riſeth, whiles it is yet night. She declareth alſo that ſhe ſpareth not to giue whatſoeuer is neceſſarie and expedient vnto her houſholde, not only vnto her owne children, but alſo to thoſe which ſerue her, and doe the buſineſſe of the houſe. Wherein wee haue to note, firſt of al, that in prayſing the vertuous woman for that ſhee riſeth before day, ſhe admoniſheth al ſtrong perſons & ſuch as are in health, not to be giuen to loue ſleepe, but to be readie to riſe vp early, after hauing taken conuenient and neceſſarie ſleepe, to make them more apte and meete to holde out and continewe al the day in their vocation, and not that they ſhoulde waxe ſlouthful and negligent, as do thoſe which ſleepe too long. This admonition ought to be receiued of al perſons of good health, and alſo kept, vnleſſe they wil bee blamed with the ſlouthful, and be in danger of pouertie as they are. *Pro.6.9.* And though they came not into the like dāger, yet ſhould they loue to riſe very early and betimes in the morning: for not onely it hath beene praiſed at al times, and of al people of ſounde iudgement, becauſe it is healthful for the body, and that they may haue the more time and leiſure to do their buſineſſe: but alſo (which is far better) the early riſing is fit for to meditate the workes of God, to cal vpon him, to giue him thankes, and to ſing praiſes vnto him: as wee may ſee in diuers pſalmes: and alſo to doe pleaſure and ſeruice vnto our neighbours. And albeit the wiſe woman doeth praiſe the riſing before day, and doeth attribute and giue the ſame vnto the vertuous woman, yet is it not to ſay that ſhe blameth al thoſe which doe not ſo. For we ought not to make and appoint a lawe or one egall rule for al men, when the complexions are not alike. For one man may better forbeare ſleepe & to watch, then another. Notwithſtanding, let them which are of an healthful and ſtrong cōplection, take heede from perſwading themſelues that they ſhoulde ſpoile themſelues, if they roſe early in the morning: for then they ſhold not be vertuous women, but very ſlouthful. Secondly, let vs note, when the vertuous womā is praiſed, *giuing the portion to her houſholde, &c.* That it is not meete for women to prepare delicates, but they muſt bee diligent to prouide for the houſholde, and to flye ydleneſſe. Thirdly, when ſhe *giueth the ordinarie portion*, women are taught to beware that their hou ſhold make no exceſſe in eating and drinking too abundantly: and alſo that they doe not deny them ſuch things as are neceſſary for them, but that they do faithfully diſtribute them to them, that the houſholde fal not into ſickneſſe, but being ſuſteined, nouriſhed, and fed with a competent portion, they may be occupied about their worke as it behooueth. And for to doe this wel, they haue neede of liberal husbands, and which wil not be too hard and ſtraight: for ſuche husbands wil not ſuffer willingly that there ſhoulde bee an ordinary trade, and reaſonable for the maintenance of their houſholde ſeruants, and cannot ſee expenſes to bee made, ſo ſparing and niggardly are they. After the iudgement that we haue giuen vpon this ſentence, there is a repetition: but there are ſome which by the ordinary or appointed portion, doe vnderſtand the works and buſineſſe where about the vertuous woman doth ſet her maidens, giuing vnto euery one her charge and taske, that they ſhould not be idle, but ſhoulde ſpende the day in labour, and ſhould not take and eate their meate for nothing. And in this the ſeruants and maidens are admoniſhed to looke wel whereunto they are called: that is to ſay, that they ſhoulde not eate the goods of their maiſters and dames, but onely by labouring faithfully. This admonition belongeth alſo to thoſe which are hyred for an other.

16 *She conſidereth a field, & getteth it: and with the fruite of her handes ſhe planteth a vineyard.*

For to make her ſentence briefe and ſhort, ſhe telleth not what it is that mooueth the vertuous woman to conſider the field: but when God forbiddeth vs to couet, we muſt vnderſtande, that the vertuous woman doeth not deſire to buy away the goods of her neighbour, except that he him ſelfe doeth offer it, and ſet it foorth to ſale. And ſo, foraſmuche as the fielde is offered vnto her, and that ſhee knoweth not of what value it is, nor what ſhe ſhal giue for it, ſhee conſiders it, leaſt ſhee ſhould buye, ſhee knewe not what, as it is ſaide: and alſo that keeping loue (whereunto we are al bound) ſhe ſhould not take the field of her neighbour for a morſel of bread, but that ſhe would giue him a reaſonable price for it: as ſhe would haue done to her, if ſhe were in ſteed of the ſeller: otherwiſe ſhee ſhould be a theef, yea, a murtherer: as are al thoſe which draw to thē the goods of other men almoſt for nothing, reſpecting nothing but their particular profite. It is ſaide that ſhe conſidering it, *ſhee getteth it*: not for nothing, nor yet of the ſubſtance of her neighbors: as there are diuers which ſuttlely drawe vnto them the monie of their neighbours to buy land withal: but the vertuous woman buyeth lande of the ſubſtance that ſhe iuſtly poſſeſſeth, as it is wel ſignified, when it is ſaide, *With the fruit of her handes, &c.* Shee calleth that the fruit of her handes, which ſhe iuſtly poſſeſſeth by her trauel, care, and diligence, or otherwiſe, without the hurt of her neighbours. Nowe when the vertuous woman is thus prayſed, we may vnderſtande, that it is lawful to ſel and to buye fieldes and vinyardes, but yet let it be with the fruit of our handes, and not with other mens monie: and alſo God in his lawe permitteth vs to buye lande. *Leuit.25.14* Moreouer, when *ſhee planteth a vineyarde*, that is to ſay, when ſhe is careful in woorking in the field that ſhee hath bought, and that ſhee maketh the ſame to profite, ſhee ſheweth vnto women that they ought not to be delicious, but that they muſt applye them ſelues vnto woorke, when it is neceſſarie. Whereupon foloweth, that men which are commonly more mightie then women, *Gen.3.17.19* ought not to ſpare them ſelues, but eate their bread in the ſweate of their face: as God hath commanded them.

17 She girdeth her loynes with ſtrength, and ſtrengtheneth her armes.

It was the maner of our elders in old time to be clothed with long gownes, of what ſtate ſoeuer they were. And we knowe that long gownes do much hinder: and for this cauſe, when they would *Exo.12.11* trauel, and doe any thing with diligence, or fight againſt their ene- *1.Kin.18.26* mies, or runne a race, or take a voyage, they truſſed and girded vp *2.King.4.29* their garments about their loynes, and that ſo ſtraight, that they *Iere.1.17.* ſhould not fal downe. They truſſed them vp (I ſay) when they went *Eſai.5.27.* a voyage, when they ranne, when they walked, when they began to work, when they fought, when they did work. And for this cauſe, for to ſhew the force, diligence and care of a vertuous woman, and howe ſhee did not ſpare her ſelfe, the wiſe ſaieth, *She girdeth her loynes with ſtrength,&c.* The girdle buckeled ſtraight, ſheweth the diligence : and when it is ſaide, *And ſtrengthened her armes,* there is ſhewed that ſhee ſpareth not her ſelfe : for to ſtrengthen the armes, is nothing els but ſtrongly & with great courage to laye the handes to the worke. Wherein the women are admoniſhed not to become delicate : and becauſe that the precious garments doe often hinder vs from working (for we feare to ſoyle or to vſe them) let them folowe the doctrine that S. Paule and S. Peter teacheth.

Luk.12.35
1.Tim.2.9.
1.Pet.3.3.

18 *Shee feeleth that her merchandiſe is good : her candle is not put out by night.*

By her merchandiſe we vnderſtande al the workes wherto the vertuous woman doeth applye her ſelfe, for to bring in riches vnto her husbande. When ſhee feeleth, or ſhee taſteth that her woorkes pleaſe her husbande, and bring profite vnto the houſe, ſhee ceaſeth not to apply the ſame: as it is ſignified, when it is ſaid. *Her candle, &c.* For the burning candle or Lampe, ſignifieth that the perſon is not giuen to be idle, but that ſhe waketh about her buſineſſe, and guideth her ſelfe rightly therein, foreſeeing what ſhee hath to doe. Whereunto wee are al called: and chiefly diligently to vnderſtand and carefully to occupie our ſelues about that which belongeth to the ſeruice of God and our ſaluation. True it is, that the Lampe or *candle which is not put out by night,* ſignifieth in other places, continual proſperitie, ioye, comfort and glorie, which the vertuous do inioy, what troubles ſoeuer doe happen to them in the worlde. And we may alſo vnderſtande it by that, that the wicked are threatened that their Lampe or candle ſhalbe put out. But the firſt expoſition doeth ſeeme to me the beſt agreeing to the line of the text.

Mat.25.1.
Luk.12.35
Pſal.18.29
Pro.13.9.
& 24.20.
Ier.25.10.

19 *She putteth out her handes to the wherle, & her hands handle the ſpindle.*

Hee

He continueth in declaring howe the vertuous wiſe doth good vnto her husbande, in applying her ſelfe to ſpinning : the which is a woorke meete for women : the which ought not to be contemned, though it ſeeme not a thing of any great profite.

But foraſmuch as the holie Ghoſt admoniſheth women to applye them ſelues thereto, therefore they ought to folowe this doctrine, neuertheleſſe without refuſing greater woorkes, when they can applye them ſelues theretoo. And when their mindes is not able to reache higher after the worlde, let not the husbandes chafe thereat, though there ſeeme to them litle gaine to come therof. And there are ſome husbands, which had rather they ſhould playe then woorke.

20 *Shee ſtretcheth out her hand to the poore, and putteth foorth her handes to the needie.*

Albeit that the vertuous woman is verie attentiue vnto her woorke, and that by this meanes ſhee laboureth to doe good vnto her husbande, yet is ſhee not ledde with couetouſneſſe, nor with deſire of decking her ſelfe : and hath not onely care to prouide for her houſholde ſeruantes, but alſo ſhee hath pitie and compaſſion of the poore and miſerable : not with wordes onely, but really and in deede. Shee ſheweth mercie towardes them, for ſhe woorketh for them with her handes, helping them at neede : as it is declared in this ſentence, by a repetition, the which ought to ſerue for our remembrance, that both men and women which haue the wealth of this worlde, might remember to ſuccour the poore and needie. It ſerueth alſo to admoniſhe the husbandes that they bee not vexed though their wiues do giue them ſelues to the ſeruice of the poore : but that rather they ſhould ſtirre them vp theretoo : and that they may be occupied therein, to giue their wiues wherewith to do it.

21 *Shee feareth not the ſnowe for her familie : for al her familie is clothed with double garments.*

Hee

He hath ſaide, He that giueth to the poore, ſhal not want: and nowe he ſheweth the effect. For hauing commended the mercy of the vertuous woman, hee declareth that ſhe exerciſeth it without diſtruſt, and without thinking in the harde time that either ſhee or her familie ſhal be grieued and pinched with any neede: for as hee ſaieth, *She feareth not, &c. By the ſnowe*, he ſignifieth the ſharpe and harde ſeaſons and weather, the which are verie harde to be paſſed of the poore hungerſteruen which are al too true, yll ſhod, and haue colde nouriſhment. After this declaration, he ſheweth that being liberal towardes the poore, ſhe hath no neede, when hee ſaieth, *For al her familie, &c.* It ſeemeth at the firſt ſight, that this is the reaſon, for the which the vertuous woman doth not feare the ſnow, &c. But by the conſideration of her good furniture (the which is ſignified, by *double garments*, or by the Scarlet, as ſome doe interprete it) ſhee was ledde not to feare, ſhe ſhould be carnal, if ſhe truſted in the abundance of her riches: and ſo ſhe ſhould not bee vertuous, but fooliſhe: as was the riche man ſpoken of in Luke. And ſhe ſhould be of the number of the worldlings, which think them ſelues ſafe, and that they ſhal not want, becauſe they haue great prouiſion. This is not the reaſon then, nor the conſideration for the which ſhe dooth not feare: but the wiſe declareth, that her liberalitie ſhal not bring her any hurt, but that ſhe ſhal haue enough for al that: wherewith ſhee is wel armed and prouided againſt the moſt harde and ſharpe ſeaſons of weather: and being ſo prouided, ſhee needeth not to feare the ſtormes and tempeſtes. For if in pouertie and affliction we ſhould not feare the euil, but be aſſured that God both doth and wil aſſiſt vs, without forſaking vs, ſo much the leſſe haue we a reaſon to feare, or to diſtruſt, whē God ſheweth liberalitie vnto vs, giuing vs abundance, but we muſt reioyce in our Lord, who giueth vs al thinges abundantly for to vſe, not putting our truſt in theſe earthly creatures, but in the liuing God. Hee ſetteth alſo before vs, the care that the vertuous woman hath to prouide thinges for her ſeruauntes, for to keepe them, and to mainteine them in health, leaſt women ſhoulde accuſtome them ſelues to be negligent and idle.

Luk.12.16.

1.Tim.6.17.

And let vs note, that it is expreſly ſayde, that it is againſt the colde, and not to cloath her familie gorgiouſly, and to giue them chaunge of rayment for a brauerie ; as do the proud women, which deſire to goe braue, and alſo to ſhewe their children braue: and becauſe of their brauerie, they thinke that other are not woorthie to come neere them. Yet this is not to ſay, but that it is lawful to haue chaunge of garmentes : ſo that therein we take heede from beeing like vnto the rich, ſpoken of in S. Luke : nor to the rich, to whome horrible threatninges are made. And for to redreſſe and amend this ſame, let vs folowe that which is taught vs : when thou ſeeſt one that is naked, cloath him, and hide not thy ſelfe from thine owne fleſhe ; and ſuche like admonitions.

Luk.16.19
Iam.5.1.
Eſai.58.7
Mat.5.42.
Luk.3.11
Iam.2.15.
1.Ioh.3.17
18.

22 *She maketh her ſelfe Carpets : fine linnen, and Purple is her garment.*

By theſe preſent wordes wee may knowe that it is not onely lawful for vs to vſe thinges that are neceſſarie for vs, but alſo delectable and pleaſant : and chiefly, when with delectation there is profite, and that they ſerue to ſome honeſt and decent vſe, and not to exceſſe, diſſoluteneſſe, vanitie, oſtentation and brauerie. For our good God doeth allowe vs that we ſhoulde delight modeſtly in cunning woorkmanſhips: and alſo it is him ſelfe that giueth man the knowledge to doe them. And thus it is lawful to haue ornaments, but we muſt not ſpende al our time therein, as diuers doe. The wiſe doth ſhewe it, when after hauing made mention of neceſſarie woorkes, he ſpeaketh of delectable, preferring them vnto the neceſſarie. And let vs not thinke that the wiſe doeth prayſe braueneſſe, and eſteeme it: but let vs knowe that he prayſeth the vertuous woman, becauſe that ſhee is ſo diligent about her woorke, that by her diligence ſhee prouideth for her familie, not onely neceſſarie thinges, but alſo pleaſant ornaments, which are not vnprofitable.

23 *Her husbande is knowne in the gates, when hee ſitteth with the elders of the lande.*

When a maried wife is vertuous, and that ſhe is knowne ſuch an one, her husband is not deſpiſed, except he be altogether a foole and vnprofitable: but foraſmuch as it belongeth vnto the man who is the head, to direct his wife, both by doctrine and by deedes, therfore when it is ſeene that his wife proceedeth vertuouſly, he is prayſed and honoured, hee is rayſed vp to dignitie and authoritie, and hath a good name among the great which are truely antient in maners and conuerſation, and not onely in yeeres. The good name is noted, when it is ſaide,

That he is knowne in the gates: by the which thoſe are ſignified which haue the gouernment of the people, becauſe that in them they gathered them ſelues together to commen and talke of their matters, and to pleade the lawe. The dignitie and authoritie is ſignified, when it is ſaide, *He ſitteth, &c.* Nowe although that none ought to affect the chiefeſt roomes, yét euerie one ſhould take paine to make him ſelfe capable, that he may duely exerciſe his office, whē it ſhal pleaſe God to make him ſit amongſt the elders. *Pro.8.15.16* For by the wiſedome of God doe Kinges raigne, and the Counſellours decree iuſtice. After ſome we may ſay, that the wiſe vnderſtandeth that the husbande, knowing that his wife is vertuous, doeth keepe good and continual reſidence in the iudgement ſeate, for to handle ſuche matters as ſhal be offered, and haſteth not home, but taking care of the common matters, hee committeth to his wife al the houſholde affayres: and ſo dooing, he getteth a good name, and is in good reputation. Neuertheleſſe this is not to ſay, that we ought to thruſt in our ſelues to medle with the common wealth, except we be called: but let euerie man keepe beneath, til it pleaſe God to raiſe him vp.

24 *She maketh ſheetes, and ſelleth them, and giueth girdles vnto the merchant.*

He returneth to prayſe her for her houſewiuerie, and for her merchandiſe, the which ſhe gouerneth carefully to make it to profite. And when hee ſaieth, *She maketh*, and then *, ſelleth and giueth*, He ſheweth that it is of her labour ſhee ſelleth. Wherein the Merchantes and ſhopwomen haue their leſſon: that is to ſay, that they ought to woorke and to labour to gaine their liuing, and not to be idle in their ſhoppes, for to marke the merchandiſes that paſſe by them, that they may buye them at a lowe price, afterwardes for to make them deare and to rayſe the price, and to ſel them them ſo deare as they can, to the hurt of the common people. The ſame is to flea of the ſkinne, to eate the fleſhe, and to breake the bones. And this trade hath the verie Heathen greatly blamed, to wit, to buye that which we wil ſel againe immediately much deerer. Such as folowe this trade, are Ingroſſers, and are woorthie of malediction and curſing; and alſo it is ſaid, The people wil curſe him that withdraweth the corne: but a bleſſing ſhal be vpon the head of him that ſelleth corne. And alſo the vertuous woman is prayſed for that ſhee ſelleth, and giueth the woorkmanſhip of her handes to ſel. *Pro. 11.26.*

25 *Strength and honour is her clothing, and in the latter day ſhe ſhal reioyce.*

He hath ſpoken of the corporal veſture and cloathing, wherwith the vertuous woman is cloathed: and nowe, for to ſhewe that ſhe ſetteth not her affection vpon ſuch ornamentes, as doe fooliſh, vaine and curious women, which deſire to pleaſe the eyes of the world, he declareth that ſhee hath an other garment farre more excellent: that is, that with the earneſt minde ſhee hath to doe good vnto her husbande, and to prouide for her familie, and not to be weerie nor vnprofitable, ſhee applyeth her ſelfe ſtoutly vnto good woorkes: wherewith ſhe is ſtrengthened more and more, and getteth glorie and honour. And thus her clothing, wherein ſhe chiefly delighteth, *is ſtrength and honour*. And ſuche clothing is much more excellent, then are the gorgeous garments of the worldlinges.

For though for a certaine time the worldlinges are ioyful in their pompe, yet haue they afterwardes ſorowe and mourning: as they are threatened therewith: and as we haue an example therof in the riche. And thus hath it happened vnto the daughters of Sion, according vnto the threatening of Eſay: But the cloathing of the waking and watchful wiſe, bringeth perpetual ioye: as it is ſignified, when it is ſaid, *and in the latter day ſhe ſhal reioice.* Wee may take this latter day after three ſorts. Firſt of al for the time of olde age, wherein the worldlings do commonly lament, becauſe they cannot laugh and reioice as they did before, and that their olde age is filled with miſerie. But they which in the flower of their age haue behaued themſelues manly and valiantly, and haue of a free minde applied themſelues to doe wel, are not grieued for old age, but beare the ſame patiently, and what euil ſoeuer they ſuffer, yet they ceaſe not to bee glad and ioyful. Secondly, for the time wherein temporal death approcheth. Then are the worldlinges greatly tormented in their conſciences, the which do reproue thē for their pompe, pride, vanities and follies: but thoſe which haue bene delighted to worke righteouſly, do then reioice, being aſſured of the remiſſion of their ſinnes. Thirdly, for the day of the laſt reſurrection, wherein thoſe which haue bene wel and profitably occupied, ſhal haue great cauſe of ioy. For they ſhal poſſeſſe the kingdome of heauen, & the worldlings ſhal haue cauſe of mourning for the tormentes that they ſhal Suffer. Or if ye wil take this worde, *in the latter day ſhee ſhall reioice*, more ſimplie, that is to ſay, that the vertuous woman ſhall haue continual proſperitie and ioye: what time ſoeuer happen, the ſenſe ſhalbe meete ynough. After what ſorte ſoeuer we take it, women are admoniſhed to be modeſt, and ſober in decking themſelues, and to apply themſelues with a free hearte vnto woorke and labour.

Luke.6.24.
Iames.5.1.
Luke.16.23
Eſay.3.15.
Mat.25.34.35.

26 *She openeth her mouth with wiſedome, and the lawe of grace is in her tongue.*

As ſhe behaueth her ſelfe vertuouſly in her buſines and workes, euen ſo doeth ſhe alſo in her words. The worldly women do thinke themſelues very vertuous when they can open their mouthes readily to pronounce that which commeth in their fantaſie, without diſcerning whether the woordes they talke bee meete or no: but the vertuous woman is guided by wiſedome to ſpeake that which is conuenient. Wherein the women which deſire to ſpeake wel, are admoniſhed to giue their heartes to learne wiſedome, not to labour to pleaſe the wiſe of this worlde by their wordes, as do they which haue ſugred mouthes, but to vtter forth wordes of edification, and ſuch as doe not prouoke their neighbours vnto wrath or deſpyte: but by ſofte and gentle woordes woulde winne the heartes of their neighbours, after the example of the vertuous woman, which *hath the lawe of grace in her tongue:* that is to ſay, that doeth ſo rule and guide her tongue, that it ſerueth as it were for a booke, out of the which is learned al goodneſſe, wherewith wee may iudge that her hearte is filled. For from the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh. And thus the women are taught, that for to bee vertuous and to ſhewe themſelues ſuch, they muſt ſuppreſſe their nature, the which is ſodainely to ſpeake fooliſhly, to bee ſpiteful, and lightly to bee angry. And for to doe this ſuppreſſion, let them followe the vertuous woman, according as the wiſe doeth briefly at this preſent teache them, and as Saint Paule doeth more largely in diuers places. And therefore they ought to giue their mindes vnto the reading of the holy ſcripture, and to hearing of ſermons of the woorde of GOD, which is the true wiſedome of all the faythful.

27 *She conſidereth the wayes of her houſholde, and eateth not the bread of ydleneſſe.*

The vertuous woman hath not a faint nor effeminate heart, as haue they which are contented to bee daintily nouriſhed and kept, and yet care to knowe howe they ſhoulde gouerne in the houſe. They reſt, they paſtime and take their pleaſure, and labour to liue in wantonneſſe, and leaue al the charge vnto their huſbandes: but ſhee conſidereth howe ſhee ſhoulde gouerne her children and other her houſholde ſeruantes, which are contained vnder the word of *houſholde:* that ſhee may cauſe them to ſpende the tyme in well dooing. And it is not to bee diſcharged in charging them: but to the ende to ſhewe them the way that they ſhoulde holde, ſhe her ſelfe laboureth diligently: as the wiſe doeth ſignifie, which ſaith not only, *She conſidereth*, but alſo that ſhe *eateth not the bread of ydleneſſe*. In the ſame ſhe giueth an inſtruction to her houſholde that they ought to labour, and to eate their bread in the ſweate of their face. And alſo ſhe ſheweth vnto women that they ought not to eate, except they worke.

28 *Her children riſe vp, and call her bleſſed: her huſbande alſo ſhal praiſe her.*

Becauſe that the vertuous woman taketh care both of the bodies and ſoules of her children, as it hath beene declared in the former ſentences, therefore it commeth to paſſe that her children doe growe in age and wiſedome, in counſel and diſcretion: as the wiſe doth ſignifie it, ſaying, *her children riſe vp*. And being thus growne and increaſed corporally and ſpiritually, they haue a true knowledge of the care that their mother had of them, and howe ſhee hath wrought vertuouſly, for this cauſe they doe greatly eſteeme her, they doe praiſe her and honour her, and ſpeake of her as of her that muſt alwaies proſper, and neuer be ouercome with euils. The which the wiſe doth ſignifie, ſaying, *and cal her bleſſed*. On the other ſide, her huſband alſo ſeeing her conuerſation ſo vertuous, and that by her meanes his children haue wel profited, cannot blame her, but beeing contented with her, ſpeaketh of her al the good he can poſſibly: as the wiſe addeth, ſaying,

Her huſband alſo ſhal praiſe her. If we ſhal take this word *riſe vp*, more ſimplie, that is to ſay, for they come forth, and ſhew themſelues to declare the praiſes of their vertuous mother, and to bring her in reputation in the world, there ſhalbe no inconuenience. But in what ſenſe ſoeuer it is takē, we muſt vnderſtand this ſame of aged children, wel taught, & wel mannered. For little children, which are without diſcretion, cānot ſo ſpeake, except that we wil ſay that their good bringing vp, ſheweth that their mother is wel worthy to bee praiſed, for the care that ſhe had & ſtil hath to gouerne & to bring thē vp godly. And indeed, whē we ſee the children of a houſe to bee godly brought vp, we cannot forbeare, but muſt praiſe & commend their mother. Wherein children are taught not to bee vnthankeful towards their mothers, and not to be aſhamed to acknowledge and confeſſe openly, howe much they are bounde vnto them. The which they cannot do, except they greatly eſteeme her, & greatly loue her: otherwiſe alſo their praiſe ſhoulde be but diſſimulation. The huſbands alſo are heere admoniſhed to content themſelues with their wiues, when they take paines to do their office and duetie. And wel to do this, let them not bee ſeuere and ſharpe, but gentle and amiable, bearing with their wiues, whẽ through infirmitie or ignorance they do not ſo wel as they wiſhe they ſhoulde doe.

29 *Many daughters haue gotten wealth, but thou haſt ſurmounted them all.*

We ſhal ſee in the worlde many great houſewiues, who by their care and diligence, by their greedineſſe and couetouſneſſe, in ſparing and locking vp, in gathering together and drawing to them, by right or by wrong, wil become riche. But although in ſo doing they heape together great abundance of riches, and that they come to great wealth, yet is it nothing, or very little, in compariſon that the vertuous woman doeth: as wee may ſee it by that which hath beene rehearſed of her, from the 10. verſe hithertoo. It is moſt often ſeene to happen, that the wealth of thoſe great houſewiues, doth ſodainely vaniſhe and come to nothing: but that which the vertuous woman getteth, continueth, as wee may ſee by this preſent rehearſal, and amongſt other places in the 25. verſe, when it is ſaid that ſhee ſhal reioice and laugh in the laſt day. For there are many which delighting in their proſperitie, are at the laſt conſtrained to lament their miſerie, as they are threatened therewith in Eſay chapter 32.9. but the wealth righteouſly gotten ſhalbee of continuance by the bleſſing of the Lorde. In ſteede that wee haue ſaide, *they haue gotten wealth:* wee might ſay, they haue wrought valiantly, or they haue done vertuouſly. For there is the very ſelfeſame worde of the 10. verſe, the which hath beene tranſlated, vertuous. And the ſenſe ſhoulde not bee vnfit, but ſhoulde bee as if it were ſaid, That there are many wiues which haue ſome kinde or parte of vertue: and in deede they doe ſome things that are worthie of praiſe: but yet the ſame is nothing in compariſon of that which the wiſe truely vertuous doeth.

30 *Fauour is deceitful, and beautie is vanitie: but a woman that feareth the Lorde, ſhee ſhalbee prayſed.*

The maidens and wiues of their corrupt nature are curious, & deſire to ſee ſuch things as profite them nothing, but rather do hurt them and bring them to diſhonour: as Dina and Thamer. Likewiſe they deſire to be ſeene, and to pleaſe the eyes of worldlings. And to do the ſame, they colour and paint themſelues to ſeeme faire, and of a beautiful hewe, and pleaſant countenance. And this is that which the wiſe calleth *fauour and beautie.* And ſuch painting and countenance doeth well like the worldlings, whoſe eyes are ful of adulterie: they praiſe and commende ſuch women as can diſguiſe and trimme vp themſelues: and in their minde and fantaſie they ſhall ſeeme to bee fine and honeſt: but they which ſhal walke faithfully and plainly, ſhalbe counted foule and vncomely. Wherein they are deceiued, as the wiſe doth ſhewe, when hee calleth *fauour deceitful, and beautie vanitie*: declaring that thoſe which colour themſelues with ſuch fauour and beautie, are deceiued. And heerein hee ſaith nothing which hath not alwaies bene proued by experience, euen from the beginning of the world. Adam found and ſawe fauour in his wiſe when he yelded to take the forbidden fruite of her hand. The ſonnes of God, ſawe great beautie in the daughters of men. Sichem ſawe that Dina was faire. But they were al deceiued, & found not that which they looked for: and in ſteede to finde happines, they fel into greate troubles, as the ende hath ſhewed. And in folowing the ſame ende it is written, many haue beene deceiued by the beautie of women: for by it is loue kindled as it were a fire. Wherein we may ſee that the wiſe yelding and applying himſelfe vnto our kinde of ſpeeche, vſeth heere this worde fauour vnproperly. For properly to ſpeake, *fauour* is the good wil that wee beare to another, without his deſeruing. And ſuch women as woulde bee founde faire, do not ſeeke to ſhewe or to beare fauour, but moſt often do ſel themſelues

Gen. 34. & 38.13.

Gen.3. & 6. & 34.

Eccle.9. 10.

ſelues to them, that wil giue moſt. Notwithſtanding, for al that, they wil labour to perſuade their whoremongers, that they ſhewe them much fauour in yelding them ſelues ouer vnto them: though they take giftes and preſentes of them: and the poore fooles (ſo muche are they deceiued) wil againe thanke them greatly for it: as though they had receiued ſome great benefite, and that they were much beholding vnto them. And in this maner they prayſe and eſteeme that which is nothing, but vanitie and deceit, yea very hurtful and pernicious vnto them, which linger after ſuch fauour and beautie. For they which colour themſelues, and deſire to ſeeme faire and of comely fauour, and they which delight therein, are both caried and led of the Deuil, who is a lyer and a deceiuer, and the father of lying and deceit. The women therfore which labor to make thẽſelues to ſeeme faire, are not to be praiſed nor commended, but they whoſe vertuous heart being hidden, is without corruption, & of a milde and quiet ſpirit. For although the voluptuous worldlings doe nothing eſteeme ſuch vertuous women, yet foraſmuch as they are highly eſteemed with God, wee muſt therefore greatly eſteeme them alſo: as wee are heere thereof admoniſhed, when it is ſaide, *but a woman that feareth, &c.* For when the wiſe man ſaieth, *ſhee ſhalbe praiſed:* the ſame is aſmuch as if hee ſaide, that ſhe ought to bee praiſed, and had in good reputation, honour and to be bleſſed & ſaued ſo much as poſſibly may be from diſhonor. For it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde praiſe and eſteeme that which our God praiſeth and loueth. Nowe that he praiſeth the vertuous woman, the wiſe man ſheweth, when hee attributeth vnto her, the feare of the Lorde: for al they which feare him are welcome vnto him, he doeth aſſiſt them and keepe them: as hath beene handled alreadie in diuers places. Therefore if women wil obtaine true praiſes, they muſt haue then the feare of the Lorde: the which is ſhewed foorth by honeſt and holy conuerſation, and when they apply themſelues to that which God commandeth in his lawe. *1. Pet. 3. 4.*

31 *Giue her of the fruite of her handes, and let her owne workes praiſe her in the gates.*

Although that of our ſelues wee doe nothing that is ought worth, and that wee wel deſerue to bee blamed, euen for the beſt & moſt perfect workes which proceede from vs, in the greateſt trueth and ſinceritie that we are able, (for they are neuer ſuch as they ought to bee: and that which is good in them, commeth not from vs, but from God, who worketh in vs both the wil and the deede, according to his good pleaſure) yet, if wee wil ſuffer the holy Ghoſt to regenerate and to ſanctifie vs, that we may walke in newneſſe of life, that we are at defiance with the worlde, and doe not yeelde thertoo, but doe ſtriue to folowe the good wil of our God, hee wil cauſe vs to be praiſed, as though we our ſelues were authors of the goodnes: and that which hee worketh in vs, he calleth ours. And therfore, after that the wiſe man hath rehearſed the good workes of the vertuous woman, he wil haue her to be praiſed, not only priuately of her huſband, and of her houſhold, but alſo publikely. For hauing ſaide, *Giue her of the fruite of her handes*: that is to ſay, acknowledge her paines and labour, and bleſſe her: for this cauſe he addeth afterwardes, or we muſt cauſe this confeſſion to be made, when he ſaith, *And let her owne workes praiſe her in the gates*: that is to ſay, that the vertuous woman ought to bee praiſed and commended in the great congregations, becauſe of her vertue that ſhineth in her life, and conuerſation. Nowe if the vertuous woman be worthy of publike praiſe, by a ſtronger reaſon ought her children to acknowledge the labour that ſhe hath borne for them, and neuer to forget it: to bee wholy at her commandement, and to helpe her with all their power, according to the commandement of God, Honour thy father and thy mother, &c.

Prayſed bee God for euer and euer.

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